

Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 15th May 2018 in the Blue Duck Bar, Springhead Pub, Sutton Poyntz, commencing 19.35 hours.

Present: Mike Blee, Bill Davidson, Peter Dye (Chair), Bill Egerton, Sue Elgey, Tony Ferrari, Andy Hohne, Keith Hudson, Keith Johnson, Huw Llewellyn, Colin Marsh, Liz Pegrum.

A total of six residents/landowners (Anne Crocker, Hannah Crocker, Liz Crocker, Louise Rookes, Lyn Grant-Jones, John Crisp) were in attendance and were welcomed by the chair.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies, all members of the Steering Group being present.

2. Bereavement

The chair reported the sad loss two weeks ago of Susan Higham and acknowledged once again her valued contribution to the work of the Steering Group during her time as a member.

3. To Approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th April 2018

The following proposed amendments to the minutes which had been circulated in advance were agreed:

Under Item 7.1 amend to read-

“In referring to land area G10 in the consultant’s report Liz Crocker identified several corrections with reference to her e-mail to the Steering Group dated 16/4/2018 and asked for the evidence to be shared with landowners. All landowners present supported this request. It was agreed that a detailed response to these points be addressed by the Biodiversity sub-group prior ... this should take.”

Under item 7.2 amend to read -

Liz Crocker notedowned. CM asked Liz G10. With reference to previous correspondence she reminded the group that designation has a financial implication for land owners, that LGS does not guarantee land management practices and that there are existing levels of protection for the land such as AONB status and it is outside of the development boundary; she asked the group to set out the added value of Local Green Space designation. PD commented that ... final analysis; he agreed that it would be beneficial ... months and offered to facilitate issues.

Paragraph 4 second sentence to begin with LC not LP.

Under Item 8f amend to read -

LP noted ... life of the plan John Crisp considered that the criteria defining second homes do not seem reasonable ... the test. For this reason he suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan should not make firm policy on second homes. The chair considered within the plan and this was a matter for the Housing and Planning

sub-group to discuss and return to the Steering Group with specific recommendations.

It was agreed that the chair should endorse the minutes subject to these changes.

Action:PD/CM

4. To Receive an update on any actions arising from the minutes of the previous meeting (not otherwise on the agenda)

The chair noted that all actions from the previous meeting were either addressed elsewhere on the agenda or had been completed. He reported that he had written to Blue Cedar Homes and was awaiting a response

Action: PD

5. Update on Grant Funding.

The chair asked TF to clarify the situation regarding additional funding that had been obtained from the local authority to cover the shortfall created by changes in government rules on grant allocation. TF reported that a block grant of £3.2k had been agreed in principle. The chair emphasised the need to confirm arrangements for payment and oversight. It was agreed that BE would liaise with Terry Pegrum (Treasurer of the Sutton Poyntz Society) to agree the arrangements. With the small residual amount from previous grant allocation sources, a total of £3.9k was provisionally available to see the Neighbourhood Plan through to completion. TF was thanked by the chair for his efforts in securing this important financial support.

The chair went through the list of outstanding work and scheduled costings which had been previously circulated, and concluded that we were now well placed to deliver a Neighbourhood Plan within the funding available.

6. To Receive an update on Income and Expenditure

LP confirmed that there was no further income or expenditure since the last report. The chair noted that a residual payment to the consultant was outstanding but this had been allowed for in the costings.

7. To Receive an update regarding Consultation with Landowners.

The chair reported on various communications with landowners and explained that these were summarised within the spreadsheet which had been circulated in advance. He commented that it was the responsibility of the respective sub-groups to consider these responses when developing policies.

Action:All sub-groups

Liz Crocker asked whether her response to the Consultants report on Key Views had been circulated. As this did not appear to be the case, it was agreed that this would be actioned.

Action:CM

A response from Wessex Water to the Local Green Space and Key View Consultant reports was pending.

8. To Receive Sub-group Reports

Since LP needed to leave the meeting early the chair got agreement to bring forward the Housing and Planning sub-group report.

a) Housing and Planning – MB gave a detailed account of his concerns regarding the recent discussion paper produced by the H and P sub-group, specifically a map of

housing sites within the Defined Development Boundary (DDB). He made a number of key points as follows:-

