

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group held on 23 April 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Present: Ian Credland (Chairman) (IC)      Judith Foot (JF)  
Geoff Copley (GC)                              Virginia Pullan (VP)  
Steven Ecroyd (SE)                             Adrian Batchelor (AB)  
Valerie Alford (VA)                            Justine Fisher (JFi)  
David Withycombe (DW)                     Frances Guadencio (FG)  
Georgia Chesire (GCe) (8pm onwards)

In Attendance: Dale Mayhew, Dowsett Mayhew (DM); Amy Tyler-Jones – South Downs National Park Authority (AT) (for Item 4)

Members of Public x3

Action By

**1. Apologies for Absence.** Apologies for absence were received from

David Cumberland, Bill Hatton

**2. Declarations of Interest.**

IC JF VA – Ham Field; VP – Pattendens (also known as Streamside); FG, JFi - land east of Ockley Lane; AB – Southdowns Farm and Friars Oak Field; DW - Land East of Lodge Lane

**3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 April 2015.**

Agreed to be signed.

#### **4. Potential Sites in the SDNP. Discussion with Amy Tyler-Jones, Planning Policy Officer, SDNP.**

IC – AT attending to advise on housing site options in SDNP and how to deliver balance of SDNP considerations and housing need. There are limited infill options in the village; so new housing will be needed on the periphery of village – of which circa 50% is within the SDNPA. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group want to understand policy view of SDNPA on potential housing sites in the National Park.

AT – recent SDNP SHLAA includes assessment of some sites that surround Hassocks and Keymer. It was a landscape impact led assessment – therefore many sites rejected on the grounds of impact on the landscape.

The NPPF emphasises the need to protect National Parks. Para 116 states that ‘major development’ in such areas should be refused except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. This includes the potential to develop outside of the SDNP.

DM – how is ‘major development’ defined.

AT – by impact; not numeric (ie number of houses) and no thresholds are set out. Key issue is impact on the landscape.

IC – What weight is given to the views of local residents, if all of the community supported a site in the SDNP?

AT - If evidence shows strong resident support and there is landscape evidence to argue the site selection – then the SDNPA would consider the merits of the site. Integral to this process would be a review of the process and justification and so it is key to have a clearly documented evidence base.

SE – What weight is given to the impact of a site on the setting of National Park?

AT – There is a duty on all Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to have regard to the setting of the National Park. They need to show they have considered impact. For example ‘tranquility’ is a consideration – LPA’s need to show consideration of whether this is affected.

IC – Aware that in relation to the residential development allocation on land at Ham Fields the SDNPA objected to the application on the grounds of impact on views from Woolstenbury Hill. However, LPA afforded this no weight in their determination of the application. Is this appropriate?

AT – The SDNPA is a consultee on applications outside of, but close to the SDNP. MSDC as the LPA for that area need to take the views of the SDNPA account. How much weight they put on this is largely a matter for the decision taker.

DM – The Inspector in assessing the emerging Lewes Joint Core Strategy has advocated allocating land in the SDNP for housing. How does the SDNPA view this recommendation?

AT – The Inspector applied the ‘Major Development’ test of para 116 of the NPPF. He considered that the level of Affordable Housing need in the town was an over-riding factor. However, Lewes Town is surrounded by the SDNPA and any allocation in the SDNP must show consideration of how need could be met outside of the designated area.

IC – Site Ref 8 (Land opposite Thatched Inn) – proponents indicate they seek to build on circa 3.5ha with a further 2ha gifted to WSCC (with funding) to build a new school. How does this affect SDNP assessment of the merits of the site.

AT – The assessment will follow the same process as 100% housing – it is primarily a landscape analysis. That site has a high sensitivity due to visibility from footpaths. Therefore the impact of development on the site is inappropriate.

IC/ VP – Site 7 (Pattendens) and 12 (East of Lodge Lane). Working Group assessment indicates that in particular Site 7 is visually enclosed; Site 12 has greater visibility more visual. Noted that these were not assessed in the SDNP SHLAA.

AT – Uncertain why they were omitted from SHLAA? Probably not included in the call for sites. A review of known sites will be undertaken later this year.

IC – What guidance do the SDNPA give MSDC when they determine applications as your ‘agent’?

AT – MSDC must take account of policies in the Development Plan – and this includes those relating to the SDNP designation. Some applications are ‘called in’ for determination by the SDNPA – this is triggered by potential impact.

DM – How does SDNPA establish housing need in the National Park, and in particular in relation to Hassocks.

AT – Housing need is being assessed by reference to 3-4 Strategic Market Housing Areas (SHMA). A Preferred Options consultation on the SDNP Plan is due in September. This will set out requirements for housing. At present it is only likely to seek to require additional housing on greenfield sites for settlements wholly within the SDNP. Elsewhere, and more generally, the SDNPA is focussed on affordable housing rather than open market housing.

IC – if a proponent promotes a site in the SDNP for 100% affordable housing, how does this affect the assessment?

AT – The SDNPA would be likely to assess against a Rural Exceptions site policy.

AT – SDNPA would assess sites not yet looked at in the SHLAA if the Parish are likely to take them forward in the Neighbourhood Plan.

IC – No potential sites yet ruled out. Therefore SDNPA are requested to undertake assessments on all options. The site boundaries use the best known information at this stage – they are not necessarily whole ownership or size of site being proposed.

AT – Assessment will be undertaken by the SDNPA landscape team.

DW – The working group have identified different sensitivities within Site 12, and would be interested to know the views of the SDNPA.

AT – queried the timetable for production of the Neighbourhood Plan

IC – It is intended that a draft plan is published late Summer – early Autumn. Consultation prior to then on potential housing sites. This results will be considered by the full PC as they decide on proposed allocations.

