

**Note of meeting between Radley College (RC) and representatives of Radley Parish Council (RPC) to discuss development of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP).**  
17 November, 4.00pm at Radley College

**Present**

Andrew Ashton (AA)	RC bursar
David Anderson (DA)	RC estates bursar
Ian Yorston (IY)	RC don and RPC councillor
Kim Cohen (KC)	Barton Willmore (planning consultants to RC)
Priscilla Dudding (PD)	RPC Neighbourhood Planning chair
Martin Wilson (MW)	RPC Shape and Cohesion subgroup chair
Richard Dudding (RD)	RPC Infrastructure subgroup member

**LOCAL PLAN**

It was noted that:

- the Inspector had announced the timetable for Stage 2 of the Examination in Public, with hearings in February;
- the Vale planned to consult on Part Two housing sites and on further sites to meet Oxford's unmet need as a single exercise. This would be in Autumn 2016 at earliest.

Part Two sites and unmet need sites were both likely to be disproportionately in the Abingdon and Oxford Fringe area, and the implications for Radley could be substantial. The uncertainty made it difficult to plan ahead, especially in relation to the potential housing site at South Radley. Arguably its proposed removal from the Green Belt in the Local Plan made it inevitable that the Vale would propose housing there on sufficient scale to impact on Radley as a whole, but they were at present not prepared to say anything one way or the other nor to explain how this might interact with Neighbourhood Planning. PD said that RPC planned to write to the Vale (Mike Murray and Adrian Duffield) saying they needed a firmer planning basis than was so far being provided.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

PD explained that five sub-groups had been established to develop options for community consultation in April and May. The aim was to be ready to firm up proposals as soon as the Inspector's Report on the Local Plan was delivered. The groups of most likely interest to RC were Infrastructure, Shape and Cohesion, and Housing Design and Tenure.

AA said that they had an interest in the process not just as the majority owner of the North West Radley site, but also as a major stakeholder with a holistic view about the future of the village. RC also owned about half the North Abingdon site (in

Radley Parish but outside the Neighbourhood Plan area), where their involvement was more arm's length.

### **Infrastructure sub-group**

#### Radley Primary School

AA said that the normal developer funding requirement would only be enough to expand the school to single form entry, but on a basis which RC and the school (of which he was a governor) considered inadequate. RC's ideal was a new build one form entry school. Failing that they would like to see good quality new build of the area needed for expansion. But they did not have a blank cheque, and their ability to provide funding would be constrained if (as now seemed likely) they were unable to include housing within the North Radley site because of its green belt status.

DA said that OCC had been unresponsive about potential development arrangements under which RC might provide more than standard funding but a leading role in the development specification and process. A further concern was that funding over the odds by them might result in other developers (eg of South Radley) getting a free ride.

In response RPC said that they would be happy to assist RC in a higher level approach to OCC which might open up a more flexible solution to the school's specification and funding. They were also mindful of equity as between developers. All would have to pay the standard CIL contribution (from which education was funded). Only S106 was variable.

#### Roads

RD said that a key infrastructure issue was the roads hierarchy within the village. It was likely that RPC would want Foxborough Road to act as a village service road (and bus route) White's Lane to act as the main through road, and the alignment of the latter straightened out. They were not likely to favour a new through road bisecting the NWR housing site.

Improvements to the White's Lane/ Foxborough Road/ Thrupp Lane junction was also likely to be a key priority for RPC.

AA said that they were prepared to listen on this, and mentioned that Brett Farmery had been advising them on roads issues. He also said that quite a few people had commented on the point during their consultation, and agreed to let RPC have all the consultation responses.

## General

RD said that it would be useful to discuss infrastructure assumptions and costings with DA, and this was agreed.

### **Shape and cohesion sub-group**

PD explained the remit of this group. There was some enthusiasm in the village for a new central focus for the village, and RC's proposals for community facilities on the North Radley site had won considerable support. However, there were serious doubts about deliverability given the Vale's intention to retain the site in the Green Belt, and viable options needed to be identified for consultation in April/May

AA outlined some of the history behind their three site proposals which would have created a new village centre on the North Radley site. They had been encouraged by the Vale to believe that there might be sufficient planning flexibility to allow housing as well as community facilities on the site if there was strong community support. However, a change of personnel there had led to a reversal of this advice.

AA said they and Barton Willmore would explore further with the Vale planners (Andrew Maxted) what might be permissible on the site and whether some minor tweaking of Local Plan policy might be proposed to increase flexibility. Even if housing and a community shop was not permissible, there might be better prospects for a school rebuild together with a community hall and playing fields. PD said that RPC would have continuing concerns about any change to the Local Plan that opened the door to new housing on the site. KC said that any modification of the Local Plan would require fresh consultation.

MW said that there was concern to establish good pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the North West Radley site and the station/pub area. A link into Selwyn Crescent might be difficult and would require a willing vendor of the required sliver of land, but it would be a pity to rule it out. RC took note.

AA said that the possibility of development of the South Radley site by Arnold White Estates made it important to take a co-ordinated view of the master planning of the village. PD said that this is what RPC hoped to do through the Neighbourhood Planning process. AA said that they would be happy to contribute to the work of the Shape and Cohesion sub-group and to participate in tripartite discussions with Arnold White Estates set up by RPC.

### **Housing tenure and design sub-group**

PD explained that work on this was at an early stage. Possible issues included provision of housing for elderly people, so that those unable to continue in their own homes but wishing to remain in the village had that option. Might it also be possible

to influence the choice of housing association for social housing? All agreed that it was necessary first to establish the fixed points of policy in the Local Plan, taking account of recent national policy changes in relation to social housing, so that the margin for Neighbourhood Plan policies could be established.

AA said that they had a vested interest in the quality of development on the North West Radley site. They would not develop themselves but would set out covenants within which the developer would need to operate. They expected the developer to appoint a housing association, probably one with which they had previous working experience.

## **Conclusion**

Below is a list of the main actions reported or agreed in the meeting.

- RPC to write to the Vale seeking a viable relationship between Radley's Neighbourhood Planning process and the Vale's consideration of additional housing sites for Part Two of the Local Plan and for Oxford's unmet need.
- RC to consider a high level approach to OCC to explore the Primary School being rebuilt or expanded above the normal spec with additional RC funding. RD to assist in this.
- RC to let RPC have the responses to the consultation on their master planning.
- RC/Barton Willmore agreed to look at options for White's Lane straightening
- RD to liaise with DA about infrastructure costs and assumptions.
- RC/Barton Willmore to consider with Vale planners what scope there might be, including through a modification to the Local Plan, to allow construction of community facilities on the North Radley site.
- RC/Barton Willmore to input to the work of the Shape and Cohesion sub-group and to participate in tripartite talks with Arnold White Estates at the invitation of RPC.

There was agreement that the meeting had been constructive and that similar meetings should take place in future.