**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**

**MINUTES** of meeting held on Tuesday December 13, 2016 at 7.30 at the Youth Centre.

**Present** : Stephen Hardy, Nick Greenfield, Judy Rogers, Lesley Smith, Sheila Brazier, Karen Ripley, Ruth Hardy, Jeremy Knott, Peter Davies, Martin Bates

**1. Apologies:** Alexander Church, Tamara Strapp, Sean O'Hara

**2. Declarations of Interest**: None.

**3. Minutes of previous meetings** held on September 6 and November 8, 11 and 14 were all approved.

**4. Review of draft Reg 15 Plan and associated documents**:

General points: Questions about inconsistencies of language, e.g. “parish” and “village” and it was agreed that we should revise wherever we found such, and recognised that there would be one final opportunity to revise post receipt of the Inspector's comments and the Reg. 16 consultation results

P.15 Sentences from HWAONB refined to relate specifically to Robertsbridge rather than the whole AONB area. (the sentence starting “the area covered by the SRNDP lies entirely with the HWAONB etc.)

p. 24 added to suit ESCC - “and is accessible to support its role as a rural service centre ...”

Historic England wanted maintenance and restoration of historic shop fronts.

p.27 Tourism: paragraph relating to the DaSA included. Peter suggested that it should be spelt out in full the first time it was used i.e. Development and Site Allocations. Karen suggested removing the word “emerging” as by the time the Plan appeared it would be in existence.

p.28 Amendment from HE included entirely.

p.29 Sustainable transport update in accordance with ESCC suggestion.

p.30 para.3:2:l Although members had their reservations about County comments about future capacity it was agreed not to change the wording as drafted.

p.32 High Weald: strike out “views into and out of the AONB”.

Environment Agency want to see the preservation of linear ecological corridors (i.e. streams). Inserted in Countryside Protection EN3.

EN8 HE have changed the wording of the policy. There was discussion of the map referred to (13) – it is there, in Annex 1.

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The tree consultation had involved an enormous amount of work. It had been decided previously to take a pragmatic approach if people objected strongly, by removing them from the list. We had received two strong objections, one from the Hoads who had four trees listed and one from Strutt & Parker on behalf of Mountfield Estates, relating to the band of trees between the two sites at Heathfield Gardens. They are saying that inevitably some of it will have to be removed. The wording needs looking at carefully as the second sentence is ambiguous: **Stephen** will look at it.

EN10: HWAONB suggested a specific policy to be included which they attached to their submission, which was agreed to but would be incorporated into EN3.

Housing: Stephen referred to the recent decision about Newick, where the Secretary of State had ruled that because the local Plan did not specifically state that there would not be any more houses apart from the sites identified, that in effect meant that they accepted that there could be more. Therefore we needed a number of changes to try to address this problem. Stephen would work with Donna to draft appropriate wording.

HO1 New wording: any development outside the boundary will be regarded as lying in the countryside as defined in the Rother Core Strategy. There are specific policies in the Core Strategy which say you cannot have development in the countryside. The last sentence after the bit that says if it is in the countryside, should be removed.

Housing requirements: Peter felt that one of our great weaknesses is that we need all our sites to be completed in order to meet the target of 155. He questioned whether we need another site as a fall-back in the policy which would give a margin of spare capacity so that we would be better defended. It would also be a way of being positive rather than obstructive to development. Jeremy felt that we already have about twenty “spare” dwellings with the three preferred sites we already have. Stephen felt that the Mill and Heathfield Gardens have demonstrated that they are highly motivated to proceed and have already invested a considerable amount of money on pre-app discussions, drawing up plans etc.

There was lengthy discussion about the wording and whether we should be more precise about the numbers or leave wider and more flexible “bands” of projected numbers, and also spell out that with these numbers we are actually exceeding our target. Finally, after a vote it was decided to leave the wording as it was.

Jeremy queried why the list of seven criteria did not include parking. Stephen explained that it was not an exhaustive list and others appeared elsewhere in the document. Wording should be altered to “subject to the criteria which include the following” or “these are examples ...”

HO4 Add in “within the development boundary”.

HO5 ESCC want a reference to sheltered housing.

HO6 Strutt & Parker wanted a different term but it was decided that we should stick to “affordable”. Jeremy requested that a footnote should be added explaining what “affordable” means in planning terms.

p.43 Needs realigning – there is no page number and a large gap in the middle.

IN3 Southern Water want a specific reference which has not been included. **Stephen** will look it up.

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IN5 Pedestrian safety: suggestion from ESCC has been incorporated.

IN8 The print overlapping in the box needs sorting out. It needs the word **unless** before points 1, 2 and 3.

LE3 Peter suggested changing the order so that the first sentence is last, which would read better and avoid possibilities of misinterpretation.

LE3 New facilities: (ESCC) “and actively promote … sustainable transport”.

P.74 Local listing: Peter pointed out that we had agreed ages ago to change the wording, which had not been done.

p.61 Martin noted that this was not the latest version which he had provided. He also asked whether the complete list of already listed buildings needed to be in the document. He would prefer to see it in a separate appendix.

Schedule 3: There is a change of typeface at the bottom of the list. Also after discussion at Peter's suggestion it was agreed to delete the last sentence. Jeremy also felt we should include a sentence referring to the HE criteria. **Stephen** will redraft it. **Martin** will send Stephen the final version of his document in Word so that he is able to amend them.

Jeremy questioned why we had not written to all the owners of properties on the list. It had been decided that as the list had been clearly displayed at the Consultation Day, that was sufficient consultation.

Martin asked what had happened to the photographs. **Stephen** will ask Donna as they need to be in somewhere. That applies to both the buildings list and the trees.

Trees and hedgerows: this section (p.78) is also not based on Martin's latest version, which again he will send to Stephen as a Word document. **Stephen** will ask about these photographs too.

Karen asked if we need to include Annex 2, and also whether the SEA (Strategic Environment Assessment) has been amended in view of comments received. Stephen confirmed that it is in the Basic Condition Statement. As to whether we need a new Annex 2, Stephen felt the answer was probably yet, but will confirm.

Donna will now work on the amendments and have the final version ready for Thursday. Karen reminded Stephen that he will need to do a presentation to the Parish Council, as they are being asked to sign the Plan off and will not have seen the final version.

**5. Date of next meeting** Thursday December 15, 7.00 at the Youth Centre in the Georgian Room, before the Parish Council meeting which begins at 7.30.

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