

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning & Townscape Committee held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 12 January 2015**

**PRESENT** Councillors Mike Boyd, John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds (Deputy Mayor), Mike Eve, Ian Potter, Shaun Rogers (**Committee Chairman**)

**IN ATTENDANCE** Richard Farhall – Town Clerk; Colonel Anthony Kimber – Rye Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Vice Chairman; 4 members of the public

*The meeting commenced at 6.34pm.*

**94 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk - were accepted from Cllrs Bernardine Fiddimore (Mayor – **Committee Vice-Chairman**) and Heidi Foster.

**95 CODE OF CONDUCT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Cllr Potter	<b>99</b> (Lower School site) <i>Adjournment</i>	<i>non-pecuniary</i>	Rye Academy Trust Director
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*The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public questions/contributions.*

Cllr Potter confirmed that the Rye Academy Trust (RAT) has expressed interest in acquiring the former Lower School site – either as part of a land exchange or purchase. RAT would like to invite RTC to formally support its intention to nominate the site for inclusion on the Rother Community Assets Register. If successful there would be a 6-month moratorium on the disposal of the site – giving RAT more time to raise sufficient funds to purchase it (or reach agreement with the landowner/s).

The Clerk would place this on the agenda for the next meeting. **Clerk**

*100 Charity Wishing Well* Alan Dickinson advised that the well at Keswick had been so successful that a second had been installed. Two sites in Rye had been considered: the Heritage Centre and the EA land opposite. It was considered that the latter was potentially hazardous (proximity to deep water and the need to cross the A259). The HC has high footfall – and this could increase if the proposed well was located adjacent to it. The Rotary Club was hopeful that one of the 3 sites suggested would be acceptable to RTC.

**96 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Planning and Townscape meeting held on 8 December 2014 (PT13) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 97 MATTERS ARISING

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*Matters Arising - 64 Display of advertisements: Gilfrin Jewellers (exploring the implications of RTC applying for consent) Outstanding.*

*Matters Arising - 65 Bus shelters (Crownfields), Resolved 1 (seeking RDC's opinion on replacing the shelters) Outstanding.*

*Bus shelters - Cllrs Boyd, Fiddimore and Rogers looking into the practicalities of replacing the shelters Outstanding.*

*Matters Arising - 65 Bus shelters (Crownfields), Resolved 2 (ascertaining if sponsorship could be found to replace the current shelters) Incomplete.*

*144 Rye Railway Station (writing to Southern Railways regarding RTC's concerns about the unkempt areas of vegetation either side of the Station building) Southern Railways had advised that the area to the left of the building (facing it) would be cut back and tidied 'as part of our planned maintenance works'. Litter would be removed at the same time. The other unkempt area (right) is not leased to Southern and remains the responsibility of Network Rail.*

**Clerk**

*14 Planning Applications – Format, Resolved 1 (Suggesting to RDC that it requires applications to be accompanied by contextual visualisations) Outstanding.*

*14 Planning Applications – Format, Resolved 2 (purchasing an A3 printer) Outstanding.*

**Clerk**

*56 Signage within Gibbet Marsh Car Park (obtaining costings) Outstanding.*

*65 Gibbet Marsh Car Park (asking RDC to consider removing the charges – or introducing a discounted scheme for traders and residents) Outstanding.*

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*93 53 Cinque Ports Street (supporting a replacement access) Actioned.*

## 98 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**RESOLVED 1 To submit the responses following to the Planning Authority:**

<b>RR/2014/2953/P</b>	42 Kings Avenue, Rye Erection of a detached dwelling. <i>Applicant: Trevor James, 42 Kings Avenue, Rye</i> SUPPORT APPROVAL
<b>RR/2014/2868/P</b> <b>RR/2014/2869/L</b>	23 Mermaid Street, Rye Insertion of conservation grade roof window in pitched roof at rear of property. <i>Applicant: Mr &amp; Mrs Stephen Willats, 42 Star Street, London</i> SUPPORT APPROVAL
<b>RR/2014/2983/P</b> <b>RR/2014/2984/L</b>	26 High Street, Rye Change of use of basement, part of ground floor, and first and second floors from retail A1 to residential C3. Alterations to shop front including creation of news access.

*Applicant: George on High Ltd. Alex Clarke, 98 High St, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL Subject to the residential accommodation not being used for multiple occupation.

