

Minutes of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Meeting 17th March 2016

Attendees: Ian Credland; Nick Owens; David Withycombe (arrived during item 4); Bill Hatton; Frances Gaudencio (left towards the end of discussions under item 4); Victoria Standfast; Virginia Pullan; Sue Hatton; Georgia Cheshire (arrived during item 4); Dale Mayhew (Consultant, Dowsett Mayhew Consultancy).
Jane Bromley (Administration).

4 members of the public present.

1. Apologies for absence: Justine Fisher; Ian Weir; Adrian Batchelor; Judith Foot (JAF).
2. Declarations of Interest: Ian Credland sites 1 & 2. Nick Owens sites 1, 2, and 15. David Withycombe site 12; Frances Gaudencio site 8; Virginia Pullan site 7.
Local Green Space Declarations of Interest: Ian Credland LGS2; Nick Owens LGS2; Frances Gaudencio LGS 5.
Schools Interest: David Withycombe Hassocks Infants; Frances Gaudencio Windmills Junior. Sue Hatton Downlands and Windmills Junior.
3. The minutes of the meeting on 3rd March 2016 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
An action brought forward from 4th February had been completed by IC a newsletter had been published.
4. Discussion of Regulations 14 responses. DM commented that the group were working through the general consultees and were later to look at statutory consultee comments. Until such time as the statutory consultee comments were looked at no recommendations could be made by DM arising from the comments. In some cases the comments were so detailed it would be appropriate to respond directly to the consultee and DM would recommend this as an action.

Policy 3 – Local Green Space (LGS)

At the last meeting the comments on Policy 3 LGS had been passed to VP and DW. They had produced a document entitled "*Response on Policy 3 Local Green Space (LGS)*". The document was read by the group. DM observed that it would be beneficial to respond to some of the more detailed comments individually. LGS was an area of particular scrutiny by Examiners and should be given as much analysis as those sites allocated for housing. DW asked whether if areas of the analysis of the LGS sites required updating, would the details require reissuing. DM replied that it was in order to update and refresh evidence documents between the pre submission and final plan without reissuing them.

Policy 13 – Housing Allocations

Comments received:

108 - That the housing target in the plan was too low. DM commented that the allocations was not a target simply those numbers that had been allocated a

site. The number was not a cap and the group had allowed for further development through windfall sites coming forward. The response to 79 applied here. *"The respondent queried the housing needs figures. IC confirmed that a blend of methodologies had been used to calculate the housing need the working group had not relied on one particular calculation. IW advised that the Mid Sussex District Plan (MSDP) had been clear that it wanted NP to calculate their own housing need."*

113 – Whether the National Tyres site would want to continue to trade and therefore if it was deliverable. IC confirmed the site had come forward at the behest of the site owner.

151 – Consultees disagrees with the policy as at odds with Policy 1 and 12. Also disagrees with Policies 14.15 and 16. Generally not happy with the housing sites and infrastructure a concern. IC confirmed that the group had concerns with infrastructure but this not to allocate housing numbers within the plan based on need was not an option.

166 – Wanted to include an additional site 16 not proposed in the Plan and expand the numbers in policy 13, to which the response to 108 applies. The details of the site from the site analysis lead the group to decide not to allocate the site.

174 – Response to 108 applies.

175 – Response to 108 applies.

184 – Response to 108 applies.

Policy 14 – Hassocks Golf Club

Comments received:

12,14 - Recommend higher density housing for the site to reduce the land area for building. IC In recommending the density for the site the Group had taken into account the location and the character of building in the surrounding area. Higher densities had been recommended for sites near the centre of the village which was in keeping with the character of the development in that location. For the more peripheral sites the more open layout matched the dynamics of the area. DM commented that the MSDC Local Plan had moved away from targeting density and this is now balanced against seeking schemes to respect/reflect local character.

