

MINUTES

METAL HILL WORKING GROUP

Meeting of 16.02.15

Present: Vic Skuce (VS), Julian Fenner (JF), Joe Kennedy (JK), Sheila Watson (SW), Margaret Lynch (ML), Simon Parkinson (SP), Philippa Hart (PH)

Apologies: Andrew Young (AY), Jane Findlay (JF).

- 1. Ground Clearance Costs.** JF and VS have contacted several local companies asking them to price for clearing the built part of the site. The first quotation has come back, estimating a cost of £27,500. This is a commercial price and we can possibly reduce this by cutting back on costs relating to the disposal of hard core, either by seeking people to take some of it in the village or by redeploying it if and when Mettle Hill is redeveloped. What may not be avoidable is the necessity additionally to obtain a grounds investigation report to detect for contamination which is estimated to cost about £3,000 in total. ACTION: JF and VS to receive further prices and report to group.
- 2. Update on Chalet Park.** No further progress made. ACTION: AY to investigate further and to enquire, in light of likely costings for site clearance, in what condition would a chalet park developer be prepared to take the site on..
- 3. Update on Live/Work.** SW, JK and PH met a developer from Spaceworks earlier in the month who advised on the suitability and likely costs of obtaining a planning permission for approximately 20 mixed-site live/work units on the whole site, together with a communal hub for the live/work and wider community. He advised that we would need to spend about £40,000 to reach full planning for such a scheme. Clearly once planning is obtained, the land could be worth a great deal more money. From SW's researches, live/work can be used cynically as way of circumventing planning laws in order to establish a right to dwell on a piece of land which would not otherwise be eligible. However, it can be pursued legitimately to provide a fertile environment for new business and new communities. ACTION: JK to continue to draw up plans. PH to look into district heating schemes, which could be an additional way of generating income for the parish. SW to contact various groups such as Transitions and the Cambs Chamber of Commerce to see whether they hold any date for live/work.
- 4. Update on Self Build.** JK has located a self build register on the SCDC website, encouraging people interested in building their own home to register and encouraging landowners to offer potential parcels of land. ACTION: PH to investigate and enquire of planning department whether Mettle Hill could be eligible and if so, how to go about it.
- 5. Update on Solar and other sustainable uses.** ML reported that the Reach Community Solar Scheme is going ahead, having obtained planning permission to be built on 3.5 acres. A share issue is in progress encouraging people to invest in the scheme. The favourable feed-in tariffs and tax relief offers on share purchases both end in April, so we are too late to take advantage of this. PH reported that she had received a suggestion that space be found for some community beehives at the site and this was generally welcomed.
- 6. Valuation.** JF has contacted Countryside Properties to request a valuation of both just the built part and of the whole site. ACTION: JF to ask other agents to value the site.
- 7. Update on funding.** PH reported that there was no current available sources of funding other than the few thousand in the Fighting Fund. The SunEdison community contribution looks likely to be spent on another village project.
- 8. Timeline.** It was hoped that at the next meeting we will be in a position to draw together all the various ideas and perhaps be in a position to report to the Parish Council.
- 9. A.O.B.** There are possible other uses for the site still out there which we have not considered yet. ACTION: VS to investigate the manufacture of Bio Diesel from rape seed and all MHWG members to keep an open mind as to other possible uses.
- 10. Date of next meeting:** Monday 16th March, 7pm at VS's.