

Neighbourhood Plan Project Management Group

Meeting: Friends (Quaker) Meeting House 7.30pm, East Gardens, Ditchling

Wednesday November 4th 2015

Notes of the meeting

Present: Richard Flack, Trevor Kirby, Tom Dufty (Chair), Amy Tyler-Jones, Edwina Rowling, Mike Burr, James Standing, Don McBeth, Tony Corrigan ((Conservation focus group) Delia Forester (Conservation focus group) Julie Middleton (Conservation focus group), Vincent Tickner (Westmeston PC)

1. Advance Apologies: Tony Gedge, Paul Farrands, Phil Smith

2. Declarations of interest: None reported

3. Correspondence received/pending:

3. 1) Tom reported that letters had been sent to the owners of two potential single dwelling development sites telling them that on the advice of the SDNPA their sites would not be included in the plan. Nothing however prevented them seeking planning permission on their own.

3. 2) Tom reported that contact had been made with the managing agent of S M Tidy's Yard on the Common to seek its view, as a special interest group, on the business/employment content of the plan. Similar contact was being sought with the managing agent for the Mid Sussex Business Park located on the same site.

3. 3) Tom reported that an email had been received from Brian Hudson regarding the poor state of pavements for the disabled. Tom had replied saying that he hoped the relevant focus groups would have policies relating to making the area 'disabled friendly' both for residents and visitors.

Action: Focus group leaders to consider

4. CIL Meeting with ESCC: Tom reported that a meeting had finally been arranged with ESCC traffic & transport officers for Nov 18th. The agenda would be to gain their support for the Quiet Lanes feasibility project (Beacon Rd, Spatham Lane, Streat Lane) in the hope that this would help support an application for discretionary CIL funding for the project from MSDC and to acquaint them with, and discuss the content of, the T & T focus group report.

5. Planned Meeting with Agricultural Businesses: Tom reported that he and Mike were seeking meetings with the owners of agricultural and related businesses in the area to gain their input to the business & employment content of the plan.

6. Development site: Tom reported that the owners of the potential Walnut Tree Cottage development site had reviewed their position and could now envisage two small low cost and/or affordable dwellings on the site. It would now be included on Open day.

7. Heritage in Neighbourhood Planning workshop Nov 13th : Richard & Don would be

attending the workshop.

8. Focus Groups progress; This item was taken at the start of the meeting

8.1) Conservation group: Richard reported that it had a very wide brief and had approached it under four headings: Built Environment, including heritage & archaeology; Natural Environment, including protection of green spaces; Landscape & Views; and Ecology & Biodiversity. They had drawn on the evidence base provided by the Household survey and published sources. They had also conducted extra bespoke research & evidence gathering. Their output falls into three categories: A detailed discussion paper, setting out conditions to be satisfied and a consideration of the qualities of the area; a focused technical report; and their policies & proposals; and a 'weighty' draft report. The group's overall approach to producing policies had been to:

- * Deliver on the objectives coming out of the survey whilst proposing a few 'refinements'
- * Comply with the Local SDNPA & LDC Plans
- * Produce policies with 'bite'
- * Take account of best practice elsewhere
- * Adopt a positive rather than a negative approach i.e not entirely 'restrictive'
- * Pay due regard to their contribution to sustainability
- * Have clear links to maps & plans
- * Have regard as a starting point to where development should be and where the settlement boundary could be flexed without compromising realisation of key objectives

9. Richard pointed out that S M Tidy's yard/Mid Sussex Business Park also has a settlement development boundary. There are currently redevelopment proposals and its very important that these are monitored and are kept within the defined area and have no adverse impact on biodiversity of the Common and Country Park etc. Nevertheless it has its role in helping Ditchling meet its role as service centre and its development should be encouraged within the boundary.

10. He also pointed out that there is currently no design statement for settlements in our area. His group has set out to produce one.

11. The group have also considered identifying and designating certain parts of the settlement as special 'Housing Character Areas'. Whilst there might be benefits in so doing there are also dangers in that areas that fall outside them might become free-for-all types of development. Amy expressed the SDNPA's concern at the prospect of more and different types of conservation designation.

12. The group is also considering a 'dark skies' policy in keeping with the SDNPA local Plan.

13. Public Open Day Exhibition November 14th:

13.1. Edwina led the meeting on the requirements for the Open Day. The exhibition would be divided into sections based on each focus group and its policies. She had had to abbreviate many of the policies for both space and consistency purposes and common 'branding'. Visitors would be invited to give feedback both directly on the policy posters and on post-its.

- 13.2. **Display boards** would be delivered early in the morning
- 13.3. **Action: Tony** to produce a visitors book
- 13.4. **All** to have a notebook to record points personal conversations
- 13.5. **As many as possible** to help set up at 8.15am
- 13.6. **Expenses:** Deadline for invoices end November