

APPENDIX 5: REPORT RELATING TO SITE SELECTION

BIGBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Meeting with the community on 17 June 2017

Introduction

Welcome and thank you to all those who completed the questionnaire and housing needs survey.

We have now analysed the results of the questionnaire. I reported on this at the Parish Council meeting on 8 March 2017. A copy of this was also included in the May edition of Bigbury News and on community website.

South Hams Council have also recently sent us a report following their analysis of the housing needs survey. There was a 48% response to the questionnaire which is excellent and a 35% response to the housing needs survey which is also very good.

We are now starting to prepare the Draft Neighbourhood Plan based on the responses received and hope to have a draft plan in place by July or August this year. As part of the plan we are also carrying out more detailed studies of the villages of St Ann's Chapel, Bigbury Village, Bigbury on Sea and Challaborough .

The main reason for today's event is to advise you of the results of the questionnaire and housing needs survey and also to seek your views on the best site for a small, mainly affordable, housing scheme which we will need to provide as a result of the requirements of the draft Plymouth and South Hams Joint Local Plan, and as shown by the results of the Bigbury Parish Housing Needs Survey.

I will be explaining this in more detail later but to start with I would like to refer to some of the main findings in relation to the current housing and need for new housing which came out of the responses to the Questionnaire. I will then summarise the results of the Housing Needs Survey.

Analysis of Questionnaire

Of the responses received 65% were from people who have their main homes in Bigbury with 35% being second homers. However, in Bigbury on Sea 50% of the respondents were from those with second homes.

Residents were asked where they considered a new housing development of 10-20 dwellings would be best located. 62% considered that St Ann's Chapel would be the best location given the facilities available.

80% considered that there was a need for affordable housing to be provided for parishioners or those who have some connection with the parish.

81% considered that some or all private housing built within the parish should be restricted to main residence only.

66% considered that there is a need for specialist or assisted living within the parish.

Housing Needs Survey

Introduction

The housing survey was distributed by hand to 389 households including those who own second homes. There were 135 responses (35%). The Council is aware of 122 properties in the parish being classed as second homes or unfurnished homes. This equates to 32% of the housing stock. This is similar to the results of the questionnaire where 35% of the responses were from people with second homes.

The objectives of the housing needs survey were as follows:

- To find out the level of affordable and open market housing required to meet the needs of those living in the parish
- To establish what tenure and size of property is required in the parish to meet the above needs
- For South Hams Council to identify a number of recommendations relating to the existing housing stock and the potential need for new housing stock.

Housing needs within the next 5 and 10 years

Of the respondents who answered these questions 9% considered they, or someone in their household, would or may need to move within the next 5 years, of whom 50% gave age/health related reasons, including the need to downsize or move to a location that was on a bus route.

When asked who would need to move in the next 10 years, 28% of respondents considered they would or may need to move. Of the 16 respondents who gave a reason, 9 stated that they would want to move to a 1 or 2 bed property. The remainder gave health reasons for a move.

The majority of the responses were from people in the over 65 age group. However, most importantly of those who considered a move in the next 5-10 years 49% would want to stay in the parish.

The majority of respondents were in the over 65 age group and wished to move to a 2 or 3 bedroom bungalow (44%) or flat (13%). 16% would like designated property for the elderly.

In terms of affordability, 85% considered that they could afford the type of accommodation that they would like. However, 18% stated that they would not have sufficient funds to buy an alternative home.

In terms of rental accommodation, there were 11 respondents who wished to privately rent and 9 respondents who wished to move to housing association rental property.

For those wishing to move to housing association properties it is also necessary to consult the Devon Home Choice and Help to Buy housing registers.

Devon Home Choice

There are currently 21 households who are already registered with Devon Home Choice and either living in Bigbury or have Bigbury as their area of preference.

10 of these are within Band E which means that they are not in essential housing need. This means that they are adequately housed but may have insecure private rented accommodation or finding the rent too expensive. The other 11 households are in definite need and it is these households which we should be trying to accommodate.

Of the 11 households in urgent need 7 require 2 bedrooms and 4 require 1 bedroom. None of those on the register need more than 2 bedrooms.

Help to Buy

There are currently 2 households living in the parish who are on the Help to Buy register.

Future affordable housing provision

There are currently 17 affordable housing dwellings in the parish, 16 at St Ann's Chapel and 1 at Bigbury Village. On average there is just one vacancy per year of these affordable homes and there has been no new affordable housing built in recent years.

