

## STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

### Minutes of virtual meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 at 7.45pm

- 1. Present**, Robin Oakley, Secretary(RO), Margaret Arger, Chairman (MA), Colin Love (CL), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB), Cllr. Paddy Riordan (PR), Tom Burnham (TB), Robin Kenworthy (RK), Cllr. John Perry (JP), Cllr. Adele Sharp (AS) joined the meeting at 8.30pm after a Village Centre meeting.
- 2. Apologies:** No apologies received but PR advised that he has received notice from Cllr. Natasha Thomas that she intends to resign as a parish councillor
- 3. Minutes of Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021, 2021:** Agreed
- 4. Matters Arising.** JB drew attention to an error on Item 9 line 6 which should read '.....a museum in Staplehurst and AS suggested that the air raid shelters might be suitable for adaption as a museum.' PR said that he had received news from Sainsburys regarding their proposed shoppers' bus services. One route would cover Stile Bridge, Marden, Marden Beech, Winchet Hill, Goudhurst and Kilndown. The other route would cover Hawkenbury, Headcorn, Biddenden, Three Chimneys, Sissinghurst, Wilsley Pound, Cranbrook and Knoxbridge. It was queried as why Headcorn, which already has a Sainsbury's store, has been included but Frittenden which has no bus service, has not been included. JB expressed concern as she had understood the bus service would cover local roads at the other end of the village. PR said he would take this matter up with Sainsbury's.
- 5. Design Code for Housing in Staplehurst.** MA said that the Design Code now had some photographs added and it now needed to be tidied up and made more presentable. PR said that he was happy with the additional clause on drainage which had been suggested by RO and that it should be added to the document. It was agreed that the document should now be offered to the parish council for approval.
- 6. Group Members' comments on Neighbourhood Plan policies PW1,2,3 & 4.** Various group members have submitted comments and in an E mail CL expressed the view that the policies have stood the test of time very well but may need some updating. However he suggested that we should be cautious about being definitive about what will not be supported in terms of development as there is danger that Maidstone will cry foul as the plan goes forward. CL said that none of the current housing developments at Dickens Gate, or the Bovis and Redrow developments in Headcorn Road complied with the Neighbourhood Plan TB commented on CL's E mail saying that we need to demonstrate that any proposals which are likely to be controversial (including to landowners and developers) can be shown to be necessary and relevant in the context of Staplehurst over and above what may be included in borough, county or national guidance. TB pointed out that if it was decided to build a new sports hall, additional land would be required if encroachment on to the football pitches was to be avoided, as MBC would require additional vehicle parking. TB also asked if there had ever been any feedback from MBC on the feasibility study of development of the station area. It was agreed that this should be queried with MBC. PR said that we should not support development outside the village envelope, e.g. north of the railway. JB said that we should prepare a map showing the green spaces proposed for listing under PW1 Para. 7.17. The recommended amendments to the NP Policies PW1,2,3 & 4 are shown in an annexe to these minutes entitled 'Review of Neighbourhood Plan Policies PW1,2,3 & 4'
- 7. Gypsy and Traveller Provision.** JB had drawn attention to the gypsy and traveller site provision in the Tunbridge Wells District Council's Local Plan and had completed a comparison between it and the MBC provision. PR said that the TW provision was much better than MBC's and he said that we should tell MBC to follow the example. JP agreed with the views on G & T and he thought PW1 and 2 both need strengthening as they are key policies. He will do some re-drafting of MBC's G & T policy and will circulate it in due course. This will be an Agenda item for the September meeting of this Group.

**8. Any other business.**

**Biodiversity.** MA drew attention to an item on the BBC TV Programme Country File on 15 August 2021 which covered protection of sites.

**Village Centre.** AS said that there are various proposals pending for improvements to the Village Centre including provision of a link between the North and South Halls and there have been discussions with MBC planners. Most of the changes are internal changes . PR pointed out that at present there is no finance in place for such changes. AS said that full details of the proposals will be available to be discussed at the Village Centre AGM on 15 September, 2021.

**Land South of South Cottage, High Street.** The planning appeal relating to the building of a new house on this site resulted in the granting of planning permission. However, the Planning Inspector's Report contains a number of factual errors and it is understood that MBC is taking this up with the Planning Inspectorate(PI) PR said that he had complained to the PI and their reply was unhelpful. He has taken the matter up with Helen Grant MP and she would bring this to the attention of the Secretary of State.

**Conservation Area.** TB suggested that the Parish Council should ask MBC to carry out a formal survey and appraisal of the Staplehurst Conservation Area.

**9. Future Meetings on Zoom starting at 7.45pm.**

September 22, October 27, November 24, December 22.

The meeting closed at 8.53pm.

Robin Oakley 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2021