



PADDOCK WOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
C/O The Podmore Building, St Andrews Road, Paddock Wood
Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6HT
Telephone: 01892 837373
<https://paddockwood-tc.gov.uk/>

VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19th May 2021

Meryl Flashman, (Chairman of Steering Group, Town Councillor, Heritage Group, resident)
Rebecca Roberts, (Steering Group, Green Infrastructure group and resident)
Jeremy Thompson (Steering Group Member, Resident)
Richard Barsley (Steering Group member, lead for Town Centre)
Carol Williams, (Steering Group Secretary, Town Councillor, and lead for Sports & Recreation Group)
Andrew Mackie, (Steering Group member, Community Centre Working Party representative, resident)
Rodney Atkins, Borough Councillor, resident
Christine Spicer, (Steering Group Member, Green Infrastructure group, resident)
Nichola Reay (Town Clerk)
Sue Lovell (Steering Group Member, Green Infrastructure group & Resident)
Tony Whetstone-Capel Resident
Vince Greene- resident.
Charles Mackonochie-Capel Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Claire Reilly Deputy Clerk

APOLOGIES

Jon Herbert (Troy Planning) Don Kent, Mike Ridger, John Hall and BCllr Bill Hills

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 21st of April were approved.

2. INFORMATION /ITEMS ARISING

Icefox Developments- No further information yet regarding their plans via TWBC Planning Dept.

An update report from Troy Planning has been circulated to all Steering Group members.

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE STEERING GROUP

A member of the steering group has expressed concerns that Tony Whetstone is a resident of Capel and not a resident of Paddock Wood and is querying why he wishes to be part of the Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group rather than the

Capel one. Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan Group's terms of reference state that membership is confined to residents of Paddock Wood unless they run a business within the town. Mr Whetstone explained that he has always considered that he lives in the Paddock Wood settlement. Some land owned by him is part of the proposed allocations in the TWBC PSDLP as part of the wider settlement allocations and he would like to have some influence as to how this land is developed and aspires to see preservation of the older farm buildings on the land and also development that respects the rural landscape of the land as much as possible. He has a development background and therefore feels that he could contribute some knowledge to the steering group. There was some discussion regarding whether his presence was in keeping with the groups terms of reference and it was decided by the group as a whole that he could attend as an associate member of the group and that his contributions to the meetings were likely to be useful and that he could of course be excluded from any discussions that might be of a confidential nature, bearing in mind that this would be an unusual eventuality.

Town Council representation on the Steering Group for 2021-22 will be as follows:

Cllr Meryl Flashman Cllr Don Kent Cllr Mike Ridger Cllr Carol Williams

4. CAPEL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP MEETING

The Chairman was invited to attend the meeting held on 10th May 2021 on the grounds that Capel and Paddock Wood share a lot of common issues. A representative from their group, Charles Mackonochie, has been invited to attend our meeting tonight.

Charles Mackonochie advised that the NP group are currently waiting for the next round of funding to proceed. In the meantime their efforts were largely directed to responding to the Reg 19 Consultation. Members wanted to make sure that the Paddock Wood NP Groups progress was not delayed in any way by waiting for Capel to progress. Charles reiterated that this was not something that they expected and should not be an issue. It was that the two groups were at a very different stage of the process but that it did not preclude the sharing of ideas between the groups and examination of possible synergies between the two plans.

5. WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

The Borough Council has now published a Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan (LCWIP) which includes suggestions for Paddock Wood in sections 4.5 - 4.12. This will be looked at by Troy Planning in conjunction with our own suggestions (see attached document)

https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/385333/05_LCWIP-Phase-2_FinalReport.pdf

Meryl had shared a number of resident comments on these proposals from the Neighbourhood Plan Facebook page with the group and passed those, plus the comments from steering group members to Troy Planning. Members were genuinely astonished by the proposal to close Maidstone Road, the main spine road through Paddock Wood, along with the proposed restrictions along Commercial Road. It was felt that this would sound a death knell for the commercial centre of Paddock Wood and its

traders and result in traffic gridlock on a regular basis. It would also guarantee an end to footfall for Commercial Road from outside the town. It also seemed likely to divide the two sides of the town in two. As a Borough Councillor Rodney Atkins was asked if he has an idea why this has just come up but he could shed no light on why it had been suggested but that the report had been discussed at TWBC. On a personal note he observed that Paddock Wood lacked cycle routes and that it was difficult to retro fit them. The deputy clerk observed that the proposal should have gone through the Planning Policy Committee at TWBC which Cllr Atkins was able to attend and Cllr Hamilton sat on. Meryl agreed that she would write to Rodney in his capacity as Borough Councillor and ask if he is able to share any further background information on this. Charles Mackonochie noted that he sits on the Joint Transportation Board and that this paper had not been through that committee. There was discussion about the difficulties of separating cyclists from other traffic and pedestrians, the poor signage on existing footpaths and cycle routes and their poor quality in general. Carol Williams raised the possibility of submitting an FOI to see the notes of the discussion at Planning Policy of this paper, the deputy clerk suggested in the interim it would be better to submit a request to the head of planning for this information and if that fails to submit an FOI. It was acknowledged that it is difficult to retrofit cycle paths amongst existing housing and footways and that proper ones were really only feasible on areas of new development. Members noted that the apparent failure to recognise the restrictions of the limited road network in Paddock Wood displayed an ignorance of Paddock Wood and a lack of common sense.

