

**Date:** 04 February 2021

**Title:** Report Item 7 – Neighbourhood Plan

**By:** D Picknell /K Larkin

**Purpose:** To reissue documents illustrative of the current position of the project

**Recommendations:** To review the position and consider the next steps

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## **The Setting up of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

The original NPSG held a foundation meeting on 19 February 2019 at which they (1) agreed upon draft Terms of Reference for their work, to be recommended to the parish council for ratification; and (2) recommended that the parish council should approve the submission of an application to the South Downs National Park Authority to have the area of the parish formally designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area. The parish council considered these recommendations at their meeting on 07 March 2019 and approved them both.

- A copy of the foundation minutes of the NPSG is attached as Annex 1.
- A copy of the approved Terms of Reference is attached as Annex 2.
- A copy of the SDNPA's confirmation of the SDNPA's approval of the Designated Area of the proposed Plan is attached as Annex 3.

## **The relaunch in 2019**

Some further progress was made in 2019 but due to changes of staff there were delays. A relaunch meeting was held on 11 February 2020 with the Admin Officer, Debbie Picknell, looking after the administration.

- A copy of the minutes of the relaunch meeting is attached in Annex 4, which has its own appendix listing four proposed Working Group areas and the members who might work on each of them: (1) Housing and Development; (2) Environment, Heritage and Countryside; (3) Traffic and Transport; and (4) Community, Infrastructure and Business.
- A copy of the draft minutes of the last NPSG meeting held on 10 March 2020 is at Annex 5. This meeting was open to the public and featured a Powerpoint presentation by the SDNPA Communities Lead officer and twenty-one residents attended. Changes to the working parties were proposed at that meeting and attached as Annex 6.
- Finally, a copy of a project plan template is circulated in a separate document as Annex 7.
- The meeting on 28 April 2020 was cancelled due to government guidance on social distancing and members were notified on 1 April 2020. A letter from the Parish Council Chairman was sent to members on 10 November 2020 to update NPSG members.

## **The future of the project**

Due to Covid-19 lockdown and subsequent loss of members, work by the NPSG came to a halt. The NPSG currently has no Chair or Vice Chair, and has also lost some other members, both councillors and residents. The parish council has only six members where there should be nine, and this must continue at least until 06 May 2021 when by-elections should be held to fill three vacancies. The NPSG may also wish to recruit other members.

A final consideration is that the government is currently consulting on a white paper on planning policy which could make changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which would be detrimental to the neighbourhood planning movement. Nevertheless, the SDNPA is still supportive of the project, and there is clearly also support for it from residents. The Chair accordingly stated in the minutes of the Public Session of the January 2021 meeting that the council would review the preparation of the Plan at the February 2021 meeting.

## ANNEX 1



### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

#### **Present:**

- Cllr Tim Bryant (Chair)
- Sean Carmody
- Wanda Carmody
- Cllr Lesley d'Urso (Deputy Chair)
- Cllr Kevin Godden
- Annemieke Milks
- Sue Pettifor
- Bob Salmon (Chair – Residents' Association)
- Cllr Paul Seeley (Vice Chair – Parish Council)
- Cathy Vine
- Peter Williamson (Tree Warden)

**In attendance:** K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

**Apologies:** Mrs Joan Colin; Cllr Mike Keller; Stephanie Mills (Admin Assistant).

#### **THE SCOPE OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROJECT**

The Chair explained that NPs had once been seen as 'nimby's charters', but had evolved into holistic planning tools giving local communities the opportunity to guide development within their own areas for the next 15-20 years, and to exercise some local control. Anything to do with development and the shaping of land usage could be included

A parish with an NP should receive a higher percentage of the income generated from local development through the Community Infrastructure Levy, collected from developers by the local planning authority. In East Dean and Friston, there was in fact no additional housing allocated to the parish in the emerging Local Plan. This was because the site allocated for 11 new homes at The Fridays had already been built out. It would nevertheless be possible for the NP to ask for more, if that was wanted: for example, past experience suggested that the feedback from the public consultations that would be mandatory during the preparation of the Plan could include a call for more Affordable Homes, both for elderly people and for young families. An NP could also seek to protect areas from harmful development and promote local environmental improvements.

## THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

- **Selection of the area** – this would probably be the area of the civil parish. In 2012, adjacent parishes had been consulted about the possibility of preparing a joint NP, but had decided not to proceed. The parish council would technically be the ‘qualifying body’ and would need to make a formal submission to the SDNPA for the chosen area to be designated.
- **Identification of aims and objectives** – members agreed it would be helpful to see some examples of existing NPs (**ACTION: SM**). A brainstorming session would then identify important local issues (e.g. need for shops, offices, infrastructure, cycle ways, protection of historic areas, protection of wildlife and biodiversity areas, design of new builds/extensions etc.).
- **Gathering evidence** - Detailed work on these issues would be allocated to focus groups which would conduct surveys and justify the need (or lack of need) for development/land use, then report back to the Steering Group. The NP must be knowledge based. If transport aspirations were tackled, it would be necessary to liaise with East Sussex Highways. It was noted that this would still apply on the Downlands Estate where roads and verges were privately owned and maintained, but with public access. Major landowners such as the Forestry Commission, the National Trust and Gilbert Estate must be consulted.
- **Timetable** – this would be under the control of the Group, but experience showed that in order to keep momentum the Group should aim to complete the task in 2 years.
- **Funding** - some grant funding was available on application, and if awarded must be spent within the same financial year. It should be feasible to get £14,000 approx.
- **Drafting the Plan** – the draft should describe the issues, the aims and objectives identified, and the preferred options for delivering them. Specific policies should then articulate how the preferred options would be delivered. Professional consultants would be employed.
- **Consultation** – there must be full public consultation during the preparation of the draft.
- **Compliance check by the SDNPA** – the draft would then be submitted to the local planning authority, and if they were satisfied that it was sound, they would seek the appointment of an independent inspector to examine the Plan
- **Independent examination** – the Examiner (who would be a qualified Planning Inspector) will look at the plan and might hold public hearings. He could then recommend that the Plan proceed to a referendum (perhaps subject to amendments he regarded as necessary), or that it should not proceed. This ‘referendum’ element to the process could be very educational in itself. The Group agreed it was very unlikely that all residents were fully aware even of existing planning policy, or the emerging Dark Night Skies policy, or even the Village Design Statement.
- **Adoption** – if successful at the referendum stage, the NP would be formally adopted by the SDNPA and become part of local planning policy.

## THE PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The NP must be broadly in line with higher level planning policy, including the Local Plan being prepared by the South Downs National Park Authority, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The parish already had a Village Design Statement which had been formally adopted by the SDNPA as a Supplementary Planning Document. References in the VDS to the policies underpinning it in the emerging Local Plan had all been superseded as the Local Plan had evolved and policy numbers had shifted. However, all the policy substance the VDS needed to rest on was still there in some form. A document had been prepared showing the old and new reference numbers. This would be circulated to members (**ACTION: SM**). The VDS material could then be updated and incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan.

## SOME EXAMPLES

The Group began to suggest specific topics to see whether they might be suitable for inclusion. All the following were endorsed:

- **Promotion of Biodiversity** – the Cuckfield NP had a good Biodiversity section recommended by the Sussex Wildlife Trust and would be circulated to members as a useful model. (**ACTION: SM**).
- **Use of brownfield sites** – good for promoting more efficient use of land
- **Designation of Public Green Spaces** – there were some areas of unregistered land in the parish which could, where appropriate, be protected as Public Green Spaces. This would involve following a set procedure for identifying and advertising and consulting on the use of the land. If successfully designated, the land must be fully open to be public at all times. An example was Friston Green. [Note by the Clerk: East Sussex County Council placed Friston Green under the ownership of the Parish Council for the purpose of formally registering the land as a village green in the 1970s, no other claimant having been found.]
- **Management of the Downlands Estate** – the Group noted that owing to the combination of private ownership and public use of the roads etc. on the Estate, and the fact that the ownership of some parcels of land including verges had lapsed to the Treasury Solicitor (following the winding up of the development companies that had originally owned them), management activity on the Estate was complex. However, it was conceivable that the Plan could include a policy to reclaim such land for the parish, if that was the will of the community.

Other topics that were suggested but not found suitable for inclusion included preventing the planting of leylandii trees (already covered by legislation, though enforcement could be a problem); and requiring householders to plant hedges instead of using boundary fences (this would not be compliant with other legislation, though the loss of hedges could certainly be discouraged).

## THE STEERING GROUP'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

A draft Terms of Reference document was available to the Group. [Note: A copy is appended to these minutes (Annex 1)]. These TORs were based on an existing model already accepted by the SDNPA as compliant with the legislation. The Group agreed to accept these TORs and to appoint Cllr Tim Bryant as Chair, and Cllr Lesley d'Urso as Deputy Chair (paragraph 4 of the TORs).

RESOLVED – That the draft TORs be recommended to the parish council for adoption.

