



Mark Community Land Trust

Transcript for Meeting (informal) with Mark Parish Council on 5th May 2017 at

Mark Village Hall 5.p.m.

Good afternoon everyone and thank you for taking the time out to meet with us this afternoon.

I think we all know each other? There are 3 other directors of the new MCLT – list but we didn't want to come mob handed.

We would like to bring you up to date with the business of the CLT and let you know about the very productive and positive meeting that we had with Duncan Harvey and Esther Carter from the affordable housing team of Sedgemoor yesterday and present some new information that we have about the current planning application in Northwick Rd.

Regarding Sedgemoor, Duncan and Esther are extremely keen to work with the new CLT and the Parish Council as a coalition to look at the affordable housing situation in Mark.

They are very concerned about the lack of community buy in to the existing scheme and would like to see a solution that is acceptable to at least most of the community.

Although they have written in support of the affordable housing as part of the current application, Duncan said that he had been very careful not to comment on the suitability of the current site.

Duncan also informed us that should the SW Housing application be turned down that the £240,000 grant would still potentially be available and they have a list of partners that they could put us in touch with.

Duncan said that they would love to see a more creative option that resolved some of the other issues in the village like the school drop off and pick up pinch points.

Sedgemoor have a pot of money that the CLT could bid into for feasibility work around this. Duncan said that this would be particularly relevant in the light of the emerging local plan and a good time to stop and take stock.

Duncan Harvey confirmed the fact that as SW Housing had not done any new or robust public consultation as part of their application in line with D7 of the Core Strategy and the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. It is enshrined in the act that communities should not have new housing imposed upon them.

Duncan also confirmed that it was incumbent upon SW Housing to carry out a sequential and exception test due to part of the Northwick site being in Flood Zone 3.

To our knowledge this has not been done (and we will return to more about the flood problem later).



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Duncan made an impassioned plea to Will Human and Polly Costello as our local district councillors to lobby Sedgemoor about the current allocations policy which has the nonsensical result of people that need housing in Mark village not getting first choice when vacant council properties come up.

Duncan believes there to be around 14 households in the village where Sedgemoor have identified a housing need. This is based mainly on whether there are elderly people or young people in the house not from asking a direct question to the occupants about a definite future housing need. Duncan and Esther are currently updating this research but said they felt strongly that with a more sensible allocations policy in place new homes would not be necessary for Mark at all.

Duncan suggested that we all lobby Cllr Gilling on this issue.

The fact that there are no alternative transport options i.e. bus routes, cycleways and pathways for the current site is a concern to them and again contravenes the Core Strategy. Duncan made it clear however that it is Liam Evans and the planning committee that we need to convince by asking them if they are absolutely certain that this has been complied with. He also feels that much of the current division in the village has been down to poor communication and the fact that the previous MCLT board partnered with Wessex Community Assets rather than directly with Sedgemoor. Duncan did admit however that it was he who made the introduction to Wessex. He also admitted that in Lymsham none of the tenants in the new affordable housing were from the village.

Mark Johnson has information on other potential sites in the village that he will talk about later.

In terms of the new information I mentioned that is of material interest to the SW Housing application, we have a report from Craddy's commissioned by the old board of the MCLT which is in direct conflict with the later flood risk assessment and the proposed access. (Copies of this to be circulated at the meeting).

We are also in receipt of an email sent to the old MCLT board members via Wessex Community Assets from Highways where they clearly state that their preference would be for the site to exit onto the Causeway. (Email to be circulated at the meeting).

Can we also draw your attention to the construction plan where it states that an operative will walk in front of the construction lorries as they make their way down Vole Rd into Northwick Rd and tell any pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders to move out of the way onto the pavement. There aren't any pavements!!!

Angela Purvis

Vice Chair Mark Community Land Trust