16 – Bullet point 1 – concerns and rewording suggested flexibility regarding criteria of not extending development into the Burgess Hill Gap (BH Gap). This to allow for the serpentine effects of the boundary of the development as suggested by MSDC. The Group decided that the serpentine effect could be achieved within the constraints of the site without encroaching on the BH Gap and the policy wording should remain the same.

Bullet point 9 – Suggesting a change of wording to incorporate possible school provision. BH pointed out that a separate policy dealt with the provision of education and there was no need to reference the provision of schooling for this policy and there was no predetermination as to where a school was likely to be provided and indeed this was decision of WSCC. All agreed to stick with the original wording.

Bullet point 7 (12 from start of policy) – The suggested rewording for this bullet point was agreed by the Group.

Suggesting amendments to land areas at 6.14 and 6.15. DM to enlarge and provide at the next meeting, all with a copy of the development parameters

plan. This so the area of the site could be looked at in detail by the Group.

ACTION DM

54/93 – Support for policy noted.

113 – The suggestion for the provision of retail space was not agreed with by the Group as they considered it would not be a good location to support such a business.

125 – The golf course was not to be extended and therefore would not threaten the BH Gap as suggested.

146 – Agreed

147 – Ockley Manor was noted by the group in its analysis.

151 – All considered the benefits outweigh the negative.

166 – Noted

169 – Comments resisting development are noted.

184 – The inappropriateness of allocating land to the Parish Council in trust, to be rented to the Golf Course and not used as public space was commented upon. DM commented that the merit of this was that it would enable the Parish to maintain the integrity of the BH Gap and Hurstpierpoint Gap, and therefore, even though on the face of it this allocation would seem inappropriate, it would secure wider benefits to the Parish. IC added that MSDC had not commented that this allocation was illegal.

Policy 15 – Land to the North of Clayton Mills and Mackie Avenue

Overall there had been a great number of comments against this policy. The comments had been on repetitive issues and it was possible to deal with these issues overall rather than against individual consultees.

Mackie Avenue Residents' Management Company – It was thought that this body had not been appropriately consulted with.

DM referenced the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 for a list of Consultation Bodies and the MARMC would not qualify as such.

MARMC had been offered the same level of consultation as all non-statutory consultees. GC commented that the level of public consultation had been over and above that offered in neighbouring communities during the Neighbourhood Plan process. IC confirmed MSDC had communicated the pre submission plan to the list of Statutory Consultees a service that they had offered to undertake on behalf of Hassocks.

Ignoring Planning Consultants Advice – This was in connection with a comment made during a meeting that DM had made suggesting Site 13 would qualify as a Local Green Space. The provision of Green Space is a secondary consideration to the provision of sites for housing as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance and therefore it is possible for a site to qualify as both a LGS and a proposed site. This being the case the provision of a site for housing should be considered before that for LGS.

Non consideration of key infrastructure & safety for access to the site The Group had received a briefing from the site proposers as to the means by which safe access could be achieved and this in turn would come under the scrutiny of WSCC Highways during the planning process. Infrastructure is a concern for all sites proposed and of the Working Group but cannot be used as a barrier to development and the NP seeks to address these concerns with criteria based policies and aims.

Land Previously Designated as Open Space- DM suggested that the MARMC and residents were of the opinion that the rough nature of the land (site 13) had lead the Working Group to believe it had little value. However, the Working Group had recognised it was an public open space area and realised it was in the process of legal action. IC commented that the site had been allocated with careful consideration to these facts. FG confirmed that the policy provided compensatory open space. " *Provide compensatory formal/informal open space to meet the needs of existing occupants of Clayton Mills and the needs generated by the occupiers of the development* ".