- RR/2014/2897/L** 18 East Street, Rye  
Repaint all window frames, door case and cornice in white.  
Replace non period front door with period style door with Georgian style brass furniture.  
*Applicant: Keith Buckland, 18 East Street, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL
- RR/2014/3017/P** St Mary's Church, Church Square, Rye  
Erection of barrier to prevent unauthorized access.  
*Applicant: John Gurney, Watchbell Corner, Traders Passage, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL
- RR/2014/3033/P** 2 High Street, Rye  
**RR/2014/3034/L** Erection of internal walls to enable shop and living accommodation to become self-contained.  
*Applicant: Mr & Mrs D Holman, 2 High Street, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL
- RR/2014/3041/L** 2 High Street, Rye  
**RR/2014/3037/P** Works in connection with the change of use of the ground floor and basement from A1 (shop) to A3 (cafes and restaurants).  
*Applicant: Mr & Mrs D Holman, 2 High Street, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL

**RESOLVED 2 To note the responses following, submitted to the Planning Authority under the Clerk's delegated authority:**

- RR/2014/2857/A** Old Library site, Lion Street, Rye  
Wooden Kino sign to replace existing Hastings College sign. Illuminated by an integral LED down lighter.  
*Applicant: Kino Digital Ltd (Rye)*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL
- RR/2014/2641/L** 16 High Street, Sue Ryder Care, Rye  
Replacement of 1 shopfront fascia sign and 1 flat dibond door panel.  
*Applicant: Sue Ryder, Elizabeth Jarmin, Kings House, King Street, Sudbury.*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL
- RR/2014/2794/P** Café des Fleurs, Rye Station, Rye  
**RR/2014/2795/L** Erection of 2 retractable awnings to the front elevation.  
*Applicant: Lucy Forrester, Station House, Rye*  
SUPPORT APPROVAL

**99 RYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**  
([www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk))

Colonel Kimber spoke to the RNPSG Update (**Appendix**) – adding:

*Draft NP* The RNPSG had considered this and version 2 was being worked on. The intention was to put a draft before RTC before the May Elections. Realistically, the NP Referendum is likely to be run in the autumn.

*Design Statement* RDC had suggested one. This was being drafted and would go to RTC first. For convenience the Parish would be zoned.

*Former ESCC Chippings Depot* There have been further discussions with ESCC about the suggested land exchange with the former Total Garage site. Because of the RNPSG's/RTC's interest, ESCC is holding off on disposal.

*TG Community Centre* Colonel Kimber would be meeting with AmicusHorizon w/c 19.1.15.

*Freda Gardham* The EA is working towards the completion of the Eastern Rother Tidal Defence Wall in 2019 – which has implications for ARRCC. Four possible relocation options have been identified.

*Travelodge* An application for a development on the Euro Car Parks site is expected.

*Flooding* On 8 Jan four areas in Rye experienced flooding or ponding – including: A259 (Strand-Winchelsea Road); Nutley Close; The Grove. REACT will be participating in a surface water flooding survey and had put forward the Strand-Winchelsea Road and The Grove for consideration.

**100 CHARITY WISHING WELL**

Members were invited to give initial consideration to a request from the Rotary Club that it be permitted to install a charity wishing well outside Rye Heritage Centre.

The Clerk summarised the HC Manager's concerns: The anchor will return in March and the area could look cluttered with this, A boards and a well; the outside area is useful for helping to 'manage' visits of large numbers of students booked in to view the Town Model.

Comments included: a well outside the Heritage Centre would create a cluttered feel; a maritime-themed charity 'collection receptacle' would, perhaps, be more in keeping (eg a buoy or mine); it might be possible to incorporate a smaller collection point at the base of the anchor; the EA land opposite would be more suitable.

The Clerk confirmed that planning consent would be required.

**RESOLVED To refer the item to full Council for further consideration.**

**Clerk**

**101 PUBLIC FOOTPATH RYE 1**

The Committee was asked to consider an application, made to Rother District Council, that public footpath Rye 1 be extinguished on the grounds that it is not needed for public use.

**RESOLVED To support the application.**

**Clerk**

*The meeting ended at 7.20pm*

Date.....

Chairman.....

# PT14 APPENDIX

## **Rye Neighbourhood Plan - How are we getting on?**

The start point is the many issues about Rye which concerns the community. The list comes from many contacts at events, meetings and numerous conversations. Not all the issues are being reflected in the Plan because they are not "spatial", (concerned with land, buildings or related infrastructure). These will be passed onto Rye Town Council for separate action.

Future development will be balanced with the need for conservation, so that we can keep the best of Rye but enhance parts to make it more attractive and functional.

The Plan has eventually to pass a local referendum, therefore it is clear that the biggest challenge will be to find compromise between the differing interests of the groups enjoying Rye: residents, traders, workers, students and visitors!

In 2014, there has been too much detailed progress for it to appear in this article, but it can all be found on the website [www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk)

Anyone who still doubts the value of having a plan – over 1000 communities have been sufficiently convinced to make one - need to look no further than the way the Valley Park development was handled. This large green-field development was imposed, without local debate, on Rye by the Planning Authorities elsewhere.

