

STEWKLEY PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF A STEERING GROUP MEETING

WEDNESDAY 3rd APRIL 2019 AT RED BARN FARM, STEWKLEY

Present:

Neil Dickens (ND) – Chair

Keith Higgins (KH) – Stewkley Parish Council (SPC) Chair

Andrew Pryke (AP) - SPC Councillor

Paul Smith (PS) - SPC Councillor

Jenny Wodey (JW) – SPC Councillor

Janette Eustace (JC)

Laraine Chappell (LC)

Steve Nicholl (SN)

ITEM	ACTION/DECISION
<p>1 <u>Apologies:</u> Gill Morgan; Margaret Burgess</p>	
<p>2 <u>Minutes of meeting on 16 January 2019.</u> The minutes were accepted unanimously as a true reflection of the meeting.</p>	<p><u>Action:</u> Minutes to be forwarded to the Parish Clerk for the parish website. Action completed</p>
<p>3 <u>Matters Arising.</u></p> <p>a) <u>NP Site 13 – ND to discuss future with site owners.</u> Despite considerable effort, ND had still been unable to speak to the owners.</p>	<p><u>Action ongoing:</u> ND</p>
<p>b) <u>Drafting of Conditions Statement – JE.</u> JE and SN had not yet started on this work. Time in not (yet) pressing and they arranged timing of a planning meeting.</p>	<p><u>Action ongoing:</u> JE/SN</p>
<p>c) <u>Spreadsheet Data Retention - SN.</u> The policy agreed at the NPSG meeting on 16 Jan 19 (in ND's absence) was re-affirmed: until the Plan is made, copies should be held <u>only</u> by ND (Chair), JE (effective Vice Chair), SN (Secretary) and Nick Booth/Tim Johnson original compilers and Xcel/stats experts. However, we also need to retain evidence of the Working Groups' development of their final reports, underpinning the eventual plan.</p>	<p><u>Action:</u> WG Chairs to be requested to create a USB stick showing, in date order, working and drafts up to and including their final report. SN (ND as Chair?) to email all WG chairs.</p>
<p>d) <u>Sustainable Energy Policy? – All.</u> Although all members of the NPSG clearly wished that we could</p>	

include a meaningful Sustainable Energy Policy in the plan, lack of national standards and/or legislation made it impossible to set specific conditions on development at present. The Parish Council acted on or considered those things that could currently be defined; for example, all street lights have been changed to LEDs but, because no street lights in the village are kerb-side, the PC have been unable to provide electric car charging points. Until a future review of the Plan, the best that we can do is insert a bullet point and appropriate sentence into the Aspirations section of the Plan. Action: JE

4 Progress of Draft Plan – ND & JE.

ND opened the discussion expressing his appreciation, warmly endorsed by the rest of the SG, for JE's hard work. She had not only revised and shortened the earlier draft to produce a document with much more impact but had also provided this meeting with a 5 page summary of outstanding consultation comments that the SG needed to consider and resolve.

Three of these comments generated substantial discussion:

- a) Para 4.6 contained an apparent conflict between the intent to protect the Conservation Area and our site selections: *"It is thus important that any proposed development within or adjacent to the Conservation Area does not extend beyond the existing line of development associated with the area."* However, there is at present no clearly defined 'line of development' and both the relevant NP WG and the SG as well as the Parish Council had carefully considered the issue in defining the "Settlement Boundary" in Policy H1, which does now clearly define the acceptable line of development. There is thus no conflict and the second sentence of para 4.6 can be deleted. Action: JE

- b) Para 5.25 and Policy H3 call for development to include an unspecified proportion of single storey homes. Although the Village Survey provides clear evidence of the scale of demand, practicalities on individual sites will drive the extent to which demand can be met.

Action: JE to amend para 5.25 to finish "...a proportion of all new homes to be single storey, set pragmatically site by site in the site specifics following para 5.16."

- c) Policy B2 (Protection of Existing Employment Sites). Policy B2 provides protection for existing business sites but does conditionally allow development of such sites. The condition – availability of alternative site(s) for businesses – was discussed extensively. Restrictions on “change of use” of land or premises are commonplace. The key issue here was whether the wording of Policy B2 puts the onus for finding the replacement site(s) on the landowner of the existing site. The NPSG including PC Councillors were clear that, if the PC wished to see a business site (specifically NP10) developed for housing, the onus would be on the PC to find alternative business areas. Action: JE to include her proposed amended wording.

In all other areas, JE’s proposed amendments were agreed or wording proposed by the Chair (NP07/08) accepted.

- 5 **Soulbury Road Site Update & Housing distribution – ND & AP.** ND had spoken to the agent for the Soulbury Road site. He reported that the developer was making only slow progress, primarily because of financial uncertainties. However, this gave a very real opportunity to use the emerging Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that the development, which is the only one large enough to make a significant impact on the desired numbers of single storey and of affordable homes, met the parish needs as far as practical. A matrix of the breakdown of housing size, type and specification, proposed by the NPSG and the Parish Council had been included in earlier Parish consultation. This matrix was extensively discussed. It was agreed that:

- a) Cat 3 homes (equipped for disabled/wheelchair users) should not be included in the Plan. All homes are to be built to Cat 2 (adaptable to disabled/wheelchair occupancy) as an AVDC requirement. Cat 3 really requires individual tailoring to the specific needs of the individual.
- b) The matrix was rather too detailed for inclusion in the plan and could usefully be simplified by combining numbers of 3-4 bedroom homes, whether detached or

semi-detached and by combining numbers of starter and retirement homes.

- c) The revised matrix should specifically show the proportion of affordable homes (not less than 30%) and the number of single storey homes. The designation "Flat" should be replaced with "Studio/1-bedroom".

Action: JE to include the revised matrix in the NP15 site specifics.

6 Any Other Business.

- a) Timings for completion of a revised plan, submission to and comment by AVDC were discussed. JE faces considerable difficulty as the Plan, currently written in Microsoft Word, is really too large for the programme to handle. Nevertheless, it should be ready for an NPSG mid-May for a final review of comments.
- b) The implications of the planned Buckingham Unitary Authority were considered. Bucks Council is supportive of local plans; the AVDC plan (the VALP) is expected to be updated to reflect the Inspector's comments and in place by the end of the year. Getting ours made as soon as practical should bring positive benefit soon.
- c) It was agreed that we should produce a piece for the Grapevine summarising this progress, updated to report submission to AVDC if achieved by the final deadline.

Action: ND to draft.

7 Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting will be on 15 May 2019 at Vicarage Farm at 7.30 pm.

Action: ND & PS

SM Nicholl
6 Apr 2019