

## STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

### Minutes of virtual meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021

- 1. Present:** Cllr. Paddy Riordan (PR) PC Chairman and Zoom Host, Robin Oakley, Secretary (RO), Margaret Arger, Chairman (MA), Tom Burnham (TB), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB), Cllr. Adele Sharp (AS), Cllr. John Perry (JP), Robin Kenworthy (RK), Colin Love (CL)
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr. Colin Bowden, Cllr. Sue Forward
- 3. Welcome:** MA welcomed Group members and wished them a happy new year.
- 4. Minutes of Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020:** Agreed
- 5. Matters Arising:** It was noted that the Parish Council's Greener Staplehurst Group have agreed to survey trees on potential housing development sites with a view to obtaining Tree Preservation Orders. It was noted that the Planning Application for the poultry farm at Chainhurst was discussed at the PC's Planning Committee and it was decided to join other local parish councils in recommending that the Borough Council refuse the application.
- 6. Future role and work of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group:** MA introduced the item and explained that as the revision to the NP was completed last year the Group needed to agree its role and work for the coming year. JP said that he believed that design issues with new housing developments were important and that we need to strengthen our policies in respect of photo-voltaic solar panels, provision of charging points for electric cars, rainwater harvesting and minimising the amount of paved areas on housing developments. JB said that she agreed and that we must be more specific and she quoted Goudhurst NP as a good example of how this should be done. PR said that we must be investigating environmental impact, flooding and green spaces. RK introduced the Green Spaces document which is listed at the end of these minutes. JP said that flooding in the area of the River Beult is a problem and that we need to consider the effect on the river of housing developments in other parishes. He also suggested that we should be looking at the effect of these developments on transport and infrastructure. PR said that the Group is very important and that other parishes in Maidstone Borough are following our lead in preparing neighbourhood plans and that our MP, Helen Grant supports our NP. RO suggested that the Group should look at other parish's NPs and the impact that they may have on Staplehurst. The following members agreed to look at the following NPs to see if there is anything that should be included in the Staplehurst NP:-  
MA Goudhurst  
RO Marden  
CL Hawkhurst  
TB Cranbrook and Sissinghurst  
JP Loose  
It was agreed that the members concerned would attempt to bring feedback from their researches to the next Group meeting.  
JP suggested that the PC should contact the Environment Agency to see how they dealt with the increase of water run-off from developments into the watercourses which they manage, in particular the River Beult.  
PR raised the matter of the Lower Medway and Upper Medway Internal Drainage Boards and their roles. JP said that he is on the Board of the UMIDB and that Tunbridge Wells Borough and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councils are also represented. JP agreed to investigate what the UMIDB is aware of in respect of housing developments in their catchment area which drains into the River Beult.

RK suggested that we should involve other village organisations such as the Footpath Group and the Photographic Society to record the state of hedges, but MA said that she thought it best to start off with a small amount of work such as that stated above in respect of other NPs.

JB said that we need to take into account the content of MBC's Local Plan and she agreed to keep a watch on it as it evolves and when it is published. She would then see how it compares with any alterations and revisions which we may propose for our NP.

RO suggested that it would be useful to see where customers come from to Sainsburys supermarket when it opens later this year. CL said that it would be useful to have a comparison of traffic through Hurst Close, Newlyn Drive and Fishers Road both prior to, and after Sainsburys opens, although it was pointed out that any traffic survey at the present time might not have much meaning due to the effect of lockdown. PR said he would remind Sainsburys of the fact that they are to provide a shuttle bus service to bring customers to the supermarket. RO suggested that this might include some trips to and from Frittenden. JB said that the PC's Finance Committee has spoken about having another traffic survey done but there is currently no money in the council's budget for this. PR said that he would take forward the Group's proposed future work to the PC for its approval.

- 7. Any Other Business.** MA drew attention to the PC's newly published Virtual Meetings Protocols, a copy of which has been sent to each of the members of this group. She said that none of the future work agreed for the group appeared to give rise to the need to amend the group's Terms of Reference.

**Meeting closed at 8.45pm. Next meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2021**

Robin Oakley 14 January 2021

#### **POST MEETING ADDITIONAL NOTES**

1. RK has forwarded this item which lists the number of new dwellings in neighbouring parishes that are planned within Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's area:-

|              |           |           |           |            |         |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------|
| Benenden     | 119 – 129 | Cranbrook | 718 – 803 | Frittenden | 25 – 30 |
| Goudhurst    | 21 – 26   | Hawkhurst | 643 – 693 | Sandhurst  | 20 – 27 |
| Sissinghurst | 100 – 115 |           |           |            |         |

2. RK has also drawn attention to a useful publication on local greenspace designations which can be accessed as follows:-

Go into [www.neighbourhoodplanning.org/](http://www.neighbourhoodplanning.org/) click on Resources, click on Toolkits and Guidance, go down the first page of the document list, click on Making Local Greenspace designations in your neighbourhood plan and the document should open.

3. RK has also drawn attention to a research briefing from the House of Commons Library published on Tuesday, 12 January, 2021, entitled 'Planning for the Future: planning policy changes in England in 2020 and future reforms'. This can be accessed on the Library's website and it examines those proposals and the other planning changes already made in the Covid-19 pandemic, including the announcement on 16 December, 2020 on changes to the standard method for calculating housing need.