



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SPNDP STEERING GROUP
HELD ON TUESDAY 26th APRIL 2016 AT 7.00pm
AT THE STANDON AND PUCKERIDGE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present: Mike Gill (Chairman), Claudia Chalkley, Maureen Wren, Jan Cunningham, Dick Rainbird MBE, Graham Cowell, Neil Johannessen, Jennifer Heaven, , Colin Jenkins, Brenda Howard, Warren Pickering, Jed Griffiths, Griffiths Environmental Planning
Minutes: Belinda Irons, Standon Parish Council Clerk

Public: 12

16.50 Apologies: Claudia Chalkley, John Riris, Jonathan Law, Michael Baker QC

16.51 Minutes of the meeting held on 15.3.16

Minutes were agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

16.52 Declaration of Members' Interests (disclosable pecuniary interest/another pecuniary

interest/a non-pecuniary interest)

Colin Jenkins: property is adjacent to Wickham Hill SLAA site

16.53 Steering group membership – review attendance and consider any requests to join Steering Group: no new applications have been received.

16.54 Comments from non-committee members attending (limited to three minutes)

None received.

16.55 A120 bypass: discussion:

Presentation by Claire Chapman, Sally Crook and Fiona Trenchard

The Chairman stated that SPNDP must remain impartial on the delivery of the bypass and the proposed routes. SPNDP must respond and support the comments of the majority of the population of the whole parish. However, the

SPNDP was fully supportive of activities undertaken by parishioners which supported evidence gathering and the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Claire Chapman advised the meeting that a group of parishioners in Standon have responded to the A120 bypass consultation, and thoroughly detailed the anomalies in the consultation document and the financial appraisal of delivery of both the north and south routes respectively, which fails to identify the considerably higher cost of delivering a southern route.

A petition has been started and already has a significant number of signatures and comments entered.

Great concern was expressed regarding the timing of delivery of the results of the consultation. Claire Chapman has contacted HCC and advised the A120 Standon bypass consultation is running in parallel with a full report into all major road schemes in Hertfordshire which will assess and prioritise works to be undertaken. The strategic roads plan for Hertfordshire will consider all evidence regarding the bypass and the results of the parallel report at a meeting in July.

Ms Chapman commented the main consideration should be aimed at solving the issue of the East/West route. This should be discussed before a decision should be made about the bypass.

Dick Rainbird advised the history of the East/West route and why the A414/M11 route had been discounted in the 1990's, which was an alternative route to the A120. Whilst the SPNDP must remain neutral, it is important that any dialogue with HCC reflects the views of parishioners, and a request for comments from the petition was requested to be supplied for SPNDP and SPC consideration.

Mike Gill commented that at a HCC highways meeting it was made clear there are no funds for mitigation for Standon once Little Hadham has been bypassed.

Neil Johannessen commented that at this time it was important to press for a bypass as other areas will also be strongly pressing for road improvements. Standon needed a bypass – the route can be argued later. A strong bypass campaign is needed. The high number of new dwellings in Bishops Stortford combined with a faster throughput of traffic at Little Hadham would lead to extensive congestion in Standon both on the A120 and the estate roads.

Claire Chapman commented that Standon will need to take a view before the close of the consultation.

A parishioner asked what support has been received from Sir Oliver Heald MP, as correspondence suggests he considers he is 'championing' a bypass for Standon but there is little public evidence of this.

16.56 Village Hierarchy Study: discussion

Jed Griffiths commented that the discussion document distributed by EHDC was a 'developers charter' which removed all limits to development in the rural

villages, and also development boundaries. Limits and boundaries deliver certainty to communities about the level of development a settlement is expected to take under the District Plan in conjunction with Neighbourhood Plans. The discussion paper removes all certainty.

Dick Rainbird commented that SPNDP has already stated to EHDC that any development would require the development boundary to be moved to accommodate the EHDC required minimum of 150 new dwellings. Landowners and agents have already come forward with SLAA sites in Puckeridge alone which would, if granted permission, result in between 400 and 700 new dwellings. Removal of boundaries and limits would exacerbate an already difficult situation.