Merging of Sites 13 & 4 after public consultation. This was a repetitive concern. The site merger had been a business decision by the site owners and had occurred after the public consultation. Both sites had been towards the top of the public's preferred sites list. Allocation sites 13 & 4 together meet the aspirations of the community and the consultation wasn't manipulative in that the sites were not deliberately separated to get better results from consultation. There was no obligation for the Group to re consult following the merger of the two sites, which they may have done had one site been particularly unpopular. It was further highlighted by NO that the preference order calculations carried out by a member of the Working Group at that time had also been reviewed and checked by him.

Mackie Avenue has borne the brunt of development over the last 10 years.

This comment was accepted but is not a material planning consideration.

Land Ownership queries. At the meeting with the MARMC the Chair of the working group had promised to direct the land owners to the MARMC which he had. The details of the land owners had in a subsequent Working Group meeting been published when consent had been given for this to occur.

NPWG biased. This had been commented upon by consultees 24,60.49 and 174 and the same reply applies. " *All brought up a query as to the partiality of the Working Group and in particular the Chairman.*

IC felt it necessary to mention that although the working group made recommendations they did not make the decisions with regard to the NP these were made at public meetings by the Parish Council. Working Group members with interests had all declared these interests at all meetings. Work had been carried out in groups and no one person had been responsible for one area of the plan. To carry out the work involved to produce the plan and not to involve people with some sort of interest would have not been possible. FG confirmed that at one time there were 21 sites involved in the NP and these covered the whole of the parish area and to find a group where no one had an interest in any site would not have been possible. IW considered that if one of the Working Group had been biased this would have been watered down by the many in the group that did not.

The respondents had felt the Working Group had not listened to professional advice given to them from their consultant. DM advised that he was not aware that the group had ever disregarded his advice ".

5,6,8,10 – Covered in general replies above.

12,14 Recommend the site be allocated for the provision of schooling. The Group responded that the provision of schooling is a criteria based policy 12.

20- MSDC have not objected to the policy 15 and therefore they cannot consider it contrary to their policy.

- 22 - Covered in general replies above.
- 24 - Policy support.
- 25,27 3661,62 - Covered in general replies above.
- 63 - Support for policy.
- 64 - Covered in general replies above.
- 65,66 - Covered in general replies above.
- 67 - Barrats had been contacted as they were thought to be the site owners at that time.
- 68 - WSCC concludes that proximity of development is important when considering the impact on AQMA.
- 69,70,71 - Covered in general replies above.
- 72 - Flood Risk Zone data used to identify level of flood risk.
- 73 - Site 13 is not in the BH Gap.
- 74,75,77 - Covered in general replies above.
- 85 - Bunds and Hillocks provide protection from noise. DM suggested a design solution could resolve this.
- 86 - ProW will be protected and the impact on biodiversity was considered in the same way for all sites.
- 87 - Covered in general replies above.
- 88 - Over crowding is to do with infrastructure and the NP seeks to address this.
- 89,94 - Covered in general replies above.
- 104 - Noted.
- 108- The comments from this consultee will be addressed at the next meeting of the Working Group on 24th March. **ACTION**
- 113 - Is commenting on Policy 16 and will be addressed at the next meeting. **ACTION**
- 114,115 - Covered in general replies above.
- 117 - The comments from this consultee will be addressed at the next meeting of the Working Group on 24th March. **ACTION**
- 119,134,146,147 - Covered in general replies. (FG Left the meeting at this point)
- 151 - Footfall on railway a concern. GC spoke of the lack of amenities to be a draw of footfall across the railway from Site 13 & 4.IC confirmed there had been a lot of correspondence with Network Rail concerning the safety of this crossing and they were unable to project sufficient footfall across this crossing to cause them major concern.
- 153,156,158,164,163,166,168,169,173,180,184,186,187,189,190,191,192,193, 194,195,196,197,199 - Covered in general replies above.

5. Correspondence. A letter had been received from MARMC Ltd raising concerns as to the reference to a Residents' Association rather than a limited company, in the minutes of the Working Group. The letter had been relied to by the Parish Clerk.

6. Date of Next Meeting: 24th March 2016 at 7pm