- Concern at the H and P plan which showed specific sites, contrary to the consultants, at the meeting with the Steering Group held on 23/9/17 (pre-circulated), having made it clear that a call for sites was not required unless the Defined Development Boundary (DBB) was changed; the village survey had subsequently confirmed a desire not to change the boundary.
- The Stage Two Survey response on the DDB was clear and should be used to define policy i.e. any development to be within the DDB, as opposed to the sub-group imposing its own ideas.
- The proposals to demolish houses and build multiple houses on those sites would devalue nearby properties (in this respect he declared an interest) as they would have to disclose the potential development in writing prior to sale of their property if the development opportunities plan was published.
- Development at a low density of the requisite number of houses could be supported within the current development boundary given the low density of existing housing and the demand for downsizing (e.g. to flats or bungalows) identified in the recent public consultation survey.
- The Neighbourhood Plan policy was not expected to provide comment on viability or detailed planning issues, this being a matter for the planners. The policy should focus on type, size, design, character rather than numbers, beyond welcoming development within the DDB up to a maximum of 20 properties. He noted that many Neighbourhood Plans had adopted similar policies as the policies were designed to form part of the overall planning policy framework not to 'trump' local or national policy.
- In relation to the above, reference was made to the Amberley Neighbourhood Plan where the inspector had suggested amendments to the policy allowing proposed development outside of the DDB in exceptional circumstances. In Sutton Poyntz this is reflected in a recent decision to allow building of a single dwelling outside of the DDB.
- The housing policy must echo the views expressed by the village community if the Neighbourhood Plan is not to fail at the referendum.
- Concern was expressed that the sub-group chair had approached Richard Burgess and others for advice when it had previously been agreed not to do so without the agreement of the Steering Group.

In response the chair identified the key point for consideration as the validity of H & P Policy 1, relating to the Defined Development Boundary (DDB). He reminded the meeting that, if there was no proposal to change the boundary, the consultants advice was not include a specific DDB policy (as it would simply be repeating an existing policy) Moreover, if it was included, we had to be prepared to justify such a policy and to demonstrate its viability, particularly the question of residual housing capacity, which was all that the sub-group had been working on.

LP stated that if the DDB were not moved the viability of providing 20 homes within the existing boundary would be challenged and the discussions within the sub-group had sought to provide evidence to address this. If potential housing space could be identified a policy could be formulated if not then it would be best to remain silent on the issue of the DDB. It was important to have a positive policy and not be seen to be protectionist and not to include the existing DDB arrangements as policy within the Plan. In short, the advice was to stay silent on the DDB if it were not to be amended

and that it was acceptable not to allocate sites, if as in Sutton Poyntz, the local authority housing requirements are already being met.

After some discussion, the chair again emphasised the basis for a decision was whether we needed to include a policy on the DDB, given that the Local Plan already included such a policy, and the requirement to provide supporting evidence. On the other hand, no further action was needed if we chose to remain silent on the issue.

It was noted that a detailed explanation as to the reasons for the final decision would be necessary in view of the survey feedback. TF confirmed that the Weymouth and Portland Borough Council Local Plan Review would not change the DDB. If ownership of the DDB remained with the Council, in the absence of a Sutton Poyntz policy, we could not expect to demand that exceptions (relating to potential development outside the DDB) should be included in the Local Plan, although the village's aspirations in this context could be included in the Neighbourhood Plan. HL argued that, since it was possible to fit up to 20 homes within the current DDB, no further action was needed and it was unnecessary for the H&P discussion paper to enter the public domain - as in the absence of a policy on the DDB no supporting evidence was required. BE commented that, if necessary, we would still be able to demonstrate to the inspector that a basic analysis had been carried out.

The meeting agreed that a separate policy on the DDB was not required and that the draft H&P 1 policy would be rewritten. **Action:H & P sub-group**

In reporting on Key Views, LP noted that feedback had been received from BE relating to Northdown Farm and that Peter Broatch (landowner) had expressed concern about a photograph being taken from private land. The latter would be re-taken from a publicly accessible location. LP suggested that in the absence of any further feedback that the nine views (which included additional and 'sweep' views) proposed in the paper produced by the H&P sub-group for the April meeting be adopted

The meeting agreed to the H&P sub-group's recommendations, subject to the changes identified above. **Action: H&P sub-group**

Although it had been agreed not to include a policy on holiday homes, the village's concerns would need to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The meeting agreed that the issue of holiday homes should be addressed within the H&P section. **Action: H&P sub-group**

LP left the meeting at this point as previously indicated.

b) Biodiversity and the Natural Environment – CM summarised the key points from the sub-group document on Local Green Space (LGS):

- Alignment with current UK government policy in terms of the 25-year Environment Plan.
- The Local Authority approach to green issues, specifically connectivity, definition of green corridors, stepping stones and buffer zones, and their relationship to the River Jordan as an essential naturally formed wildlife transit route.
- Recognition in the Weymouth and Portland Local Plan review of a need to protect and enhance biodiversity in relation to planning and how good intent is not always matched by reality.

- The importance of connectivity to the wider countryside and adjacent locations including other potential future Neighbourhood Plan areas.
- The recognition of a need for multiple layers of protection and for seeking higher levels of protection as highlighted in the proposed hierarchy.
- Support for all the proposed LGS from some landowners and the need to recognise that selection of LGS was based on the land and not who owned the land.
- Recommended adoption of the LGS as proposed by the independent consultants.

