

Minutes of the Bures Neighbourhood Plan Group Meeting
7.30 Tuesday 5th September 2023

Present: Robin Hamilton, Ken McAndrew, Ken Jackson, Sandra Scott, Richard Adams, Gill Jackson, Jan Stobart (RCCE) Simon ten Brinke Jackson, Louise Cornell (CCP)

1. Apologies for absence Richard Shackell

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd August 2023 agreed by email and circulated

3. Matters arising

Request to Braintree DC regarding Article 4 directions to prevent plotlands development off Colchester Road – update from Tim Havers Lead Principal Planner 5th Sept.

'We are reviewing this internally at BDC. Chris Paggi (Planning Development Manager) needs to give it further consideration and we may also require some legal input before we are in a position to determine what course of action BDC is able to take.'

4. Louise Cornell CCP

Louise had produced a detailed review of every policy in the 6th draft of Bures NP. This was circulated prior to the meeting. Louise looked at whether there was sufficient evidence and whether the wording of the policy was as it would need to be. We need tight but flexible policies. The draft shows that we are clear what we want to achieve. The emphasis on local character and landscape is important and is strong in the draft. There is some overlap with local and national policy; the examiner will take this out. The wording needs to show the situation very specifically for Bures. For example, with heritage it needs to be Bures related. Also, where the policy says development where trees are proposed to be removed would not be permitted – the National policy is to prefer trees not to be removed and any removal needs to be justified and replacement included as part of the proposal.

KJ asked whether the orientation ie south facing roofs could be part of a policy. No, but you can say that you want to see how renewable energy and other green policies have been considered. We can't require something solar energy on every dwelling but can require them to consider. Habitat improvement is in the local and national plans. In Bures it can be linked to specifics – possible blue and green corridors. There are three ways developers can comply – on site, in the local area or buying credits.

RA asked where the Bures plan was in relation to others. The Landscape section is strong and could be even stronger. RH asked whether the NP could be used to support the extension to the AONB. There could be policies to support the extension. SS – there is plenty of evidence to support the extension. GJ – the Alison Farmer work is very useful.

Louise felt there could be more on housing. Some of this was part of draft 5 but the team had decided that this important area needed further advice. KMc provided hard copies of the housing material from draft 5.

RA suggested that the NPPF has the right wording to make good cities, towns and villages but queried whether Braintree and Babergh were up with the national approach. He asked whether Louise could forecast any problems between Braintree and Babergh. Louise feels that there is the possibility of bringing the best from each LPA and getting the best of both worlds for the Bures NP.

The AECOM report needs to be used to make the Design section stronger. Energy efficiency and orientation can be part of the Design section

JS reminded the meeting that bad design can be used as a reason to turn down applications.

The NP needs to have the character areas and design codes for each one. This makes development relevant to your village. Burnham Market was given as an example where strengths had been taken from two authorities.

https://www.westnorfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/1037/burnham_market_neighbourhood_plan

General points when reviewing the policy wording – change ‘must’ to ‘should.’ Use a list of what is needed and use the word ‘and.’ SS pointed out that no planning can say no and there needs to be some flexibility.

The Green Spaces is a strong area. Where the land is privately owned the agreement with the owner needs to be included. Each green space needs justification.

The Vision is good but feels protective could include more specific reference to development. Organic growth is part of our thinking. There could be an objective about development to meet the needs of the village. RH referred to the issues the team had with the HNA. Louise explained that the model and data used by AECOM would have taken into account the death rate but it is such that the margin for error is greater than acceptable; for a district it would be acceptable. JS suggested that community led housing should be in the plan. This has been shown as important to the village as a way of meeting the need for housing. Louise read out a policy in the Belton NP which centred on community benefit. The meeting felt this policy would be useful for Bures.

There are probably too many objectives – the list could be thinned down. RA suggested adding a matrix of objectives and policies.

RH explained that the emphasis on climate change was there as it was felt negligent not to do so. Louise suggested specific evidence for Bures would be helpful; for example, that on emissions. GJ pointed out the link between emissions and health and the housing in the centre of the village being up to the pavement. Evidence for the need for renewables could point out the lack of this consideration on recent development such as Tenterfield. Built in energy efficiency also makes living more affordable for those who live in the properties.

It was suggested that the Conservation areas be made the focus of a policy. This could remove the need for the list of non-designated heritage assets. GJ pointed out that the BSM Conservation area report has a photograph on the cover of an important heritage asset that was subsequently lost. Using the Conservation area as protection was therefore felt doubtful.

Louise queried the identification of flood protection sites. RA pointed out that electrical equipment would be adversely affected by flood. Switchgear would be affected. This should be part of the national infrastructure thinking and policy. For Bures emphasising the use of natural SUDS would be appropriate.

Louise suggested that CCP write the policies and gather evidence. CCP could also do the Design section.

Bures NP team to provide information for each green space and key view. Appraisals of the Conservation areas needed.

RA asked how we could reduce the likelihood of the 'Nobody told us' response when it comes to the final stages of the plan. Louise was impressed by the amount of consultation the Bures team have done and said that it was far more than others. When we have the final draft we consult again. That is the important consultation stage now. When the draft is ready to share it needs to be sent to Alan Massow at Braintree and Paul Bryant at Babergh. At this stage they will give it thorough consideration.

Action: RA to list actions on the CCP report in preparation for the next meeting.

5. Funding update

Application submitted on 13th August and assessed prior to going to the panel on 22nd of that month. Decision that our application had been successful was received on 31st August. Acceptance to be sent; funds will then be transferred to BHPC account as previously.

Action: GJ to forward the email from Groundwork notifying Bures of the success of the grant application to JW for acceptance.

6. Public and council engagement

RA met with Jan Aries PROW Officer BSMPC and Shirley Keeble-Fox PROW Officer BHPC to discuss footpath suggestions. Very positive outcome with shared aspirations for enhancing the footpath network. Important to note that Little Cornard Neighbourhood Plan identifies the benefit of the same path linking the parishes.

7. Dates of next meetings

Tuesday 12th September 7.30 Dennis Ambrose Barn, Bures Common.