

## **Neighbourhood Plan Project Management Group**

**Meeting: Wednesday March 11th 2015**

### **Notes of the Meeting**

**Present:** Mike Burr; Edwina Rowling; Tom Dufty (Chair); Paul Farrands; Richard Flack; and Zarene Morrison (T & T Focus Group); Ian McLean (T & T Focus Group)

**1. Advance Apologies:** Don McBeth, Tony Gedge, James Standing

**3. Declarations of interest:** None

**5. Correspondence received/pending:**

6. Tom reported that:

7. David Grey (East End House, East End Lane) had contacted him to say that their orchard represented a possible small development site subject to potential resolution of access issues over neighbours' land.

9. The Hancocks of Streat Lane had responded to the article in the Dialogue and Beacon Magazine indicating that they might have unused farm land and buildings available for potential development.

11. Both had been told that their offers would be recorded and that suitability and acceptability for development would be assessed at a later date.

13. The Budds, owners of the Ditchling Nurseries site, had confirmed that they still wished the site to be assessed for development under the Neighbourhood Plan despite their recent planning application for two houses.

15. A standard proforma response (to the effect 'your comments will be considered when the consultation period is over') had been received from the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan project to the PMG's letter asking for a meeting on their proposed development sites on the boundary between the two parishes. Nothing further had been heard despite the close of their consultation period two weeks previously. (NB Richard reminded us that only strategic authorities have a formal 'duty to cooperate'. We might wish Hassocks to comply with the spirit of the duty but they are under no compulsion to do so).

16.

17. An appeal had been lodged by the owner of Court Farm over Lewes District's rejection of permission for a farm dwelling on the land on Keymer Rd. Tom asked if the PMG wanted him to object to the appeal on the grounds that a) building a house on the site was directly contrary to residents' desires, expressed in the responses to the questionnaire, for retention of the rural character of the villages and in particular for retention of the strategic gap between Ditchling & Keymer b) there had been no evidence of the existing barns being used for livestock c) that suitable accommodation is available in the immediate vicinity, without building a new one. The PMG asked him to write on its behalf.

**18. Action: Tom** to write as above

**20. Updating evidence sources:**

21. Tom asked PMG members and particularly leaders of the focus groups to add to the accumulated list of evidence sources as and when new material became available as Mike had done with Traffic & Transport material.

**22. Action: All PMG members**

**24. Special interest group meetings**

25. Tom reported that some PMG members would be attending a meeting with the General Manager of the Mid Sussex Golf Club the following day.

**27. CIL Presentation on April 1st**

28. Tom confirmed that Gareth Giles, SDNPA CIL Officer, had agreed to attend the next meeting on April 1st to give a presentation on the mysteries of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

**30. State of the parishes report/Documenting Evidence**

31. Tom reported that Richard, Mike and he had met to agree the issue of how evidence gathering should be documented and how the results of the Focus groups should be structured and reported to ensure consistency.

32. Action: Tom to issue their report

**34. Traffic & Transport Focus Group Policy Paper: Mike Burr and the Traffic & Transport Focus Group**

35. Mike presented the Traffic & Transport Focus Group's draft policy paper for discussion. Tom started by thanking the group for the excellent work it had done.

36. The ensuing discussion concentrated not so much on the policies proposed by the group, which largely conform with the policies put forward by ESCC in their moribund 2009 'Local Area Transport Strategy' (LATS) for Ditchling, which the group considers are still relevant and appropriate, but on the positioning and presentation of the policies to gain maximum leverage with all interested parties – i.e. residents; ESCC; SDNPA. It was agreed that this was largely a matter of 'tone' and 'language'. In this context the meeting discussed:

\* Expressing the balance between 'prohibiting' traffic which brings no benefit to the community (i.e. through traffic) and welcoming visitor traffic which brings positive benefit to the community in helping to sustain services & facilities.

\* Stressing the advent of the National Park since LATS was formulated; the opportunity it represents; and the consequences for meeting its recreational objectives if traffic and transport issues are not addressed. Develop a partnership with SDNPA to exert influence on ESCC

\* Positioning the case for a new off-street car park (Keymer Rd) in the context of having tested and exhausted all other options. Also positioning it in the context of the community-wide benefits to be derived from it.

\* The need to build a comprehensive special case that resonates with significant funding bodies, building on the area's new location within the Park and the Biosphere.

\* How residents & Parish Councils can be persuaded to part fund implementation,

particularly in view of past history. This is much more strategic than previously.

\* This is a package and a holistic approach to the management of traffic & transport issues. No one thing will work by itself. There should be no attempt to prioritise any one thing over another, at least not at this stage.

\* The traffic implications of future development sites are a key consideration. What messages are being given if occupants need to use cars to reach community services and facilities?

\* Cross focus group coordination and consistency is essential.

**1. Newsletter**

2. Edwina and Tom are drafting a newsletter to issue to all residents updating them on what we have done; what we are doing; what we will be doing. Comments on the draft are welcome.