In response, Liz Crocker (LC) emphasised that the main objection to these proposals in relation to the land that the Crocker family owned was the potential reduction in land value because of the proposed designation, although CM noted that land price was affected by many factors. LC expressed further concerns about validity of the hierarchy of protection proposed by the sub-group, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of the AONB designation. On issues of detail, area G10 (as amended) was 0.08 hectare and not 0.1 hectares, and evidence was requested demonstrating that the species of tree was an Aspen rather than a Black Poplar. Most importantly, it was argued that the imminent Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Green Infrastructure proposals would have to be considered.

In commenting upon the hierarchy, BE argued that the NPPF criteria gave Local Greenspace a higher status than Green Infrastructure.

Lyn Grant-Jones noted that the area of G9 was about 0.2 hectare and asked for this to be recorded. In opposing LGS designation she asked the group to trust the owners of the land to manage it appropriately.

The chair considered that all parties were trying to achieve the same outcome, to maintain the 'status quo'. Louise Rookes (landowner) suggested that sufficient protection already existed while BD wondered if the land could be brought within the scope of Assets of Community Value, although it was agreed by the group that this was probably not appropriate.

The chair proposed that, once the local authority green infrastructure proposals were available (scheduled for publication on 24th May 2018), the sub-group proposals (incorporating the factual corrections discussed above) should be forwarded to all landowners for comment,

Action: Biodiversity sub-group/PD

c) Employment Business and Tourism – AH confirmed there was nothing to report and that this section would include only community aspirations and not policies.

d) Heritage – d) Heritage – BE referred to a proposal he had circulated earlier following discussion at an AONB organised event in the village on 10th May. This proposed that a heritage assessment could be conducted by an independent professional for less than £1k, compared to other quotes which had been in the region of £3k. The report, based on Historic England criteria, would identify candidates for local listing and could be produced by September 2018.

Some concerns were expressed as to the implications of 'listing' by AH and JC. BE sought to allay any concerns and noted that a local listing was less onerous with no obligations in respect of additional planning considerations, although the planning authority would be required to protect listed sites and take account of the listing.

LC emphasised the need to be clear as to the assessment criteria employed while PD emphasised the need to define the benefits and implications of such an assessment and, given the previous controversy, to think through how the report would be communicated with householders.

BE considered that the listing would provide additional protection to the second layer of heritage. JC and others saw some value in creating a list but felt that it was essential to be clear as to how it would be used. CM felt that it was appropriate to commission a report which would include a statement as to the implications for property owners so that the Steering Group were in a better position to decide on the next steps.

The meeting agreed in principle that an independent heritage assessment should be conducted but that it would only go ahead once the criteria to be employed had been agreed and there was a clearer understanding about the implications for property owners. The Heritage sub-group was asked to report back on these issues at the June Steering Group meeting. **Action: Heritage sub-group**

e) Sports and Recreation - KJ confirmed that there was nothing to report.

f) Transport – SE confirmed that there was nothing to report.

9. To Receive an Update on Revisions to the Draft Place Appraisal.

The chair reported that he had met with BE and CM to consider the public feedback and make changes to the draft Place Appraisal. The spreadsheet of changes had been circulated and the revised document placed on Drop Box.

10. To Receive an Update on Progress with the Production of a Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The chair reported that he had met with CM and a rough draft Neighbourhood Plan had been produced and circulated. This would need to be updated as policy revisions emerge.

11. To Review the Draft Consultation Statement

This updated document had been circulated in advance. Liz Crocker noted that her action from the last meeting had been completed and this was acknowledged. BD asked that the reference to the Sutton Poyntz Society having unanimously agreed to develop a Neighbourhood Plan was inaccurate and this should be changed to reflect the fact that this was a majority decision. **Action:CM**

TF requested that the sequencing of the contents page and the main text be fully aligned. **Action:CM**

12. To Review Progress against the Neighbourhood Plan Timetables

CM confirmed that the timetable had been amended as requested at the April meeting. It was confirmed that the proposal to circulate the draft Neighbourhood Plan to all stakeholders was now scheduled for August 2018 and the Regulation 14 Formal Consultation for October/November 2018.

13. To Address Items of Correspondence

CM reported that there were no items of correspondence beyond those that had already been referred to.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 The chair noted that, although direct consultation had taken place between the Steering Group and some local landowners in relation to local green space and key views, the broader issues related to housing etc. had not been subject to direct consultation and several landowners had requested meetings which had yet to take place. MB expressed the view that a policy document was required prior to such discussions but TF considered it important to meet before a policy was finalised in order that views could be considered. CM felt that since the meetings had been initially mooted in July 2017, they should go ahead without further delay, a view supported by BD.

It was agreed that a series of meetings (separate to the monthly Steering Group meetings) would be organised with interested landowners. It was hoped that up to six Steering Group members could participate in what was primarily envisaged as a listening exercise, although a formal record would be kept. **Action: PD**

14.2 John Crisp noted that in view of the funding situation the Village Street Fayre Committee should be asked to make a contribution to the costs of producing a Neighbourhood Plan should there be a shortfall.

The meeting closed at 21.48 hours.

The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 19th June 2018 at 19.30 hours.