

Steering Group Meeting 5.30 p.m. 23rd April 2018 – The Village Institute

Present: J Pilcher ©, S Carmichael, T Killeen, L Young, R Tait, S Burley, A Cook, A Lloyd, D Goodale, J Robson, P Reeves, F Nowne

Apologies: J Poole, D Studholme, P Sewell, G Tucker.

Minutes of the last Meeting – signed as an accurate note of those proceedings.

Flimwell Representation. Three members of the Flimwell community had been invited to state their objections to the inclusion of the Wardsdown Site for 9 dwellings for a ten minute period starting at 6 p.m. Members of the SG would be able to ask for clarification on any points raised but there would be no open discussion or recommendations reached.

The main points raised were:

- Ecological ones - proximity to ancient woodland and sphagnum bog areas, the potential effect on the river Bewl. Disappointment that the SEA did not cover the woodland, but only the site put forward for consideration and a request that the SEA be re-commissioned to cover a wider area to produce a more balanced view.
- Over-development of Flimwell – a resident of Old Wardsdown pointed out that Union Street in particular, had been spoilt by over development and it was time to call a halt to any more intrusion into the historical development. The potential to access a larger piece of ground (also put forward in the call for sites process) was a major concern, despite the chairman explaining that the limitations of the Wardsdown recommendation would strengthen the protection of the land beyond.
- The lack of adequate infrastructure in Flimwell to sustain more development.

Queries raised by the SG included:

- Clarification of ownership/s of the access track.
- It was pointed out that the Parish Council had always tried to support Flimwell, currently with the provision of a hall, a room for a potential shop and a new playground for 2018. Those present stated that they were not complaining, but felt they needed to raise local concerns.
- Cllr. Lloyd advised that the owner of the ancient woodland should seek assistance from Natural England to list the site as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, thus providing further protection.

4. Progression of the Consultation Process:

SC explained that there were four areas to be reviewed:-

- The Questionnaires - responses will be summarised by policy
- Detailed objections – e.g. the Wardsdown one, will be considered individually.
- Statutory Body responses – RDC, ESCC AONB – comments and responses are being collated.

- EBPR from AECOM will be reviewed and considered but as this is advice rather than an official response to Regulation 14, it will be accepted if it highlights a valid piece of evidence that has been missed and or where it supports the majority view.

Responses are being tabulated in word or excel formats (which will be forward to Feria) but will take a significant amount of work to completed. Thanks were extended to SC and TK who have commenced the RDC response, taking over three hours just to collate the comments from statutory bodies before any consideration to responses or any revised wording for the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The main requirement was the redrafting of some policies and particular wording and advice from RDC (who have experience of Examiner expectations) to ensure consistency throughout the plan. Some policies will need amalgamation, additional evidence and some slight alterations.

TK explained that the design guidance will need some revision as RDC have asked for each individual site, which would provide a clear indication of local community expectation – this guidance should assist with sites such as Banky Field where the outline permission design is poor. This revision will be undertaken by J Robson and Cllr. J Galpin.

Green Spaces: JP reported that two owners in Stonegate who have objected to the inclusion of their land as green spaces have been contacted to inform them that the allocation on each had been removed. The size of the area around Singehurst pond will also be revised in the light of the owners' queries.

It is hoped that the revisions will be completed by the end of June 2018 so that it can be ratified by the PC. Feria have additional documentation to compile for Regulation 16 which again, will be subject to revision before being sent for examination and referendum. The intention of the SG should be to reach referendum by the end of 2018.

5. Call for Sites Revision:

JP explained that since the last SG meeting, the core team had reconsidered the Singehurst site as a revised proposal had been submitted, addressing the major criticisms made during the appeal process. However, at a meeting with DM (RDC) he had expressed concerns at the failure of Hillbury Field to sell but still maintained his position that Singehurst was not acceptable as a site. It had been suggested to Rydon Homes that they had a pre-application meeting with RDC and with the AONB to see if there was some compromise that could be reached as the latest sketches were attractive and had received little local objection.

It was reported that the committee have been approached by other interested parties, who had not made a submission during the call for sites period and advice provided by the SG was to make their own representation to RDC.

6. Plans for the Village Centre:

LY reported that A Linfoot has been commissioned to work with RDC Conservation Officer and ESCC to produce acceptable plans that will be acceptable to the village and to those whose permission will be needed. It is likely that the whole scheme will cost approximately

£800,000.00 but should provide a large community space, a one-way system with narrowed entry and exit points and a safe crossing between the northern and southern sides of the High Street.

The refurbishment of the well is underway and will have an impact on the street scene. The large roots extracted to allow for the works, have led the team to the conclusion that the horse chestnut nearest the road, could be compromised and present a risk to those using the road and the village centre. It will be removed in the next few weeks.

7. Village Annual Assembly – 30th April 2018:

It was decided to have the draft plans for people to question policy and sites and that the Village Square team would also have a table.

8. Date of the Next Meeting - Thursday 31st May 2018 5.30 p.m.