The 2011 Act makes clear that neighbourhood planning cannot be used to block development, because of the demand for housing and business development across the land. What it does do is provide the means for the community to influence development to best suit the community, rather than it being imposed by developers.

In making the Plan, the approach is strategic and holistic. That is to say that there are many and various inter-related factors being considered including: the future house building requirement, how to achieve quality design, mitigate the flood risks, encourage future enterprise and employment, provide community facilities, design measures to better handle year on year increase of traffic volumes, improve links inside the Parish by improved cycle and pedestrian ways and to outside (including via the proposed fast javelin service from Bexhill to Ashford, stopping at Rye), protect and enhance

green spaces and to encourage more environmentally friendly measures. Most importantly, the whole plan must be sustainable so that nothing planned will be regretted by our grandchildren!

With so much to consider, what then is emerging? There are many constraints on development in Rye. Because green-field sites will be protected and waterways, flood risks and protected areas prevent many sites being developed, the building blocks of the Plan are a few key sites, where there is scope for development.

The **Valley Park** build is well advanced for 161 dwellings. Flood risks have been mitigated but it is intended that there is a pedestrian link into Cooper Road and then on to meet the "Greenway" links to Grove Lane. There is also a site to the very west of the location, which provides the potential for development but it does sit alongside the gateway to the Town from Udimore.

The **Former Tilling Green (TG) School site** is being sold by East Sussex Council to a partnership of Rye Partnership and Amicus Horizon. The Plan is for a mix of housing and a community centre with some vital flood mitigation measures. The housing mix and size of the centre should be settled by consultation during the detailed planning phase starting in early 2015.

After many years, Sainsbury's and Tesco have ended their dispute over the **former Lower School Site** and will dispose of the site, originally bought from East Sussex Council. The Rye Academy Trust is bidding to acquire it to enable much needed improvements to the existing Rye Academy. If this is successful then the "Education Quarter" would fill most of the location bounded by Love Lane, the Grove, the River Tillingham and the railway line. Within this location there are other projects including the extension of the Primary School, the establishment of a community garden. Related issues include the future of post 16 education and the Early Years Services. The Leisure Centre contract is up for renewal in spring 2016, at which time Rother District Council look to shed its £180k annual subsidy. Future arrangements need to be agreed. There are flood risks which also need to be addressed for the long term.

If the Rye Academy Trust succeeds in securing the Lower School Site then the Plan has to address the future needs for 7 day

supermarket services. This is the subject of consultation with potential commercial operators.

The Rother District owned **Gibbet Marsh** site has been considered for various future uses. It provides an important green space and pedestrian access from Ferry Road to the Strand, but significant car parking remains underused, because visitors are often unaware of its ready access to the Town. Could this site provide options for the future?

The broad locations of the **Winchelsea Road and Rock Channel** have scope for development. The former is an important gateway to Rye from the west and has a mix of unattractive derelict sites, car lots and a car wash. Many believe that this could be much improved by mixed development of quality design. The position is complicated because there are several owners with differing ambition and the Environment Agency, which is reluctant to dispose of its holdings because revenue is lost to central Government. Instead, it prefers to lease, which presents an unattractive option to serious business investors. Various pieces of work are under way for this location: the possibility of land swaps; improvements to the Rye Harbour Road junction. Importantly, a series of design principles for the whole area have been discussed, agreed and published.

The former **Freda Gardham** school site is liable for disposal after 2019, when the Environment Agency's Eastern Rother Tidal Walls project mitigates flood risks to the east of Rye. ARRCC holds a short term lease for the school buildings and some of the immediate gardens from East Sussex Council. As and when the site is sold, then a future site has to be found for ARRCC. The Environment Agency explain that if a development of the Freda Gardham site should come before 2019 then any developer's contribution might cause the flood defence work to be brought forward.

In adjacent parishes, there are considerations about employment and some new housing in Rye Harbour, and medical and burial facilities in Rye Foreign. Importantly, many are keen to keep the green-field strategic "gaps" between Rye and adjacent parishes to preserve the unique outline and nature of Rye.

By using volunteers the cost of the planning process has been kept to a minimum. National bodies Planning Aid and RTPI have made grants and provided consultants. Close contact has been maintained with Rother Council's Planning Officers for local advice and assistance, particularly to ensure that the Plan conforms with higher strategy.

The intention is to have agreed by Rye Town Council a draft plan before the May 2015 elections. The process for wider consultation leading to referendum would progress through 2015.

The opportunity to make a Neighbourhood Plan provides the community to take a vital and strategic view of Rye for the future. For those who live, work or study in Rye, it is not too late to get involved. Individuals can volunteer or to see what is being considered, then please contact via the website, Facebook page or Twitter: @ryenplan <https://www.facebook.com/ryenplan>  
[www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk) or just write to Rye Town Hall.

19 December 2014