

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Neighbourhood Plan Working Group**
on Thursday 25th April 2019 at 7:30 pm
Council Chamber, Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Parish Councillors: Bill Hatton (Chair) (BH), Ian Weir (IW), Nick Owens (NO).

Co-opted Members: Virginia Pullen (VP) and David Withycombe (DW)

Apologies: Victoria Standfast, Frances Gaudencio , Judith Foot ,Mark Higgins and Emma Wood

Dowsett Mayhew Consultants: Dale Mayhew (DM)

Parish Clerk: Ian Cumberworth (IC)

DRAFT MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies received from Frances Gaudencio (FG) and Judith Foot (JF)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 Declarations of Interest from Nick Owens (NO) and Virginia Pullen (VP) in respect of land in proximity to their residential properties.

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on Thursday 14th March 2019 were considered, approved, and signed by the Chairman.

4. REPORTS

4.1 DM introduced the Background Paper in respect of housing matters that had previously been circulated to Members of the NPWG. This set out a summary of relevant, thematic representations received at the Regulation 14 public consultation stage of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (HNP). Attention was drawn to comments that related to both housing and Local Green Space (LGS), noting that the comments in relation to the latter were dealt with separately in a subsequent paper.

4.2 Representations and analysis were summarised in respect of Policy 14: Residential Development within an Adjoining Built-Up Area Boundary.

4.3 The NPWG considered the merit of changes to Policy 14 in respect of comments received. This included having regard to the overall housing need of the parish, with particular regard to the requirements set out in the MSDP.

- 4.4 IW and BH noted the conclusions of the Local Plan Examiner of the MSDP in respect of housing need, and the proportion of housing to be delivered in Hassocks relative to other settlements within the same settlement hierarchy category of Policy DP6 of the MSDP.
- 4.5 Members resolved that no changes be made to the HNP in light of representations on this issue.
- 4.6 The NPWG considered the representations received in respect of submissions of the absence of housing allocations. BH drew reference to the earlier consideration with respect to overall housing numbers and considered that the proposed housing number to be facilitated in the HNP was appropriate. IW noted that the draft HNP sets out support for 'windfall' housing, and that the parish has a strong legacy of delivery of windfall housing over the last few years.
- 4.7 Members resolved that no changes be made to the HNP in light of representations on this issue.
- 4.8 The NPWG considered the representations received in respect of the promotion of housing sites.
- 4.9 In relation to the representations promoting land to the west of London Road, the recent planning history to the site was noted, and consideration was given to the contribution of the site to the Local Gap.
- 4.10 Members resolved that no changes be made to the HNP in light of representations on this issue.
- 4.11 The NPWG considered the representations received in respect of the promotion of land to the east of Lodge Lane. Members discussed the merits and demerits of the site, including its relationship to the built-up area boundary, extent of visibility, including from public vantage points, relationship and impact on the Conservation Area, and relationship and impact on land falling within the National Park.
- 4.12 Members resolved that no changes be made to the HNP in light of representations on this issue.
- 4.13 The NPWG considered the representations received in respect of the Sustainability Appraisal. DM summarised the approach to the assessment of housing matters within the Sustainability Appraisal both with regard to the previous Neighbourhood Plan, and the current Regulation 14 version.
- 4.14 Members resolved that the overarching approach of the Sustainability Appraisal, accompanying the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan was appropriate.
- 4.15 DM summarised Chapter 10 of the Housing Paper, and in particular drew attention to the recommended update to the wording of Policy 18: Affordable Housing. DM drew attention to the comments received from FG in response to the proposed wording of this; noting that it did not accurately reflect the changes requested by FG/BH at the last NPWG meeting. DM circulated a further amended version of this policy wording. Members considered the revised amendment accurately reflected the NPWG resolution and should be used to supersede the earlier version.

POLICY 1: LOCAL GAPS

- 4.16 The NPWG considered the representations received in respect of Policy 1: Local Gaps. DM provided a summary of the preparation of a Background Paper on this policy to be co-authored by David Withycombe and Dale Mayhew. This had been prepared in response to representations received, including those of MSDC.

- 4.17 DM summarised the appraisal of higher tier guidance (both national and strategic), with respect to the use of Gap policies, including the approach set out in Policy DP13 of the MSDP and associated supporting text, the previous Gap policies in the MSDP, and relevant text in the emerging SDNPLP.
- 4.18 DM summarised the appraisal of other examples of Neighbourhood Plans with Gap policies, including in relation to Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Neighbourhood Plan; Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan; and Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan. DM drew attention to consideration of matters of Gap policies as contained in relevant appeal and Secretary of State decisions in and around the Hassocks area including with respect to land to the west of London Road, land off College Lane and land to the rear of Friars Oak. The representations of interested parties with respect to Gaps was summarised.
- 4.19 DW set out the background to previous reports he had prepared in respect of the Local Gap. He outlined his approach to the review of the Gap by reference to eight sub-character areas surrounding the east, west and north parts of the parish, and consideration of the merits and demerits of each sub-area.
- 4.20 DW set out his recommendations in respect of land parcels that were candidates for removal from the Local Gap.
- 4.21 The NPWG considered and discussed each candidate area for removal.
- 4.22 Members considered the merit of removing the Belmont Recreation Ground, noting its geographic location, contribution to the Gap and protection under a separate proposed open space policy.
- 4.23 Members resolved to remove this area from designation as a Local Gap.
- 4.24 Members considered the merit of removing land comprising the residential dwelling surrounded by the land allocation for development at Hassocks Golf Club. It was noted this was erroneously referred to in the Background Paper as Hassocks Golf Club and car park, but comprises an individual residential dwelling and its associated curtilage. Members considered it does not make a material contribution to the Local Gap.
- 4.25 Members resolved to remove this area from designation as a Local Gap.
- 4.26 Members considered the merit of removing land between Reed Close and land designated for residential development at Hassocks Golf Club. It was noted that this principally comprises an area of woodland. Members discussed the importance of the green character of the area, on the edge of this part of the built-up area, and its contribution to the Local Gap.
- 4.27 Members resolved to retain the designation of this area within the Local Gap.
- 4.28 Members considered the merit of removing an area of amenity space immediately to the east of London Road and west of Shepherds Walk. Its geographic position and relationship to the existing residential area was noted. Members considered it does not make a material contribution to the Local Gap.
- 4.29 Members resolved to remove this area from designation as a Local Gap.
- 4.30 Members considered the merit of removing land at Woodside. Its geographic position, in particular in relation to the railway line and strategic land allocation, and its character principally comprising a dwelling and domestic curtilage, was noted. Members considered it does not make a material contribution to the Local Gap.

