

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning & Townscape Committee held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 19 October 2015

PRESENT Councillors Mike Boyd, John Breeds, Cheryl Creaser (**Committee Vice Chairman**), Bernardine Fiddimore (Mayor), Pat Hughes, Andy Stuart

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall – Town Clerk; Cllrs Justine Erswell, Rebecca Gilbert, John Izod and Andi Rivett; Colonel Anthony Kimber – RNPSG Vice-Chairman

The meeting commenced at 6.33 pm and was chaired by Cllr Creaser.

54 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reason as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllr Shaun Rogers (**Committee Chairman**) and Cllr Charlie Harkness.

55 CODE OF CONDUCT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr Stuart *non-pecuniary* **RR/3300/CC** Wife a trustee of the Rye Academy Trust

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public questions/contributions. There was none and so the meeting reconvened.

56 MINUTES

RESOLVED To adopt the Minutes of the Planning and Townscape meeting held on 5 October (PT08) as a correct record of the proceedings.

57 MATTERS ARISING

Item	Status
Gilfrin Jewellers (side) - exploring the implications of RTC applying for advertising consent (community banners)	Outstanding
Seeking RDC's opinion on replacing the Crownfield bus shelters	Referred to Public Conveniences & Bus Shelters WG
Cllrs Boyd, Fiddimore and Rogers looking into the practicalities of replacing the Crownfields bus shelters	<i>See below</i>
Ascertaining if sponsorship could be found to replace the Crownfields bus shelters	Referred to Public Conveniences & Bus Shelters WG
Purchasing an A3 printer to print plans (for P+T Committee meetings)	Outstanding
Obtain costings to improve signage to the town centre <i>within</i> Gibbet Marsh Car Park	Outstanding
Asking RDC to consider removing the Gibbet Marsh Car Parking charges – or introducing a discounted scheme for traders and residents	Outstanding
Asking Highways to confirm it has 'no left turn' signage outside Lancaster Court in hand.	Referred to Highways Forum

58 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED To submit the responses following to the Planning Authority:

- RR/2015/2370/P** 22 Mill Road, Rye
Erection of a 2-storey extension.
Applicant: Mr & Mrs Percival, 22 Mill Road, Rye
SUPPORT APPROVAL
- RR/2015/2418/P** 8 Jarretts Close, Wall Cottage, Rye
Garden Shed.
Applicant: Christopher Rowe, c/o Jonathan Gale Architects, Stocks Farm, Wittersham
SUPPORT REFUSAL. Overdevelopment.
- RR/3300/CC** Rye Community Primary School, The Grove, Rye
Two-storey extension to provide a new nursery with ancillary spaces, two new classrooms, one new practical room and a new staffroom.
Applicant: ESCC
SUPPORT APPROVAL.

59 PEDESTRIAN RAIL CROSSINGS, SW OF RAILWAY STATION

Members considered an email from Edward Williams expressing concern there had been another suicide at one of the pedestrian rail crossings, south-west of the Railway Station. He had suggested that gates could be installed which could be locked automatically when a train was in the vicinity.

Comments included: the gates could be secured in the past – they were controlled by way of a cable system connected to the signal box; if people are determined to end their own life they will find a way; there had been 1-2 genuine accidents that might have been prevented; the cost of installing new lockable gates is likely to be prohibitive; Network Rail has undertaken to remove all crossings of this type (in favour of footbridges or underpasses); the proposed extension of HS1 is likely to speed up implementation; there was a risk that users could find themselves trapped on/near the line – with both sets of gates locked; this initiative – on the part of one of the Parish’s younger residents – was commendable; given that Edward had a personal interest in this issue, an approach by him to Network Rail might have more impact.

RESOLVED To thank Edward for raising the matter and to suggest that he puts his idea to Network Rail, supported by a letter from RTC.

Clerk

60 RYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

www.ryeneighbourhood plan.org.uk

The RNPSG Vice-Chairman, Anthony Kimber spoke to his update (**Appendix**) – adding: 1,500 local authorities had adopted – or would adopt – CIL; a lot of work had been done on Rye’s educational needs – in addition to projected student numbers, planners needed to factor in parental choice.

The meeting ended at 7.15pm

Date Chairman

Update for Rye TC Planning Committee: 15 October 2015

To NOTE - RNP V6 is on the website. Comments on V5 remain linked to the "ABOUT" page. The supporting documents, the Design Statement (draft V1), the SEA (draft V1) and Site Assessments (drafted as V1) are being reviewed with a view to elaboration to reflect earlier comments by Rother DC.

