

STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

Minutes of meeting held on 31st October, 2018

Present: Robin Oakley(RO), Colin Bowden (CB), Cllr. Tom Burnham (TB), John Kelly (JK), Colin Love.

Apologies for absence: Cllr.Gill Smith, Margaret Arger, Cllr. Joan Buller, Cllr. Adele Sharp

1. **Membership of Group.** No changes.
2. **Minutes of Meeting on 26 September, 2018.** No comments or matters arising.
3. **Non-Councillor Members Policy and Procedures.** This document, prepared by the Parish Council, of which this Group is a sub-group, had been forwarded to all members of the Group prior to the meeting. JK expressed concern regarding Para. 2 of the document and the fact that no checks of members of the group have been undertaken. JK said that he believed all members of the Group should sign a form relating to the four points mentioned in Para. 2. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk should be asked to prepare a declaration document for the members of the Group to sign to confirm that they are not disqualified from serving on the Group.
4. **David Wilson Homes (DWH) Land north of Marden Road.** Concern was expressed about Southern Water's decision to permit the first 50 houses to be connected to the foul sewerage system in Marden Road, given that they had previously said that there was no spare capacity on the existing foul sewer. CB had submitted comments to MBC but had not received a response to date. Concern was also expressed regarding the apparent lack of emergency access to completed and occupied houses during the constructions works. Concern was also expressed as to whether overall schemes for foul and surface water drainage have been full examined by a qualified civil engineer and signed off as approved. The NPRG expressed concern that David Wilson Homes has yet to make a full planning application and it recommended that SPC should seek to obtain a date for this from MBC. If none is forthcoming from MBC, then SPC should seek MBC's views regarding the absence of a full application, for such a major site.
5. **Reported Planning Decisions.** TB spoke on behalf of SPC at MBC's Development Control Committee regarding the proposal for apartments at Holman House, Station Road which the Parish Council had requested be refused planning permission. However, the Development Control Committee gave approval, subject to some minor alterations. Planning permission has been given for two more caravans to be sited at Woodside Place, Goudhurst Road. The application for a new access to Thorford Hall Farm was refused. The application for two houses and a replacement agricultural building on land south of The Gables, Marden Road, had also been refused.
6. **Review of Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan Objective O6.** The suggested revision for this objective had been circulated to Group members prior to the meeting and after some discussion it was amended and its final form for presentation to the Parish Council as part of the overall set of suggested revisions is shown as an attachment to these minutes.
7. **Asset of Community Value – The King's Head Public House.** The Parish Clerk had asked the Group if they could assist with listing the uses to which the King's Head is put, over and above the sale of food and beverages. Discussion took place and the following events were mentioned; funeral wakes, sport on television, use by church organisations for social events, Womens' Institute Darts Team, Rector's monthly tea party. JK said that he believed that the only way to get an accurate list would be to interview the current licensee, but even then, it would be difficult to foresee the potential of future use. He suggested that the Parish Clerk should ask the licensee and /or Shepherd Neame if they would be prepared to meet him to discuss the proposal and list current events.
8. **Lodge Road and Station Area Regeneration.** Nothing to report.

9. The Parade. Nothing to report.

10. Sainsbury's. Nothing to report.

11. Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan. TB drew attention to the current consultation document sent out by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC). He expressed concern that large numbers of houses could be built in Hawkhurst, Hartley, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst which would probably result in increased traffic on the A229 to Staplehurst Station and beyond to Maidstone. The present bus service 5 is not really adequate to serve an increased number of people wishing to get to places of work in Maidstone or London via Staplehurst Station. The document also suggests that a new 'Garden Village' might be set up within the borough, but given that a large percentage of the borough area is in the High Weald AONB which would not be acceptable to many people, the only locations for such a village would be along the Northern edge of the borough, e.g. at Paddock Wood or Frittenden. The Group is recommending to the Parish Council that the Clerk should be asked to write to TWBC and Maidstone Borough Council asking them to set up a meeting to discuss cross border issues.

12. AOB. JK expressed concern about the problems which are ongoing relating to access to the Wimpey Field Nature Reserve. Some access routes for visitors to the reserve have been obstructed, apparently at the instigation of residents, and he is concerned that the problems being experienced should not set a precedent for similar situations on other new developments within the parish.

13. Date of next meeting. 28th November 2018.