

STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

Minutes of virtual meeting held on 24th March 2021 at 7.45pm

- 1. Present:** Cllr. Paddy Riordan (PR) PC Chairman and Zoom Host, Robin Oakley, Secretary(RO), Margaret Arger, Chairman (MA), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB), Colin Love (CL), Cllr. Adele Sharp (AS) Robin Kenworthy (RK) from 8.30pm.
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr. Colin Bowden, Cllr. John Perry (at MBC Meeting), Tom Burnham (at Church Annual Meeting).
- 3. Welcome:** MA welcomed Group members. MA confirmed that Resident Sue Forward had decided to resign from the Group.
- 4. Minutes of Meeting held on 17th February, 2021:** Agreed
- 5. Matters Arising:** None
- 6. Cllr. Buller's Appraisal of Maidstone Borough Council's Draft Local Plan.** JB said that following the preparation of her appraisal she had been through it and highlighted those policies which had changed significantly or had remained unchanged but had been re-numbered and she would prepare a summary of her findings which she would forward to the Secretary for distribution with the Agenda for the next meeting. CL said that an integrated transport policy is urgently needed which was supported by those present. JB said that MBC claim to be talking more with KCC on transport matters. MA said there needs to be more joined up thinking between MBC and adjoining boroughs, eg. Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge & Malling. After some discussion it was agreed that the Group would E-mail the Parish Clerk with a recommendation that the Parish Council request the Ward members, Cllrs. Perry and Brice to ask for MBC to have a closer working relationship with those councils.
- 7. Proposed Revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code.** MA reported that the Parish Clerk had passed a paper to the Group for consideration following her online Clerk's meeting. It was agreed that we need to look at the Model Design Code and then prepare suggestions as to what we believe should be included in a Design Code for Staplehurst. AS said that we should take photographs of buildings both old and new, which we consider as being of good design. JB spoke in favour of self-builds. PR said that developers did not like to build bungalows as they were not financially viable to build as they occupied more land than houses. He said that in Germany developments were laid out with roads and services and then individuals were encouraged to buy a plot on which they could construct a house to their own design and requirements. RO said that good quality sheltered housing was needed for people already living here so that they could downsize and free up houses for families. CL said that the land at the end of Lodge Road would be ideal for flats for young people as the land is near to the station, bus stops and supermarket. PR said that Housing Association flats bring others in from elsewhere. MA concluded the discussion and suggested that members should prepare a list of what they think is needed in our design code and forward it to the Secretary for distribution with the next meeting's agenda.

8. Any other business. RK said that he had produced a list of listed buildings which although very detailed does require much updating. MA said that she has forwarded the list to the Staplehurst Society. JB suggested that perhaps the Staplehurst Society and the Staplehurst Photographic Society could do a joint project to update it as such a project would be outside the remit of this Group which already has a heavy workload.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm. Next meetings on 21st April, 2021 & 26th May 2021

Robin Oakley 25 March 2021