

## NOTES FROM MEETING WITH NDDC 1200 MONDAY 14<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2014

**Present:** John Hammond (NDDC), Simon Firbank, Mike Withers, Peter Williams, Harriet Palmer & IM.

**Location:** North Dorset district Council Offices.

SF opened the meeting and thanked JH for making himself available.

JH reminded everyone that the use of brownfield sites for smaller developments was not new, but, that the recent planning changes, from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014, are designed to enable conversions from offices and shops to residential use and to convert agricultural buildings into houses without the existing planning permission requirements and needs.

JH stated that there were a number of caveats within the new planning rules that have to be met before any agricultural building could be converted to housing.

- A maximum of 450 square metres on an established agricultural unit
- A maximum of three dwellings only per site.
- Extend of conversion would include doors, windows, roofs, exterior walls and laying of services and partial demolition to enable building works.
- Any conversion cannot extend beyond footprint of existing agricultural unit.
- Any additional curtilage to allow for parking and gardens cannot exceed 150 square metres.
- No additional permitted rights to allow decking, sheds etc are lost, this is to ensure the building footprint is not exceeded
- There is a loss of future rights for 10 years to apply for planning to return or add agricultural buildings to the site.
- A requirement to ensure appropriate screening including noise
- A requirement that the conversion is suitable and fits into the surrounding land use.
- Any proposed conversion must go to the local authority (NDDC) for 'screening'.

JH then outlined that any proposed development under the new regulations could be prevented by NDDC, using a stringent set of tests in relation to 'Suitability' and 'Curtilage'.

JH then moved to the specific of the proposed site for the new village hall and the existing agricultural building on the site.

JH stated that whilst he did not have personal knowledge of the proposed site, he was of the view that the owner could be successful in converting the existing barn to housing, with a maximum of three units, but, any such development would have to go to NDDC and pass the requirements already mentioned.

JH stated that the owner and developer would need to decide if the standalone conversion of the existing barn only is viable and that any conversion would comply with the requirements of the act. They would need to consider this against the viability of the new village hall with a small housing development and whether this option is tactically more achievable with greater financial benefit for the owner.

JH then moved onto the NDDC District Plan and the Bourton NP. He stated that a NP can enable the development of a new hall with housing better than the existing legislation and in the future the NDDC District Plan, which, will go to examination by an inspector in the summer.

JH stated that the inspector's main focus will be on whether there is sufficient new housing identified for NDDC. He stated NDDC are confident this will be the case, but, he acknowledged this is not guaranteed.

PW asked what impact or influence does the Mill Site and its proposed development has in relation to any housing requirements and what if any effect on how a new hall build with housing could progress.

JH stated this development would not be a factor in any new hall and housing development, but, that its number of houses would be part of any District Plan or NP. He later confirmed that the existing Section 106 grant and the viability of development of the site is a matter the current owner is progressing.

HP pointed out that the NP could take some time to progress and at the moment the advice is that any new hall development should be part of this process. She asked if though the NP process could not meet the timescales of the owner of the proposed village hall site was there another way of progressing any development, in other words a Plan B

JH stated that:

Plan A is to progress a new hall with housing through the NP processes.

Plan B would be to progress outside the NP processes. This departure from the NP process could be viewed as undermining the NP processes, but, if done with the agreement of the Parish Council it could be progressed in such a way that does not undermine the NP processes.

JH stated that there were a number of crucial factors in progressing the new hall with housing scheme.

1. Any proposal needs to be evidenced based including the identification of need and benefit.
2. Any proposal as part of an evidence based approach and must have clear public consultation and support.
3. There must be a clear business case confirming how the project would be financed.
4. Any development would need to show that the new hall could be built and would not be left as a planning agreement but never built, whilst the houses proposed were erected.

MW pointed out that previous advice from NDDC had been that any new hall and housing development should be progressed as part of the NP process. He also informed JH that the NPG with VHMC were in the process of public consultation which included questions about a new hall with housing. He added that the existing barn is unlikely to fit the criteria for conversion given its state.

JH acknowledged this but also stated it would be possible to progress a new hall and housing development without undermining the NP process. He said he felt that Members would be sympathetic to a one off application of a new hall with housing as long as any application could show the points above and had passed through the SEA process within any neighbourhood plan. He stated that if public consultation supported a hall with housing then it would be for BPC to decide if the development should be progressed without waiting for the NP finalisation as the application would be evidenced based as any NP would have to be.

IJ. McVIE. Clerk to the Parish Council.