Notes of meeting 6 Nov 2015 re Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan emerging housing policy with Ricardo Rios, Stroud District Council (SDC), Ebley Mill

Present: Ricardo Rios (RiR) (SDC), John Jeynes(JJ) (Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group (SNPG)), Rachel Russell(RaR) – Notes(Stonehouse Town Council/NP Administrator)

RiR had been provided with the following documents before the meeting:
- NLP Housing Brief
- NLP Housing Policy for board Oct 2015 (1)
- Housing Consultation 2

1. **Policy organisation/themes:** RiR suggested that some topics currently dealt with under the housing policy theme e.g. vistas, open spaces may be better dealt with under another theme. JJ explained that SNPG were looking for guidance from their consultant on how to order policies.

2. **Housing policies and evidence needed**
   RiR suggested that NP housing policies can try to influence numbers OR type of housing.
   JJ explained that there are less than 100 plots of land within the NP area available for development and a Call for Sites only brought forward one site which was unsuitable for development so NP will not be allocating sites.
   RiR advised that in order to influence the type of housing the NP needs robust evidence which should be compiled in one document in line with national guidelines from Planning Advisory Service (RiR to circulate). A starting point for evidence would be SDC's ~~SHLAA~~ Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHMAA) (http://www.stroud.gov.uk/docs/planning/planning_strategy.asp#s=sectioncontent2&p=nbhood,lp,BASE,housin gev,shlaaev). Policy will also need to be flexible; NP policies can state what community wants but must not make development unviable.

3. **Design and Access statement requirements in NP policies**
   RaR noted that a Stroud Town Centre draft NP policy (AP9a Design: General Principles) on design requirements requires certain features to be reflected in Design and Access statements and asked RiR if he thought this was a good idea. RiR said it was but only has the effect of ensuring developers address the design features in their Design and Access statement; it doesn't ensure they include them in their design.

4. **Comments on emerging housing policies as consulted on at October 17 2015.**

Emerging housing policy	SDC comment
All Policy to cover New build, Conversion, Renovation and Extension of existing builds.	Important to define scope of policy; policy could cover "all development"
No conversion of single storey dwellings to two storeys to protect limited supply for elderly and the psychically challenged.	The policy is overly onerous and unacceptable. NDPs should be about promoting not restricting development. Loft conversion may be permitted development, so policy may not have effect. Instead could have a Design policy requirement that there should be an appropriate mix of dwellings, particularly taking into account the shortage of properties suitable for elderly and disabled.
Minimum of 40% of all new builds to be high quality social and affordable housing	SDC level is 30%. If NDP policy differs from this will need evidence to show 40% is viable. Also important to note there is no need repeat local plan policy.
All builds must meet good energy efficiency standards.	Check SDC Local Plan policy (ES1?); if satisfactory no need for separate policy. National government policy guidance through a Ministerial Statement on the Deregulation Bill is that NPs should step away from design standards as these are Building Control matters.

All new builds to deliver two car parking spaces for each unit that does not include garage space provided.	Check SDC amendment on car parking (MM48?) Sorry it was MOD 49 (page 148) of Plain text version of the local plan; if NP wants to differ will need robust evidence that their policy doesn't render development unviable. Such evidence might be to do with car ownership in S'house; is there a factor which makes S'house different from the rest of the District? Generally, supporting text in the plan can be quite discursive; policy text has to be very exact.
Builds that meet the locally identified housing needs will be supported	Better to say locally identified housing types. Evidence base could be from GRCC housing audit and census/demographic data put in a document in line with PAS guidance. "Infill housing development will aim to:…" then identify all types of dwellings that are encouraged.
Occupancy of new build social housing to be protected through a structured tier system to support local families to stay within Stonehouse	This measure is only available for Rural Exception Sites. However, Nailsworth are doing a Community Right to Build order and are allowed to do tiered local connection criteria. Could have policy mentioning Community Right to Build orders…Stroud draft NP has policy on affordable housing to be delivered by Community Land Trust (AP4b Affordable Housing)
10% minimum of 9+ dwellings must meet current Lifetime Home Standards	Check SDC policy. And Statement https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015
All builds will deliver access roads, pavements, bus stops, green provision, child play areas and ensure no flooding to minimum standards that will be contained within policy	Need to consult with GCC Highways on transport/roads infrastructure. Town Council or NP group need to find out what S/house could get from W of S/house development: SDC contacts for CiL/s.106 are Christa deKrista Harris, for W of S/house planning application, David Loewen. Green provision: need to define. NP will need to have a glossary; could use one in SDC local Plan (currently only in 2013 draft). Play areas: usually ask for contributions from developers. RaR raised possibility of NP designating Park Estate greens as Local Green Space. NP group would need to talk to SDC Asset Management as landowners. NPFF criteria for Local Green Space are that it must be valuable, publically accessible and of exceptional value.
Material used in any build to be sympathetic and in keeping with area	Add value to Local Plan by identifying further criteria in NP e.g. which materials, define character areas. Update Design Statement? RiR to send link to SDC character appraisal information.
Where traffic is considerably increased by any development 20 mph speed limits to be considered.	Highways issue but not planning policy

All builds must not distract or obstruct the rural and iconic vistas from and to the Town.	NP group can do a character assessment covering built and natural environment. Need to identify what is important about views. Policy could be: "Important vistas will be improved and enhanced" Character assessment shows: • what views are important and valuable. • Function of space; why development would be harmful.
The building line should not be encroached upon to ensure no creep to joining the Parish's of Stonehouse and Standish	Identify what is important about the gap. Character assessment should help you do that.
All builds must meet the requirements of ICHA, Wildlife and Special Interest sites	Need to consult with statutory consultees such as Historic England, Natural England. They can advise where NP can add value; where general requirements could be made more specific.

5. Further action

RiR to send links:
PAS guidance on Housing Assessment:
http://www.pas.gov.uk/documents/332612/0/PASNP/5cd2a9da-dc5e-4c5c-a982-e2f4a23d3fcc
 PAS slides on housing
http://www.pas.gov.uk/web/pas1/neighbourhood-planning/-/journal_content/56/332612/7443740/ARTICLE
SDC Guidance on character assessment
http://www.stroud.gov.uk/docs/planning/planning_strategy.asp#s=sectioncontent5&p=nbhood,designated,npcharachter

Possible further action by SNPG:

- Collate evidence for housing types to be encouraged. Use SHLAA, census, GRCC housing audit, consultation findings. Put into format advised by PAS.

- Do character assessment; may be possible to base on Design Statement but update. Important evidence for policies relating to design and the environment.

- Consult with GCC Highways on transport issues.

- Consult with Historic England and Natural England on environmental issues.

Additional notes from JJ:

1. Ricardo advised that we should use the same Glossary of terms in our NP as the LP to save any confusion.
2. The liaison with David Lowen should include Section 106 allocation, he thought the allocation may be to advanced for WoS however I did point out to him that the LP Inspector had found the allocation to the restoration of the canal save for the towpath as not an appropriate allocation within the emerging LP and is subject of a MM
3. Ricardo recommended zoning Stonehouse to assist addressing the type and style of buildings in those zones.
4. The need to link with the Development Coordinating Team for WoS for connectivity with Stonehouse.
5. Ricardo advised that it was a balancing exercise for the NLP team to decide whether maintaining green spaces, for example on the Park Estate, outweighs the benefit or not of having those spaces available to deliver the identified housing need within Stonehouse.

Formatted: List Paragraph, Numbered + Level: 1 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, … + Start at: 1 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.75 cm + Indent at: 1.39 cm