To NOTE: At the last RNPSG meeting on 13 Oct, the RNPSG met with Rother DC officers to discuss progress and hear about NP developments elsewhere. The minutes are on the website linked **HERE**: http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/?attachment_id=2611
We have agreed actions as follows.

- **RNP V6:** Rother DC officers will comment further to the Steering Group;
- **Design Statement:** RNPSG will review and forward to Rother DC.
- **Parking Strategy:** RNPSG should review and advise Rother DC about impacts.
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Site Assessment:** RNPSG will work further on both with a view to elaborating to reflect comments (see below);
- **Gibbet Marsh:** Should the RNPSG wish to record Gibbet Marsh as a possible supermarket site then it must look at the sequential test outlined in the NPPF and below. This involves an examination of all possible sites and then prioritizing according the selection criteria, as summarized below. Other sites might include the former lower school site (already identified as a possible site) and the Freda Gardham site. This consideration should include a consultation with various authorities (EA/NR/ESCC Highways on the feasibility of locating a supermarket at the site). Once done, then a formal approach would have to be made to Rother DC as landowner. Rother DC emphasizes that any proposal would need a robust case.

Rother DC officers underscored the fact that some other plans are being challenged by land owners and developers on the basis of poor quality Strategic Environment Assessments and sustainability considerations. It is important to get it right.

Assessments of the RNP

There are several forms of assessment of the RNP that might be applicable (most arise from EU obligations). Rother DC has advised as below.

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** – this is the assessment of the environmental effects of the RNP, on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors). **To NOTE:** following screening and consultation with statutory environmental bodies (SEBs: Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England) RDC officers take the view that the RNP **does** require a SEA. Natural England and Historic England support this view; the EA makes no comment but welcomes the opportunity for site of the RNP). The SEA is being drafted as Version 1 (V1).
- **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - this is a continual assessment of environmental, social and economic effects of the RNP. Sustainability is at the heart of the RNP and has been a consideration throughout. It is not intended to produce a separate document.
- **Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)** – this is an assessment of significant

impacts on nature conservation sites of European importance (such as RAMSAR on Romney Marsh). Rother DC has advised that officers are handling work to screen out this assessment and will advise in due course.

- **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** – this is an assessment of the possible impacts that any proposed project may have on the environment. Rother DC has advised that this assessment is embraced by other work.
- **Site Assessment (SA)** [Extract repeated for ease of reference from last update]: RDC considers that the work undertaken thus far (on V2) as part of the decision making process has been well researched but there are some issues that will require more elaboration of the SA's text:
 - The focus appears to be on residential with apparent minimum consideration of retail requirements or employment. Rother DC points out that the latter is a policy requirement of Core Strategy (RY1) and should be considered by the Rye NP. Although the RNPSG has considered options in its work, all alternative uses (housing, commercial or other, such as open space or parking) need to be recorded in the paper for completeness. For main retail sites, RDC offers the following sequence: Consider retail sites within the town centre (post office site?). If none: Consider the edge of centre (edge of town centre boundary – local plan 2006 designation (former Lower School site – Winchelsea Rd (East and West?) If none: Consider beyond. (Freda Gardham - Gibbet Marsh – Upper Valley Park?).
 - There needs to be more consideration of 'heritage' and 'highways/transport' factors. Only the AONB applies as there is no "green belt" designation.
 - While acknowledging the constraints on development sites around Rye, there should be more consideration of: alternative uses for each site, the "red sites" in the SHLAA and others that have come to the Steering Group's attention since 2013. This work could be drawn together in the form of a matrix summary (examples have been circulated) to help to avoid challenges from developers. The RNPSG should adopt the 'reasonable alternatives' approach, for which national guidance has been circulated.

CIL Proposals: RDC officers report that work continues on the CIL charging schedule. It is expected to be adopted next year.

Conclusion: There is still much work to do on the RNP to elaborate the site assessments paper; the SEA and the plan itself. To maintain momentum, we have probably reached the stage where the RNPSG needs some professional support (the budget allows for this) to carry out some of the detailed work. This is being examined. By doing so we would be better prepared for scrutiny, examination and possible challenge.

Anthony Kimber PhD
Vice Chair RNPSG

17 October 2015