

**Notes of meeting to discuss the document Planning concerns of Down
Ampney Parish Council
Held at CDC offices on Thursday 22nd August 2019 at 10.00hrs.**

In attendance:-

Councillor Joe Harris (JH) Leader of Cotswold District Council, Councillor Lisa Spivey (LS), and Councillor Clive Webster (CW).

Mike Napper (MN) from CDC.

Ray Jenkins (RJ) and Geoff Tappern (GT) from Down Ampney Parish Council (PC).

Agenda as headings, followed by decision of meeting:-

In general following previously issued document:- Planning concerns of Down Ampney Parish Council.

1). Principal settlement :-

In the CDC Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Down Ampney (DA) is a Principal Settlement. In the early stages of the Local Plan DA was not a Principal Settlement, but was later (Dec 2013) included as sufficient potential development sites in the village had been identified.

PC believe that DA does not fulfil the Principal Village requirement as it does not have good bus services to major employment areas, e.g. Swindon, no train service, no employment in the village, shop only kept open by volunteers, no doctor or dentist. Car or bike essential. Certainly not a sustainable village. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will request that the Principal Village status be removed in the CDC Local Plan review to 2041. **Action:- GT**

2). The right of the Parish Council to meet and discuss with the Case Officer the application at an early stage:-

Whereas all understood the concerns of the PC that were presented in their letter “Down Ampney Planning Issues” MN stated there were legal confidentiality issues.

GT stated that he could understand there were legal confidential issues when discussing number and type of houses, but when it came to layout, access, construction, fencing, drainage there was no longer a need for confidentiality.

MN said that the purpose of public advertisement and formal consultation with parish councils was the point that application details become public, with the express intention of generating public comments on such aspects of proposed developments, which would then be taken into consideration. Nevertheless, at the pre-application stage, developers are strongly encouraged by the Council’s officers to engage with parish councils and the wider community as part of preparing a Statement of Community Involvement. MN assured the PC that Case Officers are expected to make themselves accessible to the PC, subject to their availability, and that this will be reinforced to the Development Management team. **Action:- MN.**

CW stated that a “Planning Procedure” meeting would be set up similar in construction to the one held at Northleach on Social Housing. The presentation not to be at a basic level, but assume participants are experienced in planning. To include problems as shown above which are a cause of major concerns by many parish councils. **Action:- CW**

3). Minor amendments:-

The document issued before the meeting “Down Ampney Planning Issues” gave examples of approvals that had been given by CDC planning as minor modifications without any consultation with the Parish Council. GT & RJ stated that they may be considered minor modifications to a planning official, but far from minor modifications to the residents of a rural village. Other parishes and towns have similar opinions. MN stated that he would remind the Council’s officers to have regard to the planning background of each case when considering whether the Non-Material Amendment process was appropriate. **Action:- MN**

4). Enforcement of conditions.

GT stated that “conditions” are hard fought and must be checked that they are enforced and not just ignored or “weakened” as sometimes happens now. JH said this was a concern of many other parishes and towns. CDC are considering employing extra staff to check conditions are complied with during the build process. **Action:- JH.**

5). Existing CDC Local Plan:-

The existing CDC Local Plan is to 2031. It has to be reviewed every five years. The deadline for request of development land to be put forward (SHELAA) closed on 2nd August. It will take several months for the development submissions to be processed. The next draft version of the CDC Local Plan to 2041 is planned for around 2023. **Action:- James Brain**

6). Excellent:-

GT would like to put on record his thanks for the excellent support and advice that has been given by Joseph Walker and James Brain, in particular for the Neighbourhood Plan.

GT also stated his concern that the “walk in” and see a Planning Officer procedure no longer existed. In his opinion this should be re-instated even if it requires a small charge, e.g. £20.

MN stated that this issue was part of the service review. **Action:- MN/CW**

When considering moving into the area he spoke to Ben Bendall about possible additions/modification to a potential property. The advice from Ben was excellent.

7). Next meeting:-

JH stated that he would arrange a similar meeting with Down Ampney Parish Council in six months time to monitor progress, and take on board any other concerns. **Action:- JH.**

Geoff Tappern
27th August 2019