There appears to be differences between Policy and Planning departments at EHDC regarding provision of the level of housing demanded by Central Government, and this would appear to be driving the change in direction to unlimited development.

In summary, the main objections to the discussion document are:

Removal of development boundaries

Removal of development limits

Scoring system which categorises villages. Standon & Puckeridge have been joined together, but if they are separated the score is significantly different for both villages.

Weighting used in scoring system.

Coalescence of settlements.

Cumulative effect of unlimited development.

The clerk has drafted a letter of objection which will be circulated for comment prior to the Parish Council meeting on Thursday.

16.57 Land Allocation and Site Assessment: update

Options

Neil Johannessen suggested that all SLAA sites are reassessed in light of the discussion paper described above, with an emphasis on what infrastructure needs to be provided by developers before any site can be developed. This would include sewers, roads and access, flooding risk, protection of important green sites and spaces. A hierarchy of development needs to be undertaken to ensure the easiest and most desirable sites are not developed ahead of those which require infrastructure investment to make them viable, which would include Cambridge Road. This would be a 'constraint to development' approach with a change of emphasis from deliverable to achieve 150 new dwellings, to preferred sites for development provided infrastructure is provided which benefits the villages. It was repeatedly made clear that 150 is the minimum now expected.

There was unanimous support for Neil's proposal. The land group will commence work on the reassessment immediately. Jan Cunningham will arrange a meeting.

Jed Griffith confirmed that the 'constraint to development' approach would carry weight provided the evidence base is strengthened and detailed.

Jed Griffiths commented that there may be a requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment which would require advice from Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. This would require additional funding.

16.58 Parish Surveys: update: John Riris

The results of the landowner and business survey have yet to be provided.

16.59 Neighbourhood Plan: Draft document:

Jed Griffiths reported that the Steering Group is now required to write policies. There are significant examples available on line through the Locality web site. Topic Groups are required to write their own policies, but if anyone has a particular policy they want to explore, please go ahead and do it. Jed Griffiths will provide a list of policy headings.

Graham Cowell commented that the public views achieved from the surveys and open days must be reflected in the policies. Maureen Wren commented that the Vision and Objectives document provides the basis for the policies.

16.60 Communications Team:

Management of mailing list: now through Mail Chimp.

May Day Stall: booked. Volunteers are needed for the day.

Transcript of open meetings: Warren Pickering will assist with technical difficulties currently encountered to enable uploading to the web site.

16.61 Evidence gathering: update from topic groups

More work must be done by Topic Group to further this vitally important element of the Neighbourhood Plan.

16.62 Grant/Financial Status

Update

The clerk reported that funds are very tight, and it is likely that a further application to Locality and Groundwork will be required. Any future applications to the Parish Council for funds will need to be fully detailed and explained.

Neil Johannessen commented that EHDC may fund specialist consultants and technical advice.

The Chairman commented that this situation has arisen due to consultation with other organisations including Herts County Council, EHDC, Thames Water, EHAPTC, and others. The goal posts have been moved a number of times by EHDC, the latest being the discussion paper to remove all limits to development which would severely affect the Neighbourhood Plan and negate much of the hard work already completed in good faith by dedicated volunteers. It was very disheartening.

16.63 Landowner and agent consultation/meeting

The SPNDP meeting with Strutt & Parker, which was undertaken at their request, proved to be 'eye opening' for their representatives, particularly the information provided by SPNDP members on Thames Water requirements for a developer sewer impact study to accompany each and every planning application.

There was a strong feeling that developers are seeking to impose development, rather than work with the community through Neighbourhood Planning despite Central Government requirements through the Localism Act for them to do so.

16.64 Items for next agenda

Policies

Land Group report

A120 bypass update

16.65 Policy Writing workshop

16.66 Dates of next meetings

Dates for 2016:

Wednesday, 11th May Colliers End Village Hall

14th June