RESOLVED - That Cllr Bryant be appointed Chair of the Group and Cllr d'Urso be appointed Deputy Chair

## THE AREA OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Group discussed the area of the Plan and queried whether areas such as Friston Forest should be included, bearing in mind that it lay under the control of the Forestry Commission. It was noted that because there were numerous public rights of way passing through the Forest, the whole area of the parish should be included in the Plan, to facilitate a holistic approach to future development and land use. The existing Village Design Statement (a formally adopted Supplementary Planning Document) covered the same area. [Note: A plan showing the parish boundary is appended to these minutes (Annex 2)].

RESOLVED - To request the parish council to make a formal application to the SDNPA for the whole area of the parish of East Dean and Friston to be designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area

## THE NEXT STEERING GROUP MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Steering Group should be held in the week beginning 18 March 2019 (actual date to be confirmed – 19 March was not suitable). **ACTION: TB/SM**

The main activity would be brainstorming to identify the issues the NP should tackle. All members were invited to bring ideas to the meeting. Cllr d’Urso would organize flip charts etc. (**ACTION: LD**). The data source ‘East Sussex in Figures’ was recommended as a starting point for gathering background information: <http://eastsussexinfigures.org.uk/>. The Chair confirmed that it would usually be possible to identify the ownership of any sites of interest to the Group.

Officers were requested to compile a ‘project initiation document’ (**ACTION: SM**).

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.42 pm.*

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

## **ANNEX 2**

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **1. Introduction**

East Dean & Friston Parish Council has taken the decision to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. In order to produce this plan the Parish Council has established a Steering Group to oversee a process that will result in the preparation of a draft Plan which will be put to a public referendum. In doing so it is deemed appropriate that the Steering Group are provided with and accept the following terms of reference:

The plan will seek to:

- Identify all the important aspects of life in the Parish for which are needed to plan for the future
- Bring forward proposals which will enhance the quality of life in the Parish in the years to come

#### **2. Membership of the Steering Group**

The Steering Group (SG) will be formed primarily from local volunteers and elected members of the Parish Council. This group will consist, as far as possible, of a cross section of people from across the parish as a whole.

The Steering Group has delegated powers and may form Focus Groups (FG) or sub-committees to undertake various aspects of the work involved in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Steering Group will be supported by senior officers of the South Downs National Park Authority and any other third party deemed appropriate or necessary to prepare the plan. The Local Planning Authority are obliged to provide assistance under the statutory provisions of the Localism Act 2011

#### **3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Steering Group**

The local representatives who are members of the Steering Group will:

- Promote the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, be encouraged to participate and provide their views and opinions on the specific topics which are covered during the preparation of the plan
- Arrange meetings and appoint Focus Groups to gather views and consult on emerging policies which are considered appropriate for incorporation in the draft plan
- Assess existing evidence about the needs and aspirations of the Parish
- Liaise with relevant organisations and stakeholders to secure their input in the process
- Analyse the results of questionnaires or other evidence received during the planning process and use them to prepare a robust draft plan
- Inform the Parish Council of progress on a regular basis in order that Steering or Focus Group Minutes can be noted
- Support the Local Planning Authority and East Dean & Friston Parish Council Parish Council during the referendum process.

**The Parish Council will:**

- Support the Steering Group throughout the process providing sufficient assistance and financial resources to ensure the plan is prepared expeditiously
- Appoint professional planning expertise and provide any relevant aid during the development of the plan. Drafting of the plan will require professional assistance to ensure conformity to national and local policy and that the plan will be sound and robust enough to withstand independent examination
- Work with the Steering Group and the local community to establish the future infrastructural needs of the area are provided prior to any housing or other development occurring within the Parish.
- Work with the Steering Group to develop policies to guide the future development and use of land in the area.
- Support the Steering Group in developing sustainability appraisal or other assessments requested by the Local Planning Authority prior to the plan being submitted.
- Support the Steering Group in efforts of engagement and consultation with the local communities throughout the plan making process.
- Facilitate any required contact with the relevant statutory bodies or parties who must be consulted during the plan making process.
- Carry out all statutory duties contained in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) regulations 2012 and engage with the South Downs National Park Authority during the referendum process of the plan for which the principal authority are responsible.
- Following the preparation of the draft Plan and with the agreement from the Group, submit the plan to the Local Planning Authority for inspection and independent examination
- Provide any budgetary support, not outlined above, for the production and local promotion of the plan

