

STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

Minutes of meeting held on 10 January, 2018

Present: John Kelly(JK), Robin Oakley(RO), Tom Burnham(TB), Robin Kenworthy(RK), Joan Buller(JB), Margaret Arger (MA)(Chairman) Colin Love (CL)

Apologies for absence: Gill Smith, Adele Sharp

1. **Membership of Group.** No change.
2. **Minutes of Meeting on 8th November, 2017.** No comments.
3. **Matters arising, not covered on the agenda.** None
4. **Maidstone Borough Council's response to FOI request regarding land north of Henhurst Farm.** At the request of the parish council (SPC) the group discussed the response from Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to the parish council's freedom of information request regarding the manner in which land north of Henhurst Farm was added in to the Maidstone Local Plan (LP) without consultation with the parish council. TB said that MBC were supposed to have liaised with SPC but they did not do this or discuss the proposal. JB said that parish councillors had always thought that the neighbourhood plan (NP) had precedence over the Local Plan and did not realise that the LP would trump our NP. It was agreed that the Group would recommend to the SPC that should the site come forward with a planning application in the future it should be challenged on grounds that no public consultation has taken place. It was agreed that the large number of changes in MBC personnel during the preparation of the NP and LP had been a problem. CL suggested that the SPC members taking part in informal discussions with MBC and other authorities and providers should produce notes of what was discussed and agreed and that copies of the notes should be sent to all parties to the discussions.
5. **Planning Applications currently awaiting MBC decisions.** The following planning applications have been discussed by SPC and forwarded to MBC with recommendations in every case that the application should be refused:

New houses at Bletchingley Farm, Pristling Lane.
New apartments at Holman House, Station Road.

New houses at Iden Grange, Cranbrook Road
Access to land at Iden Park, Cranbrook Road.

Planning application by David Wilson Homes on land at Hen and Duckhurst Farm. MA & RO reported on their perusal of the planning application documents earlier in the day. The **Travel Plan** contains a number of factual errors, particularly relating to rail and bus services. It states that the Service 5 bus stops adjacent to Maidstone Station and that buses run half-hourly in the peak, both of which statements are untrue. It states that the station provides transportation to Maidstone; the latter only applies if one changes trains at Paddock Wood or Ashford, for which there would be cost and time penalties compared with the bus service. It also refers to there being a bank in Staplehurst and the existence of the 'Sainsbury's roundabout' on Station Road, neither of which are correct. The **Design and Access Statement** states that all front doors to dwellings will be black GRP; members expressed their dismay at this. Drawing 401E shows permeable block paving and concern was expressed that this does not work well in the long term, as experienced at the Health Centre where the blocks have been installed for 10 years and are moving apart leaving large gap hazards as a result the movement of the clay sub-strata. On planning layout drawing 1737.01 one pair of semi-detached houses which had been shown close to the rear of properties in Marlfield has been removed but is still shown on Construction Phase Plan GA/CP/001. The footway around the East side of the new roundabout needs to be extended further along the North side of Marden Road. Members expressed concern that there is no street lighting shown on any plans and that given that house purchasers are to be encouraged to walk to the station and to the bus stop in High Street, lighting is essential from a security point of view. There is no

foul drainage layout and the only reference to foul drainage could be found in DWH's report on their public consultation where they acknowledge that this has been raised by many respondents and that they will address this in consultation with the statutory provider (Southern Water). It was pointed out that the recent application for new housing on land South of Marden Road had included for a sewage pumping station to pump the sewage through a new pumped sewer along Marden Road, across the A229 and along Headcorn Road to join a sewer which runs north to the water treatment works. DWH's report also acknowledges that many respondents were concerned with the impact of the new development on the surface water drainage of the site, expressing concerns that the development could result in localised flooding. SPC will need to keep in close contact with DWH and Southern Water regarding foul drainage provision and surface water drainage.

7. **Gypsy and Traveller Sites.** It was noted that SPC has received a request from Gypsy Cooperative Kent for a meeting with the SPC Planning Committee to discuss the site at Three Sons, Parkwood Lane. It was further noted that the SPC's list of gypsy and traveller sites needs updating and enlarging to cover the whole parish as a record for the planning committee and the NPRG to use as an aide-memoire.
8. **Station Regeneration.** It was reported that Cllr. John Perry is trying to arrange a meeting with the railway and William Cornell of MBC to discuss the possibility of regenerating the station area in line with the NP.
9. **Village Assets.** It was agreed that it would be useful to have a list of what could be regarded as community assets. JK said that he might still have the list which was drafted when work first started on the preparation of the NP and he would try to find the list.
10. **Railway Tavern.** It was noted that the planning application to change the Railway Tavern into a dwelling and to build on the car park had been granted on appeal.
11. **Sainsbury's Proposed New Store.** Nothing to report.

Meetings in 2018 would be on Wednesdays, 7th February, 7th March, and 11th April.