

HURST GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

MEETING #26 - MINUTES

19th January 2021 at 7.30pm

Held in public via teleconference due to coronavirus meeting restrictions

Attendees: Cllr. Andrew Brown [AB] (in the Chair), Aga Podgajna (AR Urbanism), Cllr. Derek Johnson [DJ], Cllr. Graham Browne [GB], Ian Hirst [IH], Tania McNab [TM], Duncan McNab [DM], Cllr. Steve Wright [SW].

Apologies: Bob Collins [BC], Colleen Burt [CB], Alison Eardley [AE], Jim Boot [JB].

1 member of the public was also in attendance.

1. **Welcome**

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. The Chair reminded attendees that in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Terms of Reference, that this meeting was a meeting held in public, and not a public meeting.

2. **Update from principal consultants on the progress of the draft pre-submission Hurst Green neighbourhood plan and policies**

The Chair reported that he understood Jim Boot [JB] and Alison Eardley [AE] were making good progress on the draft plan, and they would have an updated draft for the Steering Group by the end of February 2021.

Members noted that until the outputs from AR Urbanism and AECOM were known, JB and AE would be unable to finish some sections of the draft plan. AE and JB have set-up meetings with both organisations to get updates. AE is also to arrange a follow up meeting with Amy Fearn, Housing Officer at Rother District Council.

The Chair reported that Rother District Council (RDC) had provided additional feedback, pushing back on the idea of housing sites in the Silver Hill area. RDC officers deemed sites in Silver Hill to be unsuitable, due in part to their poor connectivity. Members noted that as Silver Hill was outside of the Hurst Green development boundary, that any housing built outside of Hurst Green village would not affect the parish's housing allocation from RDC.

Members noted that as planning permission had been granted (outside of the neighbourhood plan process), for 20 houses at Foundry Close, that the current parish housing allocation from RDC was now 55 new homes.

The Chair reported that the Parish Council had received concept schemes from the site promoter of the HG 22 / HG 43 site (opposite the school) and from the site promoter of the HG 40 and HG 42 sites (plots adjacent to Foundry Close). The Chair requested feedback from members.

3. **Update from AR Urbanism on the master planning and design support work for Hurst Green**

Aga Podgajna [AP] from AR Urbanism was welcomed.

AP explained that there were two parts to what AR Urbanism was undertaking. Firstly, the design codes, which were to ensure that any development that takes place was in-keeping with the area. Secondly, the masterplan, which sought to outline a future for the village, and also to explore how any housing sites that may be allocated come forward to link together with the rest of the village. It was reported that it was

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usual that elements of a masterplan and a local design code, would be incorporated into a forthcoming neighbourhood plan.

AP gave NPSG members an overview of what design codes were, these included items such as: density, site layout, developments of allocation sites and how they should look and feel, and what they contribute to the wider masterplan. It was reported that the aim was to keep the essence of the High Weald Design Guide, but to also create new codes for density, street layout and views or framing that were more specific to Hurst Green.

AP explained that the proposed masterplan would look at including ideas on creating: a strong village centre, connectivity, enhancement of existing spaces, and the creation of new green spaces.

AR Urbanism are meeting with Alison Eardley [AE] on the 25th January 2021.

4. Housing: Update on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) / progress on options for reasonable alternatives for Hurst Green

NPSG members discussed that AECOM, who were working to produce the SEA for the Parish Council are to recommend options and suggested combinations of sites to the steering group. From an environmental impact assessment perspective, they are to look at 'reasonable alternatives'. Based on their assessment, they will consider if 55 new dwellings is achievable without irreversible harm.

The Chair asked if anyone would like a printed copy of the AECOM scoping report from November, three or four printed copies are available and included the responses from the statutory bodies such as Historic England, and the Environment Agency.

A member of the public asked what the understanding of the status of the planning application on the potential housing site at HG11 was, and its timeframe. The Chair confirmed that beyond the concept plans submitted and on the neighbourhood plan website, that the NPSG did not know, only that there had been a pre-application made to the District Council.

5. Sport and Leisure: Update on Lodge Field children's park regeneration

Derek Johnson [DJ] gave an update, explaining that he had met with several representatives from playground companies to help establish the project's budget.

The children from Hurst Green school had taken part in a competition to redesign the park as they saw it. A certificate had been given to every child in the school, and each winner had received a small prize, voted for by the Parish Council.

The Chair reported that a grant application to Rother District Council for £30k had been submitted. The Parish Council have also allocated £15k from their reserves to help with this project. An application has also been made to the National Lottery's Community Fund.

6. Items for the next agenda

NPSG members suggested a 'wrap-up' workshop covering policy areas that hadn't been fully covered in previous workshops.

7. AOB

NPSG members asked if anyone was aware of where Rother District Council (RDC)

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was with their new local plan, given that RDC's area plan was now out of date, and their 5 year housing supply was under their target.

NPSG members discussed a recent communication from RDC's Head of Planning, Tim Hickling which suggested that the weight to be given to the neighbourhood plans would not be ignored, but would be significantly diminished.

It was agreed to seek the views of AE and JB, and to supply AE/JB with the correspondence.

8. Date of next meeting

The next planned meeting is Tuesday, 16th February 2021 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 20.35.