

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CRANBROOK & SISSINGHURST
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP HELD ON 12th
August 2019

PRESENT: Cllr. Warne (in the Chair) and Cllrs. Hatcher, Pethurst, and Veitch. Annie Hopper, June Bell, Jeremy Boxall, Matt Warne, Marion Cranmer, Marcus Boret, Nem Goodman and Liz Daley,

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Fletcher and Smith. Laura Rowland

Cllr. Warne read out the following statement:

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

Cllr. Warne declared an interest under the site assessments regarding site 122 which had been put forward by a relative.

Annie Hopper, Lee Hatcher, Nem Goodman and June Bell declared a personal interest as members of the CVLT (Crane Valley Land Trust). Matthew Warne and Tally Wade declared an interest as board members of the CVLT. Annie Hopper and Liz Daley declared an interest as members of the Brick Kiln Advisory Group.

1. TWBC Liaison on Site Allocation & 2. Policy Development:

Cllr. Warne gave an indepth report of the meeting held with Stephen Baughen, Head of Planning Services for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on Tuesday 30th July arranged to clarify the position and to seek advice on the way forward. Cllr. Pethurst, Jeremy Boxall, Cheryl Beattie, David Carlilse (AECOM) and Richard Eastham (Feria Urbanism) were in attendance. David Carlilse had taken a copy of the draft and is to review the LP, and NDP policies and highlight where the NDP can be streamlined/add local distinctiveness. She noted that neither Stephen Baughen or Richard Eastham had raised an issue with the number of policies. The number of policies could be reduced after the public consultation, but not added. AECOM had advised that we do not go to public consultation until after the completion of the Local Plan Reg 18 consultation.

Cheryl Beattie was still stating that the SEA was based on figures from the Housing Needs Analysis of 610 dwellings.

Cllr. Warne informed the Steering Group that an all-day meeting had been held today with Stephen Baughen and Charlotte Oben (TWBC Planning), Cllrs. Veitch, Pethurst and Hatcher, June Bell, Annie Hopper, Jeremy Boxall and Liz Daley. The meeting had been arranged to compare and contrast site allocations, with a view to achieving greater alignment where possible, and beginning a narrative around those sites where there is disagreement. Liz Daley commented that this had been a very productive meeting and Stephen Baughen had been really impressed on how well informed the SAAG team were on sites allocated. There was a certain amount of discussion on the housing density of some sites, it was felt that TWBC and SAAG team were broadly in agreement and a few sites could be looked at further. Stephen Baughen encouraged the Steering Group to meet with developers/agents for pre-application discussion as they have the greatest knowledge of what our policies were for these sites.

Stephen Baughen informed those present that Berkeley Homes would be applying for phase two of the development at Turnden and he strongly advised the NDP to allocate this site, as we would be in a better position to have a say on that development. He felt that if this site went to appeal, they would get planning permission anyway. Stephen Baughen will apply a Section 106 agreement on land which is left in perpetuity so this could not be developed in the future. Jeremy Boxall confirmed that a Section 106 agreement was between the landowner and TWBC not the developer. Cllr. Warne commented that if we did nothing, we could end up with three entrances on this stretch of road.

Tally Wade raised some very useful points and pointed out that our NDP document needed to be readable and usable by our community and it would be hard to justify allocating the Turnden phase 2 site for example, as the local community had made it very clear they did not want this development. A great deal of discussion then followed and finally it was agreed that Cllr Warne would contact Stephen Baughen to seek clarification on whether it would be possible to write a policy for a site if we were not allocating it in our NDP.

Tally Wade pointed out that if the NDP were to change their minds to include certain sites, they needed to have evidence outlining the reasons why this had changed. She was unclear on which advisers the NDP were putting their faith in - Fera, AECOM or TWBC. If the NDP allocate Turnden Site, the NDP needs to be upfront about this and explain rationale behind the decision i.e. to be able to have more input if we engage with developers.

Liz Daley felt that it would be difficult to liaise with developers if we had not included their sites in our plan, however it was not impossible. Marion Cranmer pointed out that the Steering Group had always known there would be some battles we would not win and it was really important to keep working hard to get the very best outcome for the community.

Cllr. Warne stated that AECOM had been pressing the Steering Group to do as much as possible before going to Reg. 14. and there was still work to do. Cllr. Pethurst stated that we are on an independent time line and TWBC do not have a problem with us including policies which reinforce the Local Plan.

Marcus Boret was worried that as TWBC had already allocated 900 dwellings, would the NDP if they go ahead with their own list, risk more housing. Cllr. Warne replied that this was a risk however TWBC Local Plan housing numbers may reduce. Tally Wade asked if the BKF site had been included in the 900 dwellings for the Local Plan Cllr. Pethurst confirmed that it was.

Cllr. Pethurst explained how TWBC had decided on the sites they had included in the Local Plan. TWBC carried out a sustainability assessment of each site which fitted criteria for development and ended up with 13 sites now included in the Local Plan. Annie Hopper clarified that a cluster of 5 sites at Hartley was amalgamated to form 1 site, and another adjoining 2 forming another. Annie Hopper also noted that there were 8 other sites in our site allocation list which were small, two of which may be taken out. June Bell pointed out that perhaps some of these sites could be used for much needed affordable homes.

Cllr. Warne reported that approval had been received by Full Council to form a Turnden Development Advisory Group with the same terms of reference as Brick Kiln Farm. The following volunteered to be members: Cllrs. Hatcher and Gilbert, plus Laura Rowland (on a previous occasion), June Bell, Annie Hopper, Liz Daley and Pip Gill. Cllr. Veitch highlighted the fact that councillors had commented on the excellent job the Brick Kiln Advisory Group were doing liaising with the developers.

It was agreed that Cllr. Warne would seek clarification from Stephen Baughen whether we can go ahead with the NDP draft as it is, on the understanding there are still sites we are not in agreement with. Can we write a policy on a site we have not allocated for example the Turnden site?

3. Project Timetable:

No update.

4. Communication & Public Engagement:

Discussion then took place on an article to appear in the Parish Cake magazine regarding the NDP and Local Plan Consultation. To help members of our community respond to the Local Plan in an informed way, members of the NDP Steering Group will be available in Sissinghurst and Cranbrook on the following dates to give a presentation and to discuss more fully the proposals in the local Plan. There would also be a question and answer period.

Friday 13th September 7-9pm – Vestry Hall Cranbrook

Thursday 19th September 11am-1pm – St. George’s Institute Sissinghurst

The Local Plan Consultation is scheduled to take place on Friday 27th September 4-7pm in the Vestry Hall Cranbrook. Ahead of the TWBC Local Plan Consultation, members of the Steering Group would also be available for questions at a drop-in session detailed below.

Friday 27th September 2-4pm – Weald Information Centre, Cranbrook

Following discussion Cllr. Warne agreed to forward the NDP Draft Plan to all Parish Councillors so that they have sufficient time to read it as they were the qualifying body. She would make it clear to all circulated that the draft document at the present time was **confidential** and it was not ready for Regulation 14 as more work was required.

Cllr. Pethurst was of the view that the sites were not confidential as they were all on the call for sites document published by TWBC.

5. Public Engagement:

Nothing to report.

6. Items for Information:

Nothing to report.

Next Meeting – **23rd September 2019**

Signed:

12th September 2019