Taking into account the responses from the survey, the data provided on the Devon Home Choice and Help to Buy registers it is concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group should be looking to enable a scheme of no more than 10-12 units, potentially using the Village Housing Initiative. In order to make the scheme viable it may be necessary to make 3 of these dwellings as open market dwellings.

The housing need is mainly for 2 bedroom dwellings but there could also be some 1 bedroom dwellings and possibly two 3 bedroom houses. There is however no need for larger affordable or private housing.

There has been an interest generally in providing accommodation for the elderly such as bungalows. This could also be included in the mix.

Potential Sites

A number of sites have come forward following South Hams Council's 'Call for Sites', including 6 around St Ann's Chapel, 2 either side of Houghton Farmhouse, 2 on the outskirts of Bigbury Village, 2 on the outskirts of Bigbury on Sea and 1 at Challaborough.



The Council have looked at all of these sites looking particularly at

- whether they are in sustainable locations ie close to local shops and services,

- any issues in relation to vehicular access
- whether there are safe routes for pedestrians and
- whether there are any other site constraints eg landscape, ecology, heritage and archaeology, flooding or drainage, contamination or other issues.

All of the sites are within the AONB. This in itself is a restraint to any new major development. All of the sites to the south of the Ringmore to St Ann's Chapel road (C252) are also within the Heritage Coastal Area, which is normally considered unsuitable for development.

St Ann's Chapel is the only village regarded as being sustainable and all sites other than those around St Ann's Chapel have been considered unsuitable due to this and other issues. These are coloured orange on the map provided by South Hams Council.

South Hams District Council has asked the Steering Group to look for a site suitable for 10-12 dwellings. The Steering Group consider that 10 dwellings should be sufficient and have looked more closely at all of the sites around St Ann's Chapel, including that shown orange on the plan, to see which site would be best in terms of:

- access by vehicles and impact in particular on the dangerous junction at St Ann's Chapel,
- safe routes for pedestrians (particularly children) to the facilities we have at St Ann's Chapel,
- impact on the landscape and ecology including loss of important Devon hedgerows, and
- impact on outlook, important views or other types of residential amenity.

Site 1 (SH_05_08_14) Land to SE of St Ann's Chapel

This is the site which is currently subject to an outline planning application of circa 8 dwellings. A previous application for the development of this site has been refused and was dismissed on appeal primarily on highway and pedestrian safety grounds. The revised application shows a new by pass around St Ann's Chapel bringing vehicles out at a point south of the existing dwellings on the B3392 road to Bigbury Village.

There have been considerable objections to this scheme from local residents and the Parish Council have also objected to this application.

Concerns about the application include:

- Highway safety with vehicles travelling from Ringmore and from this site and then going north still having to go through the junction at St Ann's Chapel. It will put extra traffic on the B3392 when travelling from Bigbury Village to St Ann's Chapel. Vehicles may also be travelling at higher speeds due to the western arm of the junction being pedestrianised. This will add to the danger for drivers entering the junction from Stakes Hill or from the car park to the rear of the Holywell Stores.
- Safety for pedestrians not resolved. They will still need to cross road in front of the Pickwick Inn.
- New road will give the scheme an urbanised appearance and will result in loss of substantial sections Devon hedges along both roads particularly in order to provide access and visibility splays.
- Proposed scheme is currently for 4 x 3- bed affordable units and 4 private open market (3 x 4-bed and 1 x 5 bedroom). This does not meet the housing needs identified in the Questionnaire. The local housing need is for smaller dwellings and for primarily affordable housing.
- The site will be very prominent when travelling from Bigbury Village or from Ringmore and is within the Heritage Coastal Area, as well as the AONB.

Site 2 (SH_05_12_16) Part field behind Memorial Hall

- This site has similar problems in terms of access on to the B3392 causing the removal of substantial sections of Devon hedge and traffic

travelling north still having to go through the dangerous junction at St Ann's Chapel. There are also problems in being able to provide a safe access for pedestrians and for children needing to go to the Holywell Stores or to catch the school bus. There is also concern that visitors to a development on this site may park their cars in the Memorial Hall car park.

- The site would extend the village into the open countryside to the south of St Ann's Chapel.

