

## STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

### Minutes of virtual meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2020

1. **Present:** Paddy Riordan (PR) PC Chairman and Zoom Host, Robin Oakley ,Secretary(RO), Margaret Arger, Chairman (MA), Cllr. Sue Forward (SF), John Kelly (JK), Robin Kenworthy(RK), Tom Burnham (TB), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB), Colin Love (CL), Cllr. Simon McNeill (SM)  
Cllr. John Perry (JP), and Cllr. Louise Brice (LB) joined the meeting at the point where Any Other Business was being discussed, as they had been attending other meetings.
2. **Apologies:** None
3. **Membership of the Group.** Cllr Simon McNeill has joined the Group
4. **Minutes of Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2020:** Agreed
5. **Matters Arising** None
6. **Amendments to the existing Neighbourhood Plan.(NP)** The amendments have been made.
7. **Government White Paper – ‘Planning for the future’.** It is understood that the Parish Council will be responding and there will be mention of it in the next Village Update. RO pointed out that the paper which MA and he had prepared with comments could provide a useful starting point for the article for the Village Update.
8. **Maidstone Local Plan – Review of Results of Call for Sites.** The Parish Clerk has produced a paper listing the Red and Green sites which have been indicated by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC). The Red sites are those which will not be considered as suitable for housing development. Green sites are those which could be developed for housing although this does not necessarily mean that they will be built on. RO and MA have produced a review of the Green sites, including a list of key policies in the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan which the developers should be considering and these are included as an annex to these minutes. SF said that she had attended a meeting of Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) in which it was stated that both Green and Red sites might be included if the Government increases the number of houses to be built in the borough. SF said that Regulation 18 Consultation on the draft Local Plan would be restricted to 3 weeks in December, in order to avoid MBC being ordered by Government to allow for a higher number of houses. CL said that if the result of the Call for Sites is to be mentioned in the village updates, the article should focus on 3 or 4 main messages, otherwise people will not bother to read. He said that it was important that residents should let our borough councillors, John Perry and Louise Brice know their views in the strongest terms. SM said that the PC needs to be working closely with adjoining parishes in any representations to MBC. JK expressed his concern that the larger sites might be split up between developers, as had happened in Headcorn Road with a lack of integration of various aspects such as drainage, roads and footways.
9. **Section 106 money and CIL in England 2018-2019.** JK reported that he had read a government document on the subject and was surprised to read that half of local authorities don't have local plans. Developers are not paying S.106 monies and CIL and there needs to be closer control of this by councils. Developers are obtaining planning permission and then delaying building to allow site values to rise and they can then charge more for the houses. It was felt that the amounts of money which developers should be paying for developments in Staplehurst needs some clarification, as does what it is being spent on. PR said that the government want to do away with S106 and just have CIL. MA said that smaller developments would produce less CIL money. SF said that she felt that the Finance Group of the

PC need to have more control of S.106 and CIL money and the amounts received and how they are spent should be in the PC's annual report. JK said that when residents were invited to say how S106 and CIL money should be spent, the Village (Community) Centre came out on top. TB said that he hoped that CIL would make it easier to spend money locally.

**10. Comments on Reported Decisions. Dickens' Gate.** SF reported that MBC Enforcement have placed a temporary stop on David Wilson Homes building beyond the 192 houses which are now permitted to discharge into Southern Water's foul sewerage system. PR said that MBC and Southern Water have not been open and honest about the drainage at the Dickens Gate site and the PC must keep pressing MBC and Southern Water to get the sewerage system problems resolved.

**Penryn.** It was reported that the plan to built 4 new houses on the site of the bungalow in Station Road which was recommended for refusal by the PC and refused by MBC, went to appeal and the Planning Inspector found in favour of the appellant.

**11. Sainsburys** Work is proceeding on site and various utility works have been, or about to be undertaken by the utility providers in Station Road and Station Approach. RO said that it is important that bus stops in Station Road be maintained at all times for use of passengers going to and from the station and by residents in Market Street and elsewhere who use the bus services. The site of the Texaco petrol station in High Street, which is owned by Sainsburys, is offered for sale for redevelopment.

**12. Any other business** RK reported that the Locality organisation is planning to hold a webinar on Monday 2 November on the subject of Using Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) to bring forward housing, including affordable housing. RO reported that MBC have produced a document detailing all the important facts relating to those sites considered to be green sites. TB reported that works have begun on the Huntsman's Stables site in Maidstone Road, opposite Clapper Lane.

**Meeting closed at 9.04pm.**

**Remaining meeting dates for 2020 are November 11, December 9.**

Robin Oakley

15 October, 2020

## **Annex to Minutes of Meeting held on 14 October, 2020**

### **What are the key policies in the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan which developers should be considering?**

**Policy PW1** requires that a full mitigation plan must be submitted by the developer for any housing development before planning approval can be recommended. PW1 sets out specific projects which it is hoped would result from any new developments and these include improvements to the village centre and the foul and surface water drainage infrastructure. Drainage issues must be addressed with robust measures for both surface water and foul drainage. Consideration must be given as to whether the primary school, health centre, sports facilities and the public library need further investment to cater for the needs of a larger population. PW1 calls for better retail opportunities and better broadband communications; these requirements are currently being met by ongoing construction of Sainsbury's Supermarket and BT's installation of fibre optic cabling for improved broadband.

**Policy PW2** requires that any new developments beyond the village envelope will be assessed in terms of the potential impact of the development on the noise and traffic within the open countryside and on the visual setting and landscape features of the site and its surroundings.

In **Policy PW3** the Parish Council acknowledges that renewable energy schemes will have an important role in safeguarding the nation's energy security. The roofs of new homes should, wherever possible be orientated and of suitable pitch to gain optimum energy. PW3 recognizes that the scale and size of certain renewable technologies, especially wind and solar, can have significant visual impacts upon the existing countryside scene. Developers will need to demonstrate the impact of their schemes throughout the planning application process, which then parish council will be involved in as a statutory consultee.

In **COMMUNITY THEME (Policy Code C)** Any new housing development in Staplehurst over the coming years should seek to bring with it financial investment in community infrastructure.

In **POLICY C6 (ACCESS AND MOVEMENT THEME)** Efforts should be made to reduce pressure on the crossroads by ensuring alternative access routes, and to develop a better connected series of village streets. There must be adequate provision of pedestrian footways, cycle routes and suitable dropped kerbs to meet the requirements of persons in wheelchairs.