

Lound Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Meeting Thursday 30th January 2020 at 10.00am.
at BDC Planning Dept., Worksop

Present: Michael Naylor, Andrew Perkins, Nick Prout, and Colin Beaumont.
Karen Johnson and Will Wilson representing BDC Planning Dept.

Michael set out the purposes of the Meeting, being to express the concerns and frustration of Lound Parish Council and the NP Steering Group caused by the latest draft of the Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) Local Plan, 2020. These are: -

- The fundamental change in housing number requirements, namely replacement of the 10% growth “requirement” based upon dwellings in the parish (i.e. 21 new homes – on which our Draft NP has been founded), with the 20% (again of the number of dwellings in the parish) “cap” figure becoming the new target. This requires Lound to plan for 42 new homes by 2037.
- The five years of extensive work, surveys and consultations, which have taken our Draft Plan to the point of Regulation 14 Consultation, appear to have been made obsolete by the draft BDC Local Plan.
- Despite assurances that our existing Draft Plan needs only minor adjustment, the disparity between planned and “required/aspired” development, means it lacks credibility when presenting it to either our parishioners or the independent examiner.
- Suggestions that a “windfall” element of our Draft Plan could be increased to accommodate the increased requirement are not realistic. The increase would entail a major re-working of the NP, for which resources are simply not available.
- Small Rural Settlements (SRS) are unfairly targeted to contribute to BDC’s increased new housing requirement by having their new housing figures doubled.
- BDC’s “requirement” figures (as demonstrated in our extrapolation of new house numbers from the tables in Policy ST2) show an over-estimate of **1,017** on the new total requirement of 9,087 (i.e. a total of 10,104). This is most exaggerated in the total for SRS, where para 5.1.26 states 1,090 new homes are required, but the total of the column “20% housing increase” amount to 2,124, a surplus of **1,034**. Thus, there is no justification for imposing the 20% on all or any SRS.

Will reiterated that the independent examiner would consider our NP against the existing Core Strategy until the BDC Local Plan is in place. He added that the Draft Local Plan would also be taken into account.

Karen pointed out that Bassetlaw were leading the roll-out of Local Plans, nationwide, and were “feeling their way”. She indicated a positive refining of the BDC Draft Plan in response to feedback from the Consultation, with an up-dated version by August 2020.

Karen also stated that some NPSGs and PCs had expressed similar concerns to ours, whereas others wanted to plan for more building. She acknowledged that the 20%, “one size fits all”, increase imposed on SRS was unsatisfactory and a more bespoke method might be needed. We were urged to make these points during the Consultation.

Reference was made to the strong evidence base supporting the Lound NP. The Plan would be subject to review in the future and, bearing in mind the two year extension to the Local Plan from 2035 to 2037, there might be scope to add a few more dwellings over time, say to 25/26. However, an increase to 42 dwellings is unsupportable.

Will confirmed that the 20% expansion figure was acceptable to the Large Rural Settlements. He has committed to compiling numbers from the SRS of planned and built dwellings for comparison with “requirements” with a view to calculating whether the latter will be met or even exceeded. BDC are seeking responses to the Draft Local Plan from each PC or NP group on numbers and, subsequently, additional requirement totals may be reduced.

Our propositions were to refine the Draft Local Plan as follows: -

1. The 42 SRS to be targeted at 10% growth (as the 2019 Draft Plan) with no “cap”, allowing expansion in SRS where it was felt to be beneficial to their communities, and
2. Policy ST2 to be re-worded – Table C Small Rural Settlements – the preamble to be couched in similar terms to Table B Large Rural Settlements (i.e. *Unless otherwise promoted through Neighbourhood Plans*). This would place more value upon NPs. **This would be supported by Para 5.1.32 of the Local Plan. (For ease of reference this states “*This will help to sustain those villages and also recognise their often greater environmental constraints (see Policy ST2). In most cases, their growth will be identified through Neighbourhood Plans and the local communities themselves.*”**
3. The idea of a sliding scale of Housing Requirement for Rural Settlements was suggested as follows: -
 - Large Rural Settlements with > 500 dwellings (6) - 20% increase
 - Small Rural Settlements with > 50 dwellings (42) - 10% increase
 - Rural Hamlets with < 50 dwellings (61) - 0% increase

Whilst Karen and Will can only make recommendations on the BDC Draft Local Plan, we gained the impression there is a strong desire to meet individual needs. Workshops with other SRS will be organised by BDC shortly to allow feedback and discussion on the Draft Local Plan.

Thanks were expressed to Karen and Will for facilitating the Meeting.

Date of next Meeting: This day at 4.00pm. in the Village Hall