

Housing and Environment Working Group

Looe Neighbourhood Plan

15.5.17

Members: James Lundy (Lead), Cllr Armand Toms, Cllr Edwina Hannaford , David Gamblin, Ross Fisher.

Interim Report

Meetings have taken place on a regular monthly basis. Points discussed and status as follows:-

1. Housing Need Survey:-

This was researched and advertised through Survey Monkey (online), The Cornish Times, Looe Town Council (website and email updates) and a printed copy of the survey delivered to residents. Local letting agents were also contacted for their input.

All results were collated by Steve Foster and displayed in the steering group drop-box and held by Looe Town Council.

2. Local Builders Survey:-

Research was undertaken by James Lundy to look into builders in the local area ie Looe, Liskeard, Bodmin and St Austell.

A questionnaire was devised and advertised in a similar manner as the housing needs survey.

Results showed that the local builders contacted expressed a preference to small developments of 10 -20 units. See below other results from this survey:-

- Types of buildings built by local builders in the area – Houses/Bungalows/ flats in private bespoke developments
- Area best for building – small pockets of lands/Localised plots/Small sites

- Commonly used materials in the area- Concrete block construction
- Negative building materials used in Looe – Mundic block/Asbestos
- Housing styles most requested – Traditional /Timber framed/Stone

3. House prices:-

Research was undertaken to have an understanding of current house prices in Looe and affordability. Also availability of rental properties which proved to be an issue in Looe due to the lack of rental stock.

4. Potential Sites for Building:-

October 2016 an initial view of available sites was undertaken.

In January 2017 these sites were assessed by Kath Statham from Cornwall Council (**Urban Edge Study**) in order to understand how the landscape around the medieval town of Looe could accommodate future housing growth.

The land parcels were placed into categories showing their level of sensitivity to change

Further to this assessment site visits were made by group members in February 2017. We are now at the status of selecting preferred sites.

5. Consulting Land Owners:-

Our next move is to contact the preferred site land owners. This will be to check availability of land and initial thoughts of owners.

6. Further Grants

We are advised that there is a further grant that has become available from government sources of approx £11000 -00 to assist Looe Neighbourhood Plan. We are informed that a portion of this could help The Housing Group with further assessment/feasibility for example understanding a current infrastructure/capacity of a site.

7. Cornwall Housing:-

It was helpful from The Housing Group's point of view to hear the presentation from Victoria Regan (Cornwall Housing) re the process of being admitted onto the housing register and the criteria that applicants need to meet.

We are advised that the recent completion and success of their first project in Looe (Old Park Lane, Glebelands, East Looe) 15 units demonstrated the advantages to small scale developments in the town and the use of local contractors from Cornwall. It was encouraging to hear from Victoria Regan that there would be a willingness from them to invest further in the Looe area as this project has been so positive with Cornwall Housing and the community of Looe.

8. The Polean Site – West Looe:-

It is felt by myself (James Lundy) that until we have a full commitment from John Betty (Cornwall Council) with regards to a plan of timescale and available funds for the Polean site it is very hard to be able to put this into our plan until we know there is a master plan of the possibilities put into place before our voluntary groups start to do their own research.

9. Cornwall Community Land Trust:-

This is an area that the Housing Group need to explore it has been felt by all that this information should be accessed and fed back to the group by Cllr Edwina Hannaford as she knows the right points of contact. It is felt that we may in the near future need to have a meeting/presentation from the above trust.

10. Housing Vision for Looe:-

The 'Housing Vision' for Looe statement is in its final stages with group members adding the final touches and having their input – this should be available in the coming weeks and will be added to drop-box.

11. Polices

Initial research by myself (James Lundy) has taken place into the types of polices that have been adopted by local communities in Cornwall in their own neighbourhood plans. Until group members have undertaken formal training into how polices are set we are unable to take our research any further.

Report prepared by James Lundy – Housing Group Lead

David Gamblin (Research)