**All Members of the Steering Group will:**

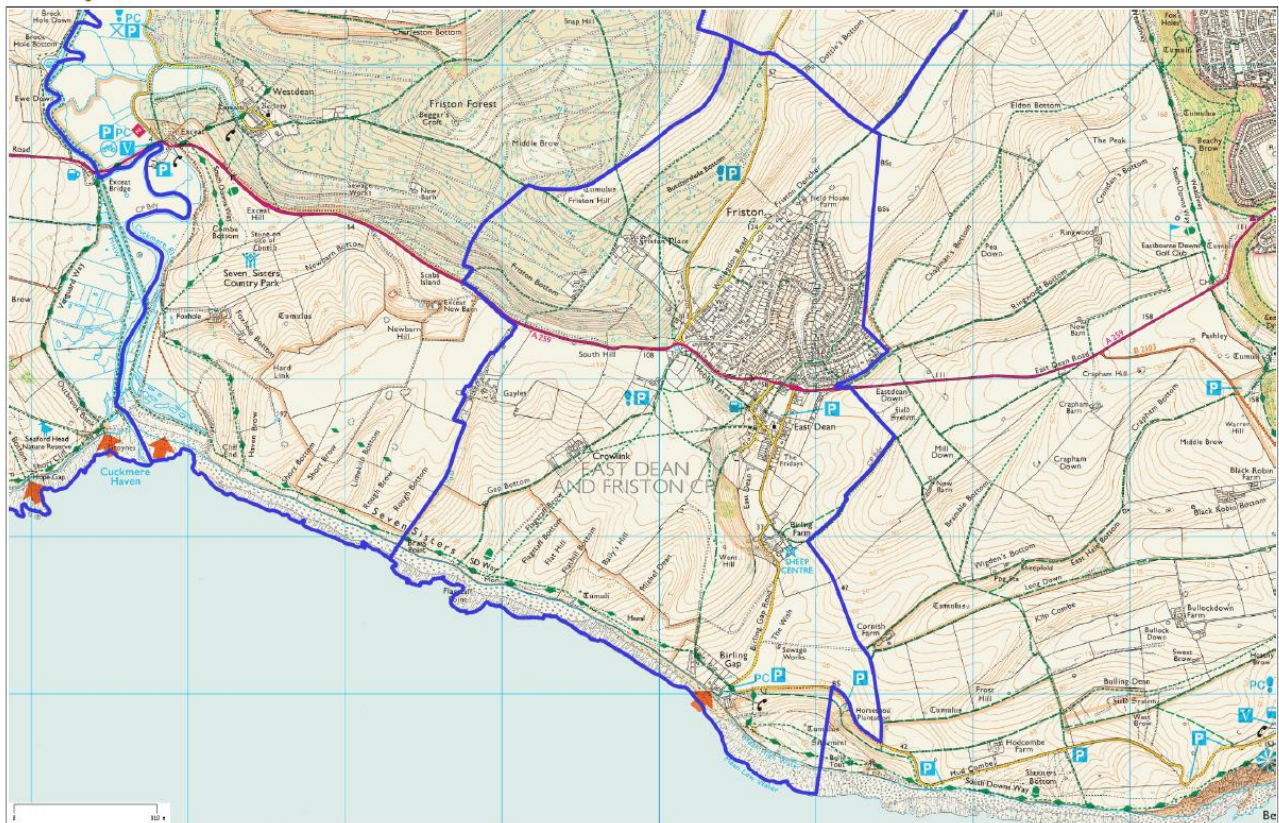
- Declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of interest in land (directly or indirectly) or a business or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the Steering Group.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination in the plan making process and that it is a wholly inclusive, open and transparent process to all groups in the Parish and to those wishing to undertake development or be involved in the plan making process
- Work together for the benefit of the communities established within the Parish.
- Treat other Members of the Group with respect and dignity, allowing Members to express their views without prejudice and interruption.
- Any decisions taken by the Steering Group, other than those delegated to appointed officers, will be carried forward if the majority (more than 50%) are in favour.

**4. Chairman & Focus Group Leaders**

- The Group have elected Cllr Tim Bryant as the Chairman and Cllr Lesley d'Urso as Deputy Chairman from their number
- If the Chairman is not present, the Deputy Chairman shall take the meeting. If neither is present, members shall elect a Chairman for the meeting from amongst their number
- The quorum for SG meetings is 4 and for FG meetings 3. In the event of the committee being equally divided on any matter the Chairman will have the deciding vote
- Focus Groups will be set up as required to research and review evidence and to contribute to the plan document – at least 1 member of the SG will be on each FG
- The lead members will support colleagues who require their assistance, monitor progress against the programme and work closely with officers of the South Downs National Park Authority and the planning consultant when appointed.

