

Bures Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting
7.30 Monday 23rd January 2023
The Garrad Room Bures Community Centre

Present: Robin Hamilton, Richard Adams, Gill Jackson, Ken Jackson, Nigel Cowlin, Susan Sills, Tom Probert, Richard Shackell, Ken McAndrew and Ian Poole from Places4People

1. Apologies for absence

Jane Chambers, Simon ten Brinke Jackson, Jan Stobart, Jenny Wright, Heidi Winch, Molly Thomas

2. Minutes of the previous Steering group

Minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2022 agreed by email and circulated

3. HNA - update on meeting to discuss draft report

RH and MT joined a Zoom meeting with Matthew Kearney of AECOM to discuss the draft report. The document summarising feedback from the group had been shared with Matthew Kearney ahead of the meeting. It was agreed that the executive summary would be extended and the message clarified. The pop. Data from the 2021 Census with a narrative to explain why 2011 was used in places and 2021 in others. The number of caveats, which had weakened the report, is to be reduced. The next draft will be available by 10th February. However, if there are further items to feedback this can be done prior to that date.

Action: RS to draft further points to Matthew Kearney on the HNA. MT or RH to put these points to AECOM.

4. Brief feedback on use of Heritage and Landscape Survey, further surveys and visits to groups

The H & L survey was trialled at the History Society meeting on 10th January. The response was very positive with wholehearted support for the policies identified by the group.

The Natural Environment survey is also ready for use. Both will be presented to meetings of clubs and societies.

Drafts of surveys for the other areas of the plan were available for consideration and will be emailed round for comment.

Action: GJ to circulate drafts of surveys for other areas of the plan. All NP members who belong other organisations in Bures to take the surveys to these groups.

5. Places4People –feedback from Ian Poole

Ian began by explaining his background and listing some of the local NPs for which he had been responsible. These include Assington, Little Waldingfield, Great Bardfield and West Mersea. Ian said that areas of concern identified by residents in all villages are volume and speed of traffic and dog poo.

Bures NP team received brief feedback from Ian before Christmas on part of the Natural Environment group work. He had then been asked to look at the contents of the whole Dropbox and not only the file marked with his name.

1st comment - impression was that the work was disjointed and repetitious.

Green spaces was given as an example where the topic occurs in more than one place.

The advice was to decide on the policies and community actions and then decide where they are going to sit in the NP.

Ian explained that Braintree has a new Local Plan in place but that Babergh has yet to reach that point. There is the issue that the two Local Plans will not necessarily match. The hope is that the Babergh plan will be out for consultation soon. The new Braintree LP should give Bures an idea on what not to repeat.

2nd comment - Vision statements are not needed for each area and that we should stick to the main Vision statement. It was explained to him that all the vision statement link to the main statement.

3rd point – Policies are Planning Policies and anything else is a Community Action. One parish in Norfolk has a NP with 8 policies and 30 community actions. Using biodiversity as an example the policy would be there where planning permission is granted a condition would, based on the Bures policy, be that biodiversity must be protected. A CA would be to map aspects of biodiversity.

4th - Parish Online mapping system should be used. Bures has access to this mapping system but group member NC has access to GIS which is better. Bures should ask Braintree whether they will map for Bures St Mary. This may not be necessary if Bures maps are produced using GIS. Wherever a piece of land is referred to a map should be included showing where it is.

TP asked about the evidence for the Heritage and Landscape section.

1. Landscape sensitivity assessment – this identifies where development could take place. The Proposed Extension to the AONB is helpful. It was suggested that we look for gaps in the evidence, break down the planning policies and community actions. Planning policy is covered by Braintree and Babergh. We can add Bures specific policies.

2. A local green space assessment would be useful. Private land can count as 'Green space'.

Green space must be Reasonably close proximity to the community it serves

Demonstrably special to a local community it terms of (a) Beauty (b) Historic significance (c) Recreational value (d) Tranquillity or (e) Richness of wildlife

Local in character, not an extensive tract of land or Land already designated (AONB SSSI)

3. A List of Non-designated Heritage Assets. This work is already underway. It was suggested that 'less is more.'

5th – The structure of the NP. It may be better for the Heritage section to become Built Heritage and the Landscape aspect go to the Environment section. Design should be one section and not in Housing as it may be referred to in situations other than new development. The Design work needs to link to evidence base.

6th – Housing. It is wise not to allocate sites. Rural exception sites must never be identified.

Have a policy non site specific. A Set of Criteria can be helpful but don't repeat the Local Plan.

TP All of Bures is 'Valued Landscape' as it is in the area identified for the extension to the AONB.

7th – Define what we want – Valued Landscape – add to that Biodiversity, Traffic – what is acceptable and what is not. Go back to the SWOT analyses –(we have) Try to make the NP an attractive read to residents. The policies must be as watertight as possible – no ambiguity. Each chapter – Context – District Council. There is no need for National policies and strategies. Should be a 15yr plan as any longer it will not match with changes in the LPs. The only policies you cannot override are Strategic Policies. The Eric Pickles statement – NP policies cannot insist on higher standards than those in place.

It was suggested that Bures NP engages Places4People to write the Bures NP. The question over whether DAC would suit Bures' needs more was raised.

Action: All to recheck the NPs to see how the work by Places4People (Assington, Little Waldingfield) and DAC (Cressing, Coggeshall <https://dacplanning.com/projects-np>) differ. GJ and RA to pull together the work to date into one document – share with group before sharing with Places4People and DAC.

Decision on which way forward to be taken at the meeting on 6th February

6. Finance

The response from Locality on the request for a further grant before the end of the term of the current grant – *'If you need more grant and you will spend it before the end of March you can apply. However, we don't have groups with more than one grant open at a time.'*

Expenses for stationery for the surveys will be claimed via Jenny Wright.

7. Dates of next meetings

Wider Group Meeting Mon 6th Feb 2023 7.30

Steering Group Mon 20th Feb 7.30