

Rudby Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Note on process to date December 2017

KVA Planning Consultancy was commissioned by the Rudby Parish Council to act as a 'Critical Friend' to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in March 2017.

Since that time; Mrs Katie Atkinson (MRTPI), Director of KVA Planning Consultancy ('KVA'), has attended monthly steering group meetings and various public consultation and workshop events. Mrs Atkinson was also present at the Site Selection Meeting held at the village hall on 25th October 2017. As an Independent Planning Consultant, Mrs Atkinson has not had any influence on the decision / plan making process, but has acted to advise and steer where necessary, the Steering Group to consider appropriate planning-related matters to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan making process is community-led and transparent with a proper audit trail.

Whilst it is understood that there have been several meetings where a planning consultant has not been present, from what has been observed to date and therefore to the extent of Mrs Atkinson's knowledge, KVA is confident that the Steering Group have acted in an appropriate manner throughout the life of the project ensuring that those community-views forwarded to them have been recorded and appropriately acted upon where they were within the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and passing information on to other appropriate bodies when necessary.

At all stages of consultation to date, exercises have been duly publicised over a variety of media as well as physical notices having been delivered by hand to every door around the Parish and other advertisements including the displaying of posters. All events have been recorded and opportunities have been given for new people engaging with the process to leave contact details in order for them to continue to be updated and invited to further events by the Steering Group via email as appropriate.

The Steering Group have ensured transparency and fairness by repeatedly reporting and 'checking' with the community following any consultation event that evidence they have gathered is indeed true and correct and in line with what was actually offered by the community themselves.

With reference to challenges having been made to the Parish Council surrounding potential 'conflicts of interest' involving certain members of the Steering Group in relation to where they reside, KVA can confirm that living in a certain community whilst being involved with the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan does not, in itself, constitute a conflict of interest. If a member of the Steering Group had a clear pecuniary interest (be it a financial loss or gain) in an area of land subject to a potential allocation, this would be classified as a conflict. Similarly, if a direct family member was subject to the pecuniary interest this would constitute a conflict and should have been declared publicly. As clarified at the meeting of the 27th November 2017, the creation of a Neighbourhood

Plan can only be undertaken by a qualifying body, in this case, the Parish Council. By virtue of the fact that the process must be community-led by the Parish Council and their appointed Steering Group, the members of the Steering Group will in most cases reside close to or next to land which is to be considered for potential allocation. This cannot therefore be a conflict of interest. Members of the group are perfectly entitled to give opinions on matters raised at meeting and abstain from voting on specific matters if they do not wish to, as occurs commonly at many meetings covering a variety of topics.

In conclusion, KVA is confident that the vast amount of work undertaken by the Steering Group to date on behalf of the Parish Council in producing the Rudby Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken in a fair, transparent and balanced approach. KVA is confident that the process will stand up to independent scrutiny by Hambleton District Council and an Independent Examiner.