## **5. Frequency, Timing and Procedure of Meetings**

- The Focus Groups will usually meet monthly although sub groups may meet more frequently as necessary
- The Steering Group comprising of the working groups and all other members shall meet at least every 4 weeks initially
- Meetings shall normally be held at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month at the Village Hall
- The Steering Group shall keep Minutes of meetings which will be open to public scrutiny. These will be publicised on the Parish Council web site and displayed in the notice boards or such other prominent places as may be requested
- Notices, Agenda, Minutes and associated papers shall normally be despatched to Steering Group members by email unless otherwise specified or agreed.
- Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with set procedure to be determined and agreed by the Steering Group
- The Steering Group will regularly update and report its progress to the Clerk/responsible financial officer of the Parish Council ensuring that she is aware of the on-going budgetary implications associated with the project.
- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed throughout the project and amended as required. Any changes to Steering Group Terms of Reference shall require Parish Council agreement



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## Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice

This notice concerns the designation of East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Area. The power to designate a neighbourhood area is exercisable under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

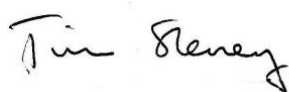
East Dean & Friston Parish Council as the 'relevant body' submitted an application for designation of a neighbourhood area to South Downs National Park Authority. The specified area includes the whole of the parish boundary. The submission included a) a map identifying the area, b) a statement explaining why the area is considered an appropriate neighbourhood and c) a statement that the organisation making the application is a relevant body, as required by Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

In determining a neighbourhood area application, the SDNPA must consider the following:

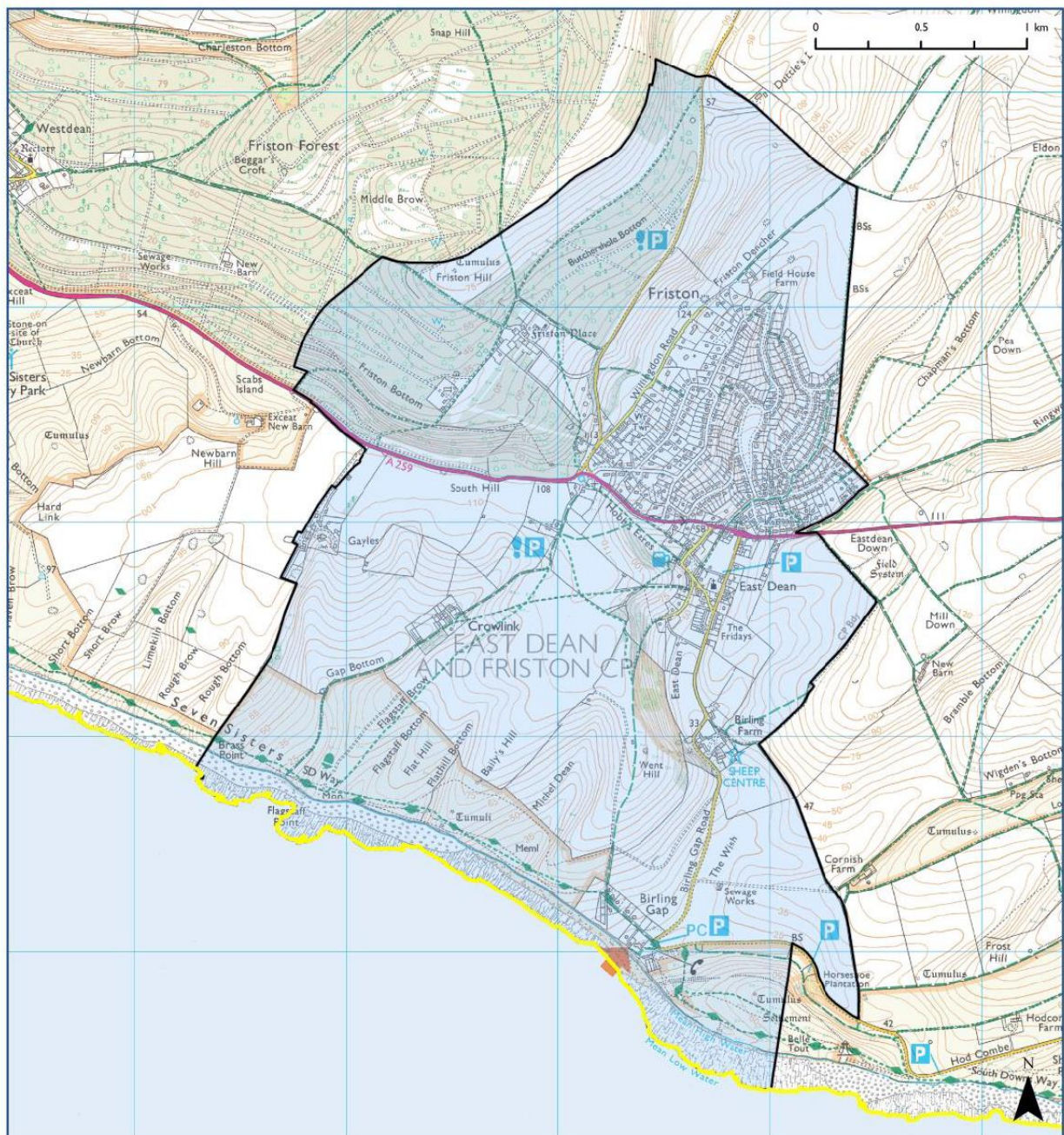
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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>How desirable is it to designate the whole of the parish area as a neighbourhood area?</b>                                                                                    | The parish is wholly within the South Downs National Park. The application is to designate the whole of the parish area as a neighbourhood area and this is considered appropriate. In addition the existing Village Design Statement covers the same area and is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.                   |
| <b>How desirable is it to maintain the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas (as areas designated as neighbourhood areas must not overlap)?</b> | This is the first area designation application made to the SDNPA as local planning authority for this area and so, in determining this application, the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas does not need to be considered under section 61G(4)(b) of the Act. |
| <b>Should the area be designated as a business area?</b>                                                                                                                         | The specified area is not wholly or predominantly business in nature and so it is inappropriate to designate it as a business area.                                                                                                                                                                                               |