6. AECOM

Aecom representatives are intending to visit Paddock Wood either at the end of May or beginning of June. They have drafted the attached content for the Design Codes document and have started to draft the actual document. Comments are requested.

Comments were that the codes were generic rather than Paddock Wood specific and their visit to the town would better inform the detail of the codes going forward. They plan to visit on the 2nd of June. Meryl asked members to contact her if they wanted to take up the offer of a meeting with them prior to them going around the town. It was explained that AECOM are commissioned by the PWNP to do this piece of work and it was agreed that it was better for the consultants to draw their own conclusions, rather than give them preconceived ideas, then see what they come up with and comment accordingly. They have been given all the draft policies and have had one preliminary meeting with TWBC.

Subject to practical (covid) considerations Jeremy, Andy and Tony were both happy to accompany them

AECOM need to see the detail behind the DLA work on the town centre before deciding how to take their work forward. Hannah Young at TWBC was written to regarding the Town Centre Masterplanning. As a result of this Jon Herbert and AECOM have been provided with the DLA Town Centre work. It was noted that this still consists of artists impressions but it was hoped that some of the detailed work behind that might be provided to them.

7. COMMUNICATION REPORT

Teresa Maxwell was thanked for this and also the cycle and footpath images and information that she has provided.

8. FINANCE REPORT

An up to date report is not available as Nichola Reay was unable to attend the meeting. Meryl said that she would make sure one was provided for the next meeting.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Borough Councillor Hamilton has requested that the dates of future steering group meetings be altered if they clash with full council meetings at TWBC. Meetings have always been held on the third Wednesday of the month since the Neighbourhood Plan got under way. There was discussion by members on this and whilst it was noted that there would be some clashes reducing the opportunity for Borough Councillors to attend it was generally felt that the set regularity of the meeting fitted in with members work commitments and their other regular activities. It was also extremely difficult for the officers to schedule irregular meetings with there being so many extra meetings that have to be held currently especially as there might be a return to physical meetings. Rodney Atkins was keen to stress that when he could not attend it did not indicate a lack of interest on his part or that of the other Borough Councillors and this was acknowledged. In view of this the decision was made to leave the arrangements as they are.

10. ANY OTHER INFORMATION

A summary has been received from Jon Herbert of the work that he has done to incorporate the various comments received into the draft. This has been circulated to members. They are now in a position to prepare for the Reg 14 consultation process and it is hoped that with the relaxation of Covid restrictions some public consultation events may be possible as well as the digital forms of consultation.

Regulation 19 consultation – Jon Herbert had been asked whether the NP Group should submit a separate consultation or just support the PWTC submission. Their view was that as PWTC are the qualifying body for the NP all views should be submitted by them in order to have more weight and not to conflict with the inter-relationship between the NP and the TWBC PSDLP. Individuals and groups are of course free to submit their own comments as part of the Consultation. This was agreed.

Carol Williams gave an update on the Sports and Recreation Group. The football and rugby teams feel very strongly that contrary to the TWBC proposals the sports hub should be located at Eastlands as proposed by the NP Group and the clubs are not prepared to consider compromising on this point. They are therefore inviting Paul Shipley (TWBC officer) and John Herbert to discuss the other options for locations. This meeting will be held as soon as possible. The TWBC proposed new location for a sports hub has not been discussed by Capel despite the fact that it is in their parish.

Vince Greene expressed the feeling that the importance of the green wedges as proposed on the draft NP policies should be reiterated and wanted to know how they could be protected within both the local plan process and also going forward once the sites have been developed. The deputy clerk said

that once these were in adopted policy they had to be respected within the planning process and in the event of appeals would also carry weight. They would also have to demonstrate that the loss of these spaces would be outweighed by the benefit of building on them. However, this all relies on the masterplanning process working effectively to deliver the green wedges evenly over all the sites. Members are still concerned about this especially as SPD's evolve and are issued by TWBC over time and therefore the NP needs to include clear statements to emphasize their importance. Jon Herbert will be approached to ensure that this is covered with the greatest effect in the NP. The same should apply to the Town Centre policies.

Jeremy Thompson asked whether the Reg 19 Consultation response would go to a meeting before submission. The Deputy Clerk advised that an extension of time had been requested in order for this to happen but no reply had yet been received from TWBC.

11. DATE OF NEXT STEERING GROUP MEETING: The next scheduled meeting is on 16th June 2021, Dates of future Steering Group meetings: 21st July, 18th August, 15th September, 20th October, 17th November.