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Cranbrook Sustainability Strategy – Consultation Response

My immediate reaction is that it is a far more comprehensive document than the original version, and more thought seems to have gone into it.

However I am not sure that it represents any extra significant commitment in practice than the original. A summary of what NCDP are practically delivering would be useful. The summary included (Appendix 4) is difficult to follow and could be misleading.

In the 'community sustainability' element there is no commitment to a continuing dialogue between the developers and the emerging community about their needs and issues. I see no reference to the community development worker or faith worker (just youth and country park work).

The Eco-Homes 'very good' standard (and equivalent for commercial premises) seems unambitious, and not at one with what Members originally wished. There are no proposals for even pockets of 'excellent', nor demonstration schemes for alternative construction methods. When we look at the detailed wording of this section there seem to be some clauses about not using the standard BRE methodology nor the usual assessors (end para. of 2.1.1). There is also an expectation about flexibility of eco-homes scoring which could make it very difficult to monitor the achievement step by step through the development.

There will be an Extranet which is a good idea but is not seemingly intended to be very interactive, just advisory.

The public health promotion campaign mentioned is an excellent initiative, it would be interesting to know what this means in practice, and what financial commitment (if any) the NCDP are thinking of putting in.

There are lengthy sections on alternative energy sources or water reduction measures, and the different engineering options, but there is little commitment to doing other than looking into these. No firm proposals, no targets, no intent to create a flagship development. In some cases consideration is deferred until the further phase of development. Wind power appears to be entirely overlooked.

No mention of waste water treatment and handling (other than surface water) and no review of greywater systems.

No overall carbon targets are mentioned (other developments now seek to achieve carbon neutrality).

The acoustic standards mentioned (second bullet point 2.6.1.7) are confusing. Rather than 'higher' and 'lower than' I think they should state 'better than'.

On waste and recycling NCDP seem to be saying they will be providing domestic bins but this issue seems somewhat confused with bin storage areas.

In summary then a better document but little extra obvious commitment to sustainability and no real sense of a culture within the developers of wanting to get high sustainability at the heart of what Cranbrook is about, other than in terms of transport and countryside.