IC – MSDC Neighbourhood Plan officer has advised delivery of any housing in the NP will count towards MSDC identified need for the Parish.

AT – SDNPA disagrees. It will treat any housing in the SDNP as counting towards SDNPA number – not MSDC number.

## **5. Report from Workstream Leaders**

### **a) Housing**

GC – completed analysis of Questionnaires. Ranking public preference for sites. Now identifying more detail for site assessments – ie housing potential having regard to VP appraisal work.

Assessing housing availability – letters issued to all free-holders today.

Next step is to compile information for next consultation in early July.

Skeleton for policy options from BH – reviewing if evidence still supports this approach.

VP – need a clear evidence base.

### **b) Economic Development/Tourism**

FG – GC has helped with a coding system for the feedback from the first Questionnaire. This is to be undertaken by GC.

Second Questionnaire on homeworking is now being undertaken. The methodology for the collation and analysis of feedback is not yet determined.

Further evidence gathering is needed for Tourism section.

IC – Further consideration has been given to land at the Goods Yard – conscious that this is popular as a brownfield potential housing site – but we have to be mindful of economic need. Therefore consideration is being given to keeping this as an employment site.

FG – Will be looking at employment need and retail need

**c) Amenities/Education/Health**

SE – met with WSCC Education on Monday. Even without additional housing, demographic change means number of children will exceed places within village – excess currently 14+.

WSCC have a statutory duty to provide school places – although this may not be in village. They will look at expansion potential on existing sites; (DW confirmed he has received a meeting request from WSCC); or look at a new site if this was needed. This would reflecting Neighbourhood Plan housing allocations.

IC – We need to write to them with Qs. This is to include the potential need to phase housing to ensure adequate availability of school places. DM to draft.

DM

GCe – Concerned that current over spill capacity at Manor Fields (Burgess Hill) will be used once the new housing at Keymer Brickworks is completed.

FG – Feel the key issue is space. Where will a school go?

DW – need to look at feasibility of potential to expand existing schools first; although it is likely this will not be possible.

IC – WSCC seemed unaware of WSCC owned land in Hassocks.

IC - 2ha needed as minimum for an all through primary. If a site proponent offered land – this could be beneficial to site selection. 2 sites have mentioned school land option – at golf course (adj Belmont Rec Ground); and land opposite Thatched Inn – WSCC have met proponent once. Feel the latter does not fit well with population location. Question the option of using WSCC land?

DW – The area operates as a school ‘locality’ – that groups schools – so one option is to look at increasing capacity within the locality – this might for eg mean Albourne. This would result in a catchment shift for school places in Hassocks village.

IC – WSCC conceded they are uncertain how many children are in the area; due to health data from PCT no longer being released.

DW – It also very transient population.

SE – Will circulate minutes from the meeting with WSCC

IC/ SE to write to Healthcare sector.

SE

IC/SE

**d) Transport**

GC – Has produced the Transport Background Paper identifying issues and potential solutions. This included new vehicular crossing of railway line.  
WSCC say they have no money and scheme will be cost prohibitive. It would necessitate a significant number of new houses in the parish – and so is to be dismissed as an option.

Discussed Stonepound – WSCC say there is no easy solution.

IC – The appeal submissions in relation to Ham Field indicated that the only means to improve the AQMA is via car technology. Phasing of lights is debatable in its effectiveness. The appellants consultants accepted that there would be more congestion via more housing, but argued that there may not be as much pollution per vehicle.

Overall, WSCC are supportive of the Paper. They cautioned against the use of ‘policies’ where implementation is down to WSCC to deliver – instead they should be ‘aims’. Also recommend keeping the solutions generalised – to enable a variety of solutions to come forward.

**e) Environment/Wildlife/Nature**

VA - has undertaken a village centre analysis. To be circulated. VA

VP – Townscape analysis feedback amended – revised version to be re-circulated. VP

Green Infrastructure to be mapped and circulated.

Landscape viewpoints to be referenced and undertaken in summer and winter.

VA – character area photos to be added.

VA - Village centre issues to be added – but will be kept factual.

## **6. Next Consultation Event**

IC – School booked 3-4<sup>th</sup> July. Aim is to publicise event material 14 days beforehand – ie w/e 15<sup>th</sup> June. This will be site a analysis booklet of information – presentation to be agreed.

Similar event as Jan 2015: Presentation; Q&A; facilitation of group discussion.

Promoted via leaflet. GCe to obtain quote for printing. A5 leaflet – double sided to include a cover letter; Proposed more A boards than January; and large banner (possibly placed at the school; social media (J Fi to create a social media strategy and mission statement).

GCe/ JFi

## **7. MSDC Infrastructure Development Plan**

IC – read out suggestion of Ian Weir (to be added to Minutes). Consider adding other items to the ‘shopping list’ that CIL monies could be used to deliver.

## **8. Correspondence**

No response from Russells Nursery – being chased

Pattendens – correspondence received

Mr Meredith – Question on Local Green Space designation

Allwoods – asked about medium to long term plans

## **9. Date of Next Meeting:**

14<sup>th</sup> May 2015 – subject to room availability

**AOB** – FG - potential for workstream groups to have a separate forum to share cross-over ideas. How does this feed into the PHLAA.

GC – results of qualitative feedback to added to website.

GCe – HHA have invited member of NPWG member to attend at present at meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

GCe – Michelle Binks – Mayday (4<sup>th</sup> – 12-4pm) – table for NP? TBA



There being no other business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.30pm.

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman\_\_\_\_\_











