

Knighton Neighbourhood Forum – Housing & Planning Group Meeting 2
5th July 2018

Note of meeting

Attendees

Names of attendees are redacted from minutes made public for privacy reasons.

1) Welcome and Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves and new attendees were welcomed.

2) Minutes of first meeting on 11th June

SB asked if the minutes of the meeting from 11th June were a true and accurate record of the meeting on 11th June. One amendment was proposed to page 2 section 3c (bullet one). The minutes should be amended to clarify that it is only the section of Welford Road Playing Fields that had been sold by the University and were no longer in use that were assessed. The minutes were agreed with this change.

3) Actions from first meeting

SB ran through the 'Actions from the first meeting and confirmed:

- GW confirmed that De Montfort University had been sent a Freedom of Information request regarding their growth plans. No response had been received.
- GW had attended a Leicester University Liaison meeting and asked about growth plans. The question was not answered fully. Documentary evidence appears to indicate growth of some 14% over 4 years (potentially an increase of some 2,800 students) with an increase of some 900 – 1,200 bed spaces.
- Contact had been made with Leicester City Council (LCiC) planners about the timescale for the Local Plan and its relationship to the Neighbourhood Plan. It was considered that engagement should be ongoing.
- A request had been made to Leicester City Council and a map and data received regarding HiMO locations.
- Examples of policies in other plans would be looked at as the plan is developed further.
- Gathering evidence regarding what makes Knighton Buildings special, unique and locally distinctive would be an ongoing process.
- No progress had been made regarding the number of houses that could realistically be accommodated.

4) First thoughts on Housing & Planning policies for Knighton

PT ran through each of the 11 issues raised at the previous meetings and asked whether a policy was required and if so, the broad areas that could be included. The group concluded:

Flood risk

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- PT indicated there were National and emerging Local Plan policies on flooding so the policy should consider specific local issues.
- Carisbrooke Road and Knighton Church Road issues were identified.
- The policy could seek to:
 - Resist 'impermeable' surfaces and driveways;
 - Require proposed developments in high risk areas to properly assess flood impacts;
 - Try and incentivise or encourage 'naturalisation' of water courses.

Mary Gee Houses.

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- The policy could address issues such as:
 - Design, density & open character, retention of trees, impact on the Conservation Area and listed buildings, drainage, green spaces, scale (height).
 - An appropriate mix and affordable housing.
 - The potential for 'key worker' accommodation should be explored.

Welford Road Playing Fields

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- The policy should seek to resist development of the playing fields which should be retained as green space.
- There is potential to look at protection of green spaces and playing fields arising from other KNF working groups.

University related development

- It was agreed a policy was not required as there was little potential for large scale purpose built student accommodation.
- There was some potential for demolition of large houses and redevelopment for residential and university related accommodation. A policy should be explored in relation to demolition and redevelopment of large houses generally, and not specifically in relation to student accommodation.

Mix of houses

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- The baseline study had identified that the mix was skewed toward larger houses.
- Given the aging population with a desire to downsize and to encourage more young people, smaller houses should be encouraged. This could free up larger houses for families.

Affordable Housing

- It was agreed a policy was required.

- Evidence would be needed.
- The policy could consider a different 'threshold' to Leicester City's plan and could look at geographically splitting the area in terms of the percentage requirements.
- The policy could set out the type of affordable housing – social rent, affordable rent, low-cost or discounted market housing or shared ownership.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HiMO)

- The accuracy of HiMO data provided by the Council was questioned.
- It was agreed a policy was required.
- The emerging policies in the City Plan were acknowledged. The policy should not duplicate this.
- Options might include a policy where a 'radius' of 100m containing no more than 10% of HiMOs. 10% was considered normal 'custom and practice'.

Subdivision of houses

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- As per discussions at the previous meeting this could address:
 - No adverse impacts on character;
 - Whether sub-division can result in logical / useable space;
 - Adequate 'on-plot' parking

Living above shops

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- A policy to encourage this was considered logical but would have little impact.

Backland development

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- The policy could identify areas where this may be acceptable.
- The policy could address issues such as flooding, traffic and transport, facilities for pedestrians, design, density & open character, retention of important features, drainage, green spaces, green corridors, scale (height).

Design of houses

- It was agreed a policy was required.
- The policy should be locally specific and not duplicate City policy.

5) What makes Knighton Buildings unique and locally distinctive?

The group were encouraged to take photographs of buildings they considered added to the character of the area and to think about what they consider are the characteristics of buildings in Knighton. MR referred to the City Council's Conservation Area appraisals which contained useful examples.

6) Knighton conservation area

SB indicated that the Forum were considering whether a separate group was required to address this issue or whether the H&P group was best placed. This will be discussed by the Steering Group and at a future meeting.

7) Any other business

- The University should be approached to allow a walk around Mary Gee Houses site.

8) Date of next meeting

6th August 2018, 7.30 pm, The Lounge, Knighton Parish Centre, LE2 3WG

Actions:

- PT to confirm whether only 3 storey properties needed to be licensed.
- GW to ask if Mary Gee Houses can be visited by the group.
- GW to establish whether the University have a 'masterplan'.