Minutes of the Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting

Held Monday 13 October 2014, 8pm, Renshaw Room, Wivelsfield Village Hall

**Attending**: Jason Stoner (Chair), Craig Bowden, Ian Dawson, Dave Wright, Gordon Harper, John Wigzell, Liz Gander (Clerk), Faustina Bayo (AirS) and 18 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Nick Dutt, Rosemary Fair, Richard Jephcott, Sheila Blair, Angus Thwaites, Ann King and Helen Nichols.

The Chairman asked for members of the public to refrain from talking during the meeting. There would be a fifteen minute open forum session at the start of the Parish Council meeting during which people would be able to raise any questions. The Chairman thanked Faustina Bayo for attending.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

None noted.

1. **To agree Recommendations about Policies to go into the Draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan, to put forward to the Parish Council**

The Chairman explained that the meeting had been called for the Steering Group to continue agreeing the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Further work had been done on the green spaces policy since the last meeting. Seven policies have been agreed so far, with the green spaces policy forming the eighth.

The Chairman read out each part of the Green Spaces policy asking SG members for a show of hands to confirm their acceptance of each section.

* 1. Land off South Road to West of Wivelsfield Primary School – all agreed
  2. Wivelsfield Recreation Ground – all agreed
  3. Land to west of South Road – part of Coldharbour Farm – should read land to

‘south’. Subject to this all agreed.

* 1. Land south of North Common Road and east of the Mormon meeting house – all

agreed

* 1. Land to east of Eastern Road - agreed
  2. Land to South of Antye House and East of Orchard Close - agreed
  3. Land at the north west boundary of Parish - agreed
  4. Land at Springfields – correct word to ‘retained’ (‘t’ missing) – the Chairman said that there was more news on this; the developer is happy to entertain allotments and/or place space on this land – however it turns out that only a part of the public open space shown on their plan is owned by the developer. The developer is prepared to consider signing a Section 106 agreement agreeing not to build on the public open space, (although JW cautioned that LDC has suggested that they will impose the Community Infrastructure Levy rather than S106 and this would be harder to ring-fence for the development). All agreed to include as public open space.

Finally the Chairman asked if everyone was happy with the maps to accompany the green spaces policy. ID agreed to number them prior to sending on to Neil Homer (rCOH). Having received Steering Group approval, the Green Spaces policy would now be put to the Parish Council for agreement.

Faustina Bayo’s advice was sought regarding notifying landowners of the Council’s intention to designate sites as green and open spaces for the duration of the Plan period. She suggested that it is as well to make landowners aware. All agreed.

Councillor Franks arrived at this point of the meeting.

1. **To make Recommendations to the Parish Council on Allocation of Sites for Inclusion in the Draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan**

The Chairman noted that this item had also been on the last agenda, but said that he wished to remind everyone of where we are and to get Faustina’s input. He said that we have to continue with the criteria that we have set and the policies as agreed. We have now heard that Springfield have submitted a planning application and Tal has said that LDC is likely to try to grab it as windfall.

The Chairman wondered to what extent we might be able to bring community pressure to bear on LDC if the Springfield application reached an LDC planning committee and appealed to the public to ‘stand up and shout’ if this happened.

GH advised that whilst the NPPF says certain things about windfall sites, NPPG says that it is open to discussion with the Local Planning Authority (LPA). GH to elevate this with LDC senior officers and bring the problems caused by this ‘windfall’ trap to the attention of Norman Baker.

Other information received from the Springfield Industrial Estate had been:

* Soil samples done – have now managed to move the odour line across on the site giving a site plan of 35 dwellings (a net of 34 as one existing property will be demolished). However this now fouls our criteria of having sites of less than or equal to 30 properties.
* They will conform to the LDC requirement for 40% affordable homes

The Chairman concluded that all we can do is continue with the sites from our criteria and await the results of the public consultation.

In the meantime the Council has received a number of letters from residents, some of which have been quite upsetting. The Chairman expressed disappointment at the fact that some people seem to have been misinformed. He did however say that all of the comments received to date will go forward as comments for consideration during the six week statutory consultation period.

Councillor Bowden said that he was also unhappy to be accused of ‘worming his way onto the Council’ and effectively being accused of taking bribes. He noted that several letters have said that there has been poor notification of meetings etc, but that we have held public open days, included information in the Wivelsfield News and the Middy, put things on the website and noticeboards and that short of going round door to door every week he didn’t know what else could have been done. Some of the information coming back in letters is clearly wrong – some had mentioned a development of 30 houses on Slugwash Lane. At the end of the day the Steering Group and Parish Council asked landowners to put forward land, decided upon criteria and assessed sites. LDC will be the deciding authority on what gets built and what doesn’t. What the Parish Council has done is to work with the Steering Group to identify sites. Members have all given their time and effort to get this far and there will soon be a six week consultation during which people can give their views – it is just disappointing that there hasn’t been more input from people until now. Councillor Bowden rejected the allegation in some complaints that Councillors and Steering Group members have selected sites away from where they live and concluded by reminding residents that there are elections next May –giving an opportunity for other people to stand for election.

DW asked the Chairman to put forward what would happen without a NP.  The Chairman reminded everyone that there are lots of sites included within the SHLAA.  There would be nothing to stop landowners putting in applications and we could end up with 409 extra dwellings.  He made it clear that everyone on the Steering Group was fully aware of the significance of the work that they are doing, and reiterated that the six week consultation period would offer an opportunity for residents to give their views.

Finally, FB clarified that the pre-submission plan is what the six week consultation is carried out on. If, as a result of consultation feedback there are minor amendments to be made, that is acceptable and the amended Plan can go forward to examination. However, if you put in new policies and/or sites, you would have to do another six week consultation on the revised Plan.

The Chairman confirmed that the preferred sites identified by the Site Assessment Report would go into the Draft Pre-Submission Plan and closed the meeting at 8.40pm.

1. **Date of Next Meeting**

To be confirmed.