### Neighbourhood Area application determination under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

I am satisfied that the specified area of East Dean & Friston Parish is an appropriate area to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area.



Tim Slaney  
 Director of Planning, South Downs National Park Authority  
 Date: 10 April 2019



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-  Neighbourhood Area
-  Within the National Park
-  South Downs National Park Boundary

## ANNEX 4



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held in the Small Hall of East Dean Village Hall, East Dean BN20 ODJ at 6.30pm on 11<sup>h</sup> February 2020.**

**Present:** Cllr T Bryant – (Chair), Cllr L D’Urso (Vice Chair), Cllr P Seeley, Cllr D Wild, Bob Salmon, Jane Tatum, Cathy Vine, Bernie Ewer, Peter Williamson, Annemeike Milks

**In attendance:** D Picknell (Administration Officer)

**Apologies:** Cllr M Keller, Cllr K Godden, Megan Davis, Sue Pettifor and Vanessa Farmer

### 1. Chairman’s Update

The Chair reported on the following matters:

- Objectives need to be discussed in Focus Groups and skills should be identified. The Vice Chair circulated objectives to the group.
- The SDNPA was contacted and a representative would attend the next NPSG meeting. Concerns and questions from the Steering Group for the SDNPA Communities Lead (Chris Paterson) would be sent by e-mail to the Vice Chair.
- Contact was made with Shipley Parish Council as their Neighbourhood Plan was adopted and the rural area is similar to this Parish. Liaison was agreed between Councillors from this Parish and Shipley.  
**ACTION: LD/TB**
- Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were encouraged to view the Shipley PC website.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. **Update on Community feedback:** A good response was received from residents on the feedback forms and from the Village Fete. This was collated into an Excel Workbook. The Workbook would be forwarded to the Steering Group for information. **ACTION: DP**

4. **Draft NPSG Terms of Reference:** An updated draft NPSG Terms of Reference was reviewed with no objections. This document would be presented to the Parish Council for approval and adoption.

### 5. Draft Objectives on the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Plan

The Steering Group agreed 4 objectives as follows: -

- 1) **Housing and Development- key area a):** To ensure all new development is of high quality design, adheres to construction management plans and supports the defined needs and wishes of the community, is located within the existing village of East Dean and Friston and the hamlets of Birling Gap and Crowlink.

- 2) **Environment, Heritage and Countryside- key area b):** To maintain enhance and protect the rural setting and character of the Parish and improve access to and enjoyment of green space for the benefit of all. To encourage and protect biodiversity and to protect heritage assets.
- 3) **Traffic and Transport – key area c):** To enhance accessibility and traffic safety for all across the Parish, including the reduction of traffic speed. To protect the character and nature of the parish from damage by poor traffic management.
- 4) **Community, Infrastructure and Business – key area d):** To secure communications infrastructure that provides for the day-to-day needs of residents and businesses. To support small business development and employment opportunities for the parish.

