

## **Neighbourhood Plan Project Management Group**

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

**Wednesday February 17th 2016**

### **Agenda**

Present: Tom Dufty (Chair), Sallie Collard-Watson, Mike Burr, Tony Gedge, Edwina Rowling, Phil Smith, Paul Farrands

**1. Advance Apologies:** Tom Jones, Amy Tyler-Jones, Trevor Kirby, Richard Flack

**2. Declarations of interest:** None

**3. Correspondence sent/received/pending:**

**Grant:** Tom reported that he had applied for a new (third) government grant of £4,400 to cover printing, publicity and room hire invoices from April 1st. He was still unclear as to whether the maximum would be restricted to £8,000 over all three grants. [N.B. the grant of £4,400 has subsequently been approved]

**Lewes District Council:** Tom reported that somewhat belatedly he had sent the draft policies to LDC (James Garside) for a critique, bearing in mind that it had not been represented in any PMG meetings but was accountable for circa 25% of the area. Garside had responded positively, complimented the project group on its work, whilst providing some useful comments. He acknowledged that the SDNPA was the lead authority for our plan and relaxed that LDC had not been represented.

**Park Barn Farm** (N.B outside the settlement boundary): Tom reported that he, Mike and Edwina had met with Amy & Sarah (SDNPA) who had given them the SDNPA's Landscape Officer's feedback on this possible development site. The officer was concerned at the possibility of additional roads converging onto the Beacon Road and at the possible loss of trees/hedges lining the road, and with the need for appropriate screening. He had expressed doubt in view of this that site would have the capacity to accommodate 13 small houses. He was open to the prospect of development on the site but many of his concerns would be mitigated if access could be obtained via the Long Park Corner roads i.e. 'through' the existing garage block. He advised that LDC's 'garage site strategy' officer (Leighton Rowe) should be approached for his view. Tom reported that he was in contact. Amy/Sarah had advised that the owner of the site, Simon Sinnatt, should be asked for a letter to go in the draft plan setting out the terms of his gift of the land. Tom reported that he had drafted a letter for Simon to send him and awaited its return.

**Walnut Tree Cottage** (N.B outside the settlement boundary): Tom reported that the SDNPA's Landscape Officer had expressed serious reservations about any development

on this site because of its position within the Conservation Area and opposite two large listed buildings. He would also be very reluctant for the hedge lining the site to be removed whilst not ruling development out entirely his principal message was that it would have to be a very high quality if it was to stand a chance of approval. Tom had confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan policies will support retention of the existing settlement boundary unless a greater good could be achieved for the village in the form of maximisation of space for small houses (in this case up to 3). Prior to the open day the owner/agent had indicated that they accepted this. Amy/Sarah had advised that the owner/agent of the site should be asked for a letter to go in the draft plan setting out the basis on which they were prepared to see the site developed. Tom reported that had prepared a draft but the owner/agent had subsequently written withdrawing the site from consideration.

**West side of Nye Lane:** Tom reported that in view of the above he was now seeking the Landscape Officer's view on this site.

**Jointure Site:** It was asked whether the current planning application for an additional three houses on the sand south of The Jointure would count towards our allocation of 15+ houses. Tom said they would not because it was already in the planning process.

**4. Parish Councils:** It was agreed that there would be a plenary meeting of councillors from all three parishes (as many as are available) on March 9th to affirm support for the draft plan and be informed about the pre-submission consultation process.

**Action: Tom** to find venue.

**5. Draft Policies:** Tom reported that Amy/Sarah SDNPA had provided a critique of the draft policies and divided them between 'land use' and 'aspirational'. It had been a useful meeting. Edwina and Mike were now editing the policies and sections; formatting the draft plan; and working on its presentation. Richard Flack was drafting some of the initial sections.

**6. Draft Plan pre-submission;** It was agreed that the statutory 6 week pre-submission consultation with residents, elected bodies and quangos would start on March 16th. The draft plan (key sections) would be available for residents to read on the website and in locations around the three parishes. A flyer would be produced publicising the consultation for delivery to all households and other publicity.

**Action: Edwina** Flyer and publicity

**Tom** to find locations

**7. Implementing the Plan post referendum:** A discussion followed Phil's production of a draft section on post referendum implementation of the plan. The following key points emerged:

There should be an implementation team:

**'Beacon Villages Plan Implementation Team'**

Two key roles:

**1) Monitoring progress regularly in implementing the plan**

**2) Driving forward implementation of the plan & projects, particularly the aspirational policies**

The BPVIT will need to prioritise the policies in terms of which to tackle first and avoid a scattergun approach. It will need to establish time and qualitative measures of success.

The BVPIT will consider all options as to the resources it deploys to drive implementation forward including:

**1) Employing person(s) to undertake projects**

**2) Raising funds through Council Tax and/or Grant giving bodies**

Communication: The BVPIT needs to establish a communications strategy reporting back progress in implementing the policies regularly to residents

**Land Use Policies**

A process needs to be agreed with the Parish Councils and the Local Authorities (SDNPA & LDC)

Whereby all planning applications must be considered in the context of whether they fit with the plan or not and must frame their responses to the applications in regard to whether they do or don't fit with the plan.

With regard to responses to 'significant' applications all three Parish Councils should work together to produce a combined response even though the location of the application might be in just one parish. For example, Streat and Westmeston have an interest in preserving Ditchling's role as a service centre just as much as Ditchling itself. To achieve this all planning applications should be circulated around all three parish councils with each having the power to call for a combined