- 4.31 Members resolved to remove this area from designation as a Local Gap. It was resolved that the precise boundary of this area for removal be limited to the domestic curtilage of the property, and not include the bank of the woodland running north.
- 4.32 Members considered the merit of removing two fields to the west of Ockley Manor. It was noted this was bisected by a Public Right of Way. Its geographic position in relation to the strategic allocation of residential development to the north and west was noted. Members considered it does not make a material contribution to the Local Gap.
- 4.33 Members resolved to remove this area from designation as a Local Gap
- 4.34 Members considered the merit of removing land comprising a dwelling and its curtilage at Streamside. Members considered that although the Gap at this point is particularly narrow and vulnerable, the property, being domestic in nature, and surrounded by residential boundary delineation, does not materially contribute to the Gap.
- 4.35 Members resolved to remove this area from designation as a Local Gap.

LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- 4.36 The NPWG considered the representations received in respect of Policy 2: Local Green Space. DM provided a summary of the preparation of a Background Paper on this policy to be co-authored by David Withycombe and Dale Mayhew. This had been prepared in response to representations received, including those of MSDC.
- DM summarised the appraisal of higher tier guidance with respect to Local Green Space, including in relation to that set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Attention was drawn to Development Plan policy, and Policy SD47 of the emerging SDNPLP.
- 4.37 DM summarised appraisals of other examples of Neighbourhood Plans that had sought to include Local Green Space designations and associated policies, by reference to thematic matters, comprising: *'reasonably close to the community it serves'*; *'demonstrably special to a local community and holds particular local significance'*; and *'local in character and not an extensive tract of land.'* DM drew attention to consideration of matters of Local Green Space as contained in relevant appeal and Secretary of State decisions in and around the Hassocks area including with respect to land to the rear of Friars Oak. The representations of interested parties with respect to Local Green Space was summarised.
- 4.38 DW set out the background to previous reports he had prepared in respect of Local Green Space. He summarised the re-appraisal of the candidate LGS sites. This had focussed on those candidate LGSs that had been the subject of objection/negative representation as part of the Regulation 14 consultation exercise.
- 4.39 The NPWG considered and discussed the merits of retaining/amending the LGSs.
- 4.40 Consideration as given to LGS 1. Members considered that the designation was in compliance with national criteria, was justified and should be retained in the HNP.
- 4.41 Consideration was given to LGS 2. Members noted that DW considered the designation may no longer be justified having regard to the position of the Parish Council to support soil disposal onsite as part of the adjoining residential development.
- 4.42 NO summarised the reasoning of the Parish Council Planning Committee in supporting the soil deposition application, including in relation to the limitation to the soil deposition, and the overall positive benefits that it was considered would result in ecological terms.

- 4.43 Members considered that the designation was in compliance with national criteria, was justified and should be retained in the HNP.
- 4.44 Consideration was given to LGS 4. Members discussed whether the LGS was as '*an extensive tract of land*', the use of the area by the public, and whether it was '*demonstrably special*'.
- 4.45 Members resolved that the eastern field parcel be omitted from the LGS designation, and that the western field parcel was in compliance with national criteria, was justified and should be retained in the HNP.
- 4.46 Consideration was given to the LGS 5. Members discussed the background to the use of the area by the public, the intent and purpose of the designation, and implications in relation to the representations of WSCC, including in relation to future potential uses of the site.
- 4.47 Members considered that the designation was in compliance with national criteria, was justified and should be retained in the HNP. It was resolved that the policy/ text within the Neighbourhood Plan be amended/added to include reference to make clear that support would be offered for applications for works on the site that were in accordance with its purpose as an LGS designation, such as its future alternative/intensive use for open space and recreation.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 5.1 Discussion took place regarding the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that an amended draft Regulation 16 Neighbourhood Plan be proposed for consideration at the NPWG meeting on Thursday 23rd May 2019. DM was asked to contact MSDC to advise of intention to provide a draft of the Neighbourhood Plan following the NPWG meeting, with a request that MSDC comments be submitted back to HPC ahead of a full Parish Council meeting to consider the Plan, proposed to take place on Tuesday 11th June 2019.

- 6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Thursday 6th June 2019.

Meeting closed 10:05 pm