

Parish Council

Brent Knoll Parish Council

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Subject:

Brent Knoll Affordable Housing Project

Briefing Note Author

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Purpose Paper

Post Community Consultation Event (June 2016) Update Report

The Affordable Housing Project Plan

Stage 1: Understanding local housing need for affordable housing
COMPLETE (see note below)
Stage 2: Finding and securing a suitable site for the new affordable housing.
Stage 3: Designing and agreeing a housing project.
Stage 4: Identify development partners
Stage 5: Agree funding options, followed by securing funding and planning permission
Stage 6: Construction phase
Stage 7: Occupation stage

Stage 1

Brent Knoll HNA published December 2013

Understanding Local Housing Need in Brent Knoll

It is important to note that the Brent Knoll Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) offers a snap shot of the housing situation in the parish at the time of the survey. These will alter with increasing/decreasing values of housing, policies of lenders, the economic climate, and demographic changes in the community and as individual's situations change.

HNA REFRESH
PENDING

Affordable Need	2bedB (rent)	2bedH (rent)	2bedF (SO)	3bedH (rent)	TOTAL
Now	1	3	0	2	6
Within 1yr	0	0	0	1	1
Within 5yr	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	1	3	1	3	8

There is no specific length of time associated with the relevance and robustness of a HNA. However, it is advisable that any HNA older than 3-years should be updated to capture the scale and nature of current local housing need. **The Brent Knoll 2013 HNA is therefore reaching the end of its natural shelf life and requires updating.**

The Affordable Housing Development Team at SDC proposes to carry-out a HNA refresher exercise starting in early October 2016, culminating in the publication of an updated Brent Knoll HNA in December 2016.

Stage 2

Finding and securing a suitable parcel of land on which new affordable homes could be built continues to be a major challenge.

Finding a Site

WORK IN PROGRESS

SITE INVESTIGATION HISTORY

The SDC Affordable Housing Development Team ("AFHDT") has carried out a detailed and sequential investigation into potential development opportunities.

Sequential Site Search: Stage 1

Sedgemoor District Council Planning Policy first requires that any sites inside the Brent Knoll settlement boundary are explored for their potential to deliver affordable housing. It soon became apparent that there were no available, suitable and achievable parcels of land fitting this description.

Sequential Site Search: Stage 2

Given the apparent absence of any suitable, available and achievable parcels of land

within the settlement boundary, the site search exercise expanded its search to include parcels of land outside the settlement boundary. Sedgemoor District Council Planning Policies (D7 & P4) allows for sites outside the settlement boundary to be delivered for affordable housing if there is a demonstrable local need and support from the community.

Assessment Criteria 1: Site Availability for Housing

A site is considered available for development, when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements of landowners. The key question asked under this assessment was a simple one. Did the land owner wish to dispose of their land to support the provision of affordable housing?

Assessment Criteria 2: Site Suitability for Housing

Factors such as planning policy restrictions and limitations (designations, protected areas, existing planning policy and corporate, or community strategy policy), any physical problems or limitations (access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination), any potential Impacts (upon landscape features and conservation) and any environmental conditions

Assessment Criteria 3: Site Achievability for Housing

A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the financial capacity of the affordable housing provider to actually build the new homes.

This second stage exercise identified a limited number of possible land parcels.

In line with published advice and good practice, the AFHDT sought the advice and guidance of Brent Knoll Parish Council on which of the potential land parcels would be preferable.

The AFHDT initially concentrated its investigations on a brownfield parcel of land in the heart of the village ("site 1") – see attached map.

After lengthy unproductive discussions with the land owner, further work in respect of this land parcel was discontinued. The land was not available.

Despite the above setback, Brent Knoll Parish Council was asked to consider three additional potential land parcels ("site 2, 10 and 11") – see attached map.

After further discussions with the Parish Council, it was agreed that the AFHDT should concentrate on bringing forward a parcel of land in Station Road to the north of the heart of the village ("site 2") – see attached map

As at June 2016, discussions had progressed sufficiently well enough to report matters back to the Parish Council.

The developer for site 10 parcel presented alternative development proposals via a community consultation in early June 2016. The AFHDT have no feedback on this event.

STAGE 1 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Given the positive nature of the feedback associated with early investigations into site Brent Knoll Parish Council hosted an "open to all" public consultation event on 28 June 2016 in the Brent Knoll Parish Hall.

The Parish Council sponsored 28th June Brent Knoll Consultation Event was run with a number of aims in mind.

Brent Knoll Parish Council wanted local people to find out more about affordable housing, the scale of the problem in the parish and to talk about a possible site on which new homes might be provided (Station Road "Site 2"). The Parish Council also wanted to capture local views about other parcels of land available on which new homes might be built and to gauge local reaction to the possibility of new homes being built in the parish.

It is important to stress that the 28th June event was not a pre-cursor to a planning application for the land in Station Road ("site 2")

Headlines from the Consultation Feedback

An estimated number of just over 100 people attended the event. A feedback form was provided for visitors to give their views. Whilst not insignificant, only 35 feedback forms were received, 66% of who live in the vicinity to site 2. Summary responses are below.

The headline message from the consultation event is that there is general acceptance in support of the provision new affordable housing, and that the use of a cross subsidy model to fund any new affordable homes was understood and acceptable.

A healthy number of respondents (at 40%) also supported the building of new homes, including affordable homes on the Station Road parcel of land. It is not unsurprising to note that the majority of people living close to "site 2" were against any form of development here.

Key messages from local people included:

- The new affordable homes should go to local people;
- The any new homes be of the right type, size and their appearance should be in keeping with the village;
- When asked about alternative sites, only a mere 9% knew about another site on which new homes could be built.

Visitors to the consultation day were able to ask questions about why Station Road was preferred and were asked suggest alternative parcel(s) of land on which housing could be built - see map below.

The Next Steps

Brent Knoll PC support to undertake HNA refresh

Brent Knoll PC views in terms of site preference