#### 6. Working Parties

Members of the Steering Group volunteered for inclusion in Working Parties listed in an Appendix 1 (to follow). Persons not present were recommended for inclusion and the Chair agreed these persons would be contacted. **ACTION: TB/LD/DP**

#### 7. Additional resources and new members

New NPSG members were proposed and it was agreed for them to be contacted by members of the Steering Group and those interested reported back to the Chair.

#### 8. Digital Media Campaign Awareness

A Parish Councillor informed the Steering Group of the importance of a Digital Media campaign and E-Surveys. The Steering Group agreed for this to be developed to encourage awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan and target residents who use social media for information. **ACTION: DW/AM**

9. **A.O.B.** The Vic Chair informed the Steering Group of the importance of documentation of their meetings in preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and advised that a “Working Party Report Template” would be provided for this purpose. **ACTION: DP**

10. **Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall, The Village Hall, Village Green Lane, East Dean.

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.00 pm*

Signed.....(Chair)

Date.....

# East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Plan

*Shaping East Dean, Friston, Birling Gap and Crowlink for the future*



## Appendix 1

Minutes of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020

| Housing and Development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1. i) Environment<br>2. ii) Heritage<br>3. iii) Countryside                                                                                                                                                                    | Traffic and Transport                                                                                                                                                                                      | Community, Infrastructure and Business                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To ensure all new development is of high quality design, adheres to construction management plans and supports the defined needs and wishes of the community, is located within the existing village of East Dean and Friston and the hamlets of Birling Gap and Crowlink. | To maintain enhance and protect the rural setting and character of the Parish and improve access to and enjoyment of green space for the benefit of all. To encourage and protect biodiversity and to protect heritage assets. | To enhance accessibility and traffic safety for all across the Parish, including the reduction of traffic speed. To protect the character and nature of the parish from damage by poor traffic management. | To secure communications infrastructure that provides for the day-to-day needs of residents and businesses. To support small business development and employment opportunities for the parish. |
| Working Party a)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Working Party b)                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Working Party c)                                                                                                                                                                                           | Working Party d)                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Bob Salmon (Lead)<br>Cllr Tim Bryant<br>Richard Coomber<br>Sue Duncan<br>David Lockyer<br>Jane Tatum                                                                                                                                                                       | Sue Pettifor (Lead)<br>Megan Davis<br>Bernie Ewer<br>Annemeike Milks<br>Cathy Vine<br>Peter Williamson                                                                                                                         | Bob Salmon (Lead)<br>David Lockyer<br>Cllr Tim Bryant                                                                                                                                                      | Daniel Wild (Lead)<br>Cllr Lesley D'Urso<br>Vanessa Farmer<br>Cllr Kevin Godden<br>Paul Hill                                                                                                   |

\*Additional members may be added to the Working Parties.



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held in the Small Hall of East Dean Village Hall, East Dean BN20 ODJ at 6.30pm on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

**NPSG Members Present:** Cllr L D'Urso (Acting Chair), Cllr M Keller, Cllr P Seeley, Bob Salmon, Megan Davis, Jane Tatum, Cathy Vine, Peter Williamson

**In attendance:** C Patterson (SDNPA Communities Lead), H Collier (SDNPA Senior Planning Policy Officer), Cllr V Rowlands (SDNPA representative), Cllr. P Hill and D Picknell (Administration Officer)

**Apologies:** Cllr T Bryant (NPSG Chair), Sue Duncan, Bernie Ewer, Vanessa Farmer and Annemieke Milks

*21 members of the public were present.*

The Acting Chair welcomed residents not involved with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and invited them to actively participate at the meeting along with the members.

#### **1. Representatives from the South Downs National Park Authority**

SDNPA representatives were introduced and the Communities Lead gave an informative PowerPoint presentation.

Attendees were informed that the government launched the Localism Act 2011 with new Rights that empowered local communities with Rights to Challenge, Bid and Build as part of Neighbourhood Planning. Development could be influenced by the following: -

- Village Design Statement (VDS) – Supplement Design Policies on Local Plans and provide local detail to broaden policy in local plan
- Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) – Provide local detail on landscape features and identify important views or important areas in the Parish.
- Neighbourhood Plan – Provide detailed planning policy relevant to the local area and can allocate sites for development and protection.
- Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) – An assessment of a conservation area and an associated management plan that is not community led.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan would be prepared by The Parish Council as the 'qualifying body'. With more power and responsibility, land use and spatial planning would be influenced by the Parish Council. More material weight would be given to determine decisions on planning applications with a NDP. Communities could help to draw up detailed planning policy for the area.

