

Hungerford Town Council

Public Report

Report to:

Full Council meeting 6th July 2020.

Agenda Item No 6:

Report from Hungerford 2036

Current Activities

On 18th June the external planning consultant who is assisting us with the development site assessments visited Hungerford. The joint project team chairmen accompanied him around and onto the sites put forward through the HELAA process plus the additional sites that have been promoted subsequently.

The visit enabled him to familiarise himself with Hungerford generally and with the sites to be assessed by H2036.

As a result of the visit the project team have received his commentary on the information gathering on which we should focus. He can construct an initial matrix of site assessments for our further discussion and later public consultations. On July 8th the project team will be meeting to agree the data collection we need to do.

Last month we reported that we had requested (and it had been agreed) that WBC would conduct HELAA-type assessments of the additional sites submitted after the HELAA publication – sites now known as HUNNDP_ A/B/C. We had understood back in early May that the WBC portfolio holder and Head of Planning had not decided what the charge to HTC for the assessments would be despite the request originally made following the HELAA briefings in Hungerford by WBC on 13th February 2020.

We have now been told (July 3rd) by the WBC Planning Policy department that due to human and financial resource constraints they are not able to complete this for us until the new Local Plan has been issued for consultation at the end of 2020. This was completely unexpected news given the earlier statements and will now seriously impact our ability to make progress as we had hoped.

Furthermore, this revelation by the Council fails to deliver on the expectations that were set by the WBC portfolio holder and Head of Planning on 5th February 2018 about their commitment and support of Hungerford initiating the Neighbourhood Development Plan project. We therefore call on our District Council representatives urgently to seek an acceptable resolution.

Signed: John Downe, Joint Chair H2036, 4/7/2020