

Minutes of the Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting
Held Monday 22 December 2014, 8pm, Renshaw Room, Wivelsfield Village Hall

Attending: Jason Stoner (Chair), Craig Bowden, Ian Dawson, John Wigzell, Sheila Blair, Gordon Harper, Liz Gander (Clerk) and six members of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Angus Thwaites, Dave Wright, Dionne Franks, Rosemary Fair, Richard Jephcott and Nick Dutt.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None noted.

3. **To Accept Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting Held 15 December 2014**

The Steering Group agreed the minutes of the meeting held 15 December. However it was highlighted that the minutes of the meeting held 2 December were wrong in that they stated that the Steering Group had agreed to remove the brownfield status criterion from the site selection process. The Steering Group's recommendation had been simply to remove the points awarded to the Springfield Industrial Estate under this criterion, rather than to alter the criteria themselves. It was agreed that the wording of the 2 December minutes would be changed to reflect this.

4. **Meeting with the Local Planning Authority (Lewes District Council)**

A meeting had taken place on Wednesday 17 December between Tal Kleiman (Neighbourhood Planning Officer, LDC) and I Dawson, G Harper and J Wigzell as Steering Group representatives. Tal had been appreciative that he had been given the draft in advance and was pleased that it was, in his view, neither too long nor too short. He said that the policies were clear and understandable, succinct and to the point and he was pleased that we had not gone overboard.

Tal gave the following feedback on specific areas of the Plan:

1. The Policies Map should be included with the Plan, and is basically there to indicate what specific places we are referring to e.g. the preferred development sites and suggested planning boundary changes. It should be absolutely clear, specific and accurate about the places referred to in the plan. The Map should also contain Green Spaces listed in the Policies, Allotment site and any other location sites referred to.
2. Tal questioned the Vision Statement in the previous draft, but it has been changed in the latest version and he is happy that we have elaborated slightly.
3. In para 1.1, there was a reference to the screening opinion being awaited. It has now been produced and the reference should be replaced with the statement that it is not now needed.
4. In para 1.7 Tal pointed out that we are no longer one of the first neighbourhoods to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. Many of them are now in preparation.
5. He suggested we looked at the Inspector's report on the Newick Plan. The inspector had a lot of the descriptive material removed which they had included. He felt that ours was not necessarily too heavy with descriptive matter, but might bear critical review.

6. He thought the Vision Statement at para 3.19 looked a little thin, and wondered whether we might expand it a little to refer to the vision we have for housing and development looking forward to 2030.
7. He was keen to say that the housing trajectory in the LDC Local Plan referred simply to the time it was proposed, and was not necessarily a plan for the future cast in stone. He felt that the term 'trajectory' could easily be misinterpreted to mean that it was a fixed target, whereas it was very much a moveable issue, and could be changed over time.
8. He warned us that the inspector may suggest modifications to our statement of the Planning Context and consistency with NPPF etc. We explained that we felt it was necessary to explain to the neighbourhood that we needed to work within those given parameters.
9. He suggested that we were very specific in naming all the places of worship included in our list of community assets. Similarly we should specify the location of the shop and pub and all other items in the list. We need to be very specific. Does this need to be on the Policies Map or a separate map as the map may be a bit crowded.
10. We depend a lot on the Core Strategy in our plan. He pointed out that it is not yet final, and asked what would happen if it is delayed or maybe doesn't pass inspection. What Newick did was to refer to the proposed local plan but also linked it to the current local plan.
11. The site assessment plan needs to be sent to LDC Planning Department, who need to review the reasons for selecting particular sites in some detail, and he reiterated that we must be very sure about our justification for selecting the preferred sites. He also made the point that development on the Springfield site has been refused many times in the past. Do those reasons for refusal still apply? LDC has to go through the rationale for choosing the sites very carefully. It was pointed out that the Gleeson site had been refused many times but circumstances and needs have changed therefore site history may no longer be appropriate or a consideration.
12. He pointed out that very recent legislation means that affordable housing is no longer required for sites of less than 10 dwellings.
13. Para 4.3 referring to the Coldharbour site in particular needs to have more elaboration to support it.
14. Considerable discussion took place about the selection of sites. Steering Group members pointed out that we had examined the sites which had been put forward by the landowners. In answer to our question as whether we needed to examine SHLAA sites, he was equivocal, and said only that we should have examined all sites which were available. What will be challenged by LDC's planners is whether we have done so. We may need to demonstrate that SHLAA sites have been considered, but have not met our criteria.

We need to show much more justification for the sites that have been selected. We should possibly put the criteria into the policy area of the document, and we must be incredibly specific about the location of the sites. We also need to be absolutely clear about the sizes of sites, and verify them rather than rely on what we have been told.

15. We should provide evidence of discussions with education authorities about the expansion of the primary school, and possibly quote the Infrastructure Plan from LDC.
16. The green infrastructure bullet points should be made into policies. We questioned whether it would undermine the housing site development criteria. He said that if anything was proposed for a site that was **not on an allocated site, then these criteria would apply**. We should make them bold type and part of the policy, but we must also provide some justification for them.
17. With Green Spaces, good justification is needed. We can refer to NPPF and planning guidance notes. Hamsey have been helped by Planning Aid (planning arm of Royal Town Planning Institute). We need a lot more justification. We must also have been seen to discuss them with landowners, and show documentation.
18. We also have to justify our allotments policy.

Tal concluded that he thought we had a good Plan and was pleased with what he had read and discussed.

The Chairman expressed disappointment that the Council's consultants had said that only those sites put forward under the Plan needed to be assessed, when Tal has now said that all sites in the Parish should be reviewed.

G Harper had sent suggested boundary maps and plot maps that he had drawn up to Neil Homer and Faustina Bayo, but had received no acknowledgement. He has also sent a copy of the Site Assessment Report to Tal.

Tal had commented that the definition of windfall sites wasn't as precise as before and that, once both the Core Strategy and our Plan are 'made' there may be an opportunity to challenge a site which we do not believe to be windfall.

5. To Consider Any Changes to the Pre-Submission Plan resulting from 4 above

It was agreed to put together some working groups to tackle the additional work needed on the Plan before consultation.

- Policies maps – to be prepared by GH/DW and ID (GH to Chair)
- Green Spaces – to be worked on by SB/JW and CB (SB to Chair)
- Site Assessment – to be looked at by JS/ND/AT and RF (JS to Chair)

6. To Agree the Final Version of the Pre-Submission Plan to put Forward to the Parish Council for Approval (if appropriate)

The Steering Group agreed that it would have to delay publishing the Pre-Submission Plan until the various points raised by LDC have been addressed.

7. To Agree Wording for a Letter to Owners of Land to be Designated as Green Space within the Plan

The basic wording of the draft letter was approved, however it was agreed that the information contained within it about the green spaces needs to be 'beefed up' and made more specific. This to be reviewed in conjunction with the work being undertaken by the working group looking at Green Spaces.

8. To Review the Project Plan and Consultation Arrangements

With the need to tie up the extra bits identified by Tal, the consultation will not now take place at the start of January as was the Steering Group's aim.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19 or Tuesday 20 January 2015 (to be confirmed)

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.