Site 3 (SH_05_13_16) Land at Chapel Farm, to the east of Hilltop

This site does have the advantage of being less exposed in terms of the impact on landscape. Development would be located to the east of the existing Hilltop estate. The new housing would be close to the facilities at The Holywell Store and the Memorial Hall as well as having reasonably safe access for pedestrians and children.

The biggest disadvantages are as follows:

- Access would be via Stakes Hill putting more vehicles on to this road with the very dangerous exit on to the B3392 at The Holywell Stores. Drivers and passengers in vehicles exiting The Holywell Stores car park are also put a greater risk when joining Stakes Hill close to the junction. There is also a blind corner at this junction.
- Development on this land could impact on views from some of the dwellings in Hilltop.
- Access to this site via the Hilltop development would result in similar problems. This would only be possible if the same housing association (Devon and Cornwall Housing Trust) was being used. It would also result in more vehicles passing through this estate which would cause danger to children living here.

Site 4 and 5 (SH_05_09_14/16) Land at Holwell Farm

These sites are both part of Holwell Farm with Site 4 being that closest to the rear of the Holywell Stores.

The Steering Group consider part of this site to be the preferred site for development for several reasons. The main advantage is that it can be accessed from the B3392 to the north of St Ann's Chapel therefore avoiding the St Ann's junction for vehicles travelling north.

The Steering Group consider that the vehicular access should be positioned a short distance to the north of the two new houses built on the east side of the road. The Devon bank is lower, less well formed and not rich in species in this location. It is also set slightly further back from the road.

The Steering Group consider that any new dwellings should not be positioned immediately behind the new houses and the access road should also be kept a reasonable distance away. It would also be important to protect the views from other properties including the residential first floor of The Holywell Stores. Fortunately the land does drop away to the rear of The Holywell Stores car park.

We envisage having an access road with properties either side. There could be bungalows on the side closest to The Holywell Stores. The buildings themselves could be set about 12-15m away with only the rear gardens backing on to the car park. Any two storey dwellings would be set at the much lower level to the east of the access road. A development of this type would hopefully not impede on the views from existing properties. There is also good screening between this site and Hilltop which is located on the other side of the track leading to the Holwell Farm.

Pedestrian access from this development could be along the track leading to Holwell Farm with easy and safe access to The Holywell Stores, to the Memorial Hall and to the school bus stop.

Development on this site would fit in well with the landscape seen against the backdrop of the Hilltop development and as it would be set at a lower level it would not be too prominent on the skyline.

We have hatched on the plan the part of Site 4 which we consider could be developed. It is not the whole of this land.

We consider Site 5 to be too far from the centre of the village although it could be accessed from the existing track to the farm which lies about



100m to the north of St Ann's Chapel.

Site 6 (SH_14_16) Land north of Pickwick Inn

Although Site 6 is shown in orange on the South Hams District Council's map the Steering Group have also looked at this site.

South Hams Council considered that the vehicle access to this site would remove hedge banks and exacerbate pressure on the Ringmore turn at the Pickwick Inn junction. It is assumed that the Council were expecting the access to be from the C252 Ringmore Road. Why similar comments were not given for the application site (Site 1), which lies to the south of this site, is strange. We would however envisage that if developed this site could be accessed from the B3392 to the north of St Ann's Chapel. The Devon hedgerows are however much higher and therefore of more significant importance on the east side of the B3392 when approaching St Ann's Chapel from the north.

South Hams Council also considered that it would be difficult to secure safe pedestrian access from a development on this site to the existing services. A similar concern relates to pedestrian access from Site 1. The Steering Group consider that any development to the west of the B3392 would result in problems of being able to provide safe pedestrian access.

South Hams Council also considered that Site 6 was in an elevated and prominent location within the AONB. The Steering Group also consider that development of this site would be more prominent when viewed from the north and as such consider that Site 4 which is set on lower ground against the backdrop of existing development would be preferable.

Conclusion

The Steering Group have looked carefully at the six sites available around St Ann's Chapel and consider that part of Site 4, ie that part to the rear of The Holywell Store car park, would be the best site. However, we do want to receive the views of the local community and before you go would like you to give your vote for which site you would prefer to see developed on the assumption that we do need to provide for about 10 new dwellings as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

If you have not already been given a voting paper please could you ask Jill Gubbins for this. You will however need to live in the Bigbury Parish or own property in the parish to have a right to vote.