The SDNPA Communities Lead advised a Neighbourhood Design Plan **could:** -

- Allocate land for development
- Protect important green spaces (through the local green spaces designation)
- Influence design; and
- Set out Parish priorities for infrastructure (facilities and services)

## **It cannot**

- Stop or prevent development. This tool was launched by the government to enable and encourage development
- Retrospectively affect existing permissions or appeals
- Identify alternative sites without adequate evidence or information
- Deal with non-spatial planning matters such as local police presence or lack of transport
- Deviate from strategic 'parent' policy documents (Local Development Framework)

A NPSG member asked about a policy for smaller housing to downsize and was advised back-up evidence should be acquired to support the application to be determined. For example, if the community wanted to encourage young people into a rural location with affordable housing ask what does the community want locally? Is it a real issue? Can you have a policy around that?

The SDNPA Communities Lead informed the attendees that the housing provision for this Parish had already been met. He advised existing and extended permissions could change during the period of the Plan to the year 2032. Opportunities could arise from the Windfall Allowance for Brownfield sites.

## **Neighbourhood Plan – Process**

The SDNPA Communities Lead advised that the Neighbourhood Area for this Parish was agreed and the next level was preparation of a Plan. From this would come greater opportunity to shape places and local issues shared and solved.

He emphasised the importance of an agreed 'Terms of Reference' at the outset and formal public consultation in the preparation of the Plan to avoid future challenges. In the preparation, scope, resources and support gained could take months or years. The SDNPA Communities Lead recommended the Parish Council requested a list of Examiners to seek an Examiner with the requisite skills for the Neighbourhood Development Plan for this Parish and not wait for formal consultation. The SDNPA Senior Planning Officer should be contacted for advice.

The Parish should work closely with the SDNPA on the Examination and Decision Statement. They should be careful on promotion at referendum (rules and controls on leading the vote) and commentary from the Examiner Report used for voting to be encouraged.

The SDNPA Communities Lead suggested the draft Policy was not written by Consultants but persons with insight of the Parish.

## **Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan**

Pre-submission consultation could be 6 weeks, amended or modified in weeks or months, a revised Plan submitted to the SDNPA for a legal compliance check in 2 weeks, further consultation 6 weeks, examined with examiners report and possible modification in weeks or months, followed by a decision statement and referendum.

## **The Steering Group**

The SDNPA Communities Lead advised this could be as few as 6 to 10 members with the right skills and Parish Councillors should be included. Fittleworth Parish had 8 to 10 and no planners.

The SDNPA Community Lead advised the first Scope of the Neighbourhood Development Plan was to understand local issues. What do you want to cover? What can you cover? What would be left for the

SDNPA? Review other Neighbourhood Development Plans. Look for Parishes of a similar size, make it applicable to your Parish and read the Examiners Report. He advised not to get a consultant to write the Plan.

He said, 'ascertain what people want locally, inform people what the Neighbourhood Plan can and cannot do and justify why you have that policy or do not have that policy.'

The SDNPA Senior Planning Policy Officer suggested the Steering Group viewed Neighbourhood Plans for Lewes (up to date on Environment/ Ecosystem), Seaford (6000 voted in the referendum and how the process was interpreted), Newhaven (Regeneration of local green spaces), Peterborough (Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document), Fittleworth Parish Council and Lavant Parish Council as a few examples.

A Parish Councillor asked if a levy could be built into the planning application relating to heavy lorries and speeding. The SDNPA Community Lead advised this was **not** appropriate to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Members of the Steering Group asked what happens when a Green Space is no longer special? The SDNPA Community Lead advised the area could be re-introduced. Demonstrate the value to the public such as a play area or historical importance, it does not have to be habitable. He stated 'Bury Parish Council had a historical orchard.'

A member of the Steering Group asked whether a detailed demographic survey was required. The SDNPA Community Lead advised that it was not essential.

Another member of the Steering Group asked whether the Neighbourhood Plan could include planting of new trees. The SDNPA Community Lead said 'there was a veteran tree policy that seeks to avoid the loss of native high-quality trees but there is no policy for successful planting or to protect the loss of trees. He said "Lewes included 'Ecosystems Services' for clean air/water which could be incorporated into your Neighbourhood Plan and would need to be determined." He advised the Woodland Trust website may be of interest.

The SDNPA Senior Planning Policy Officer and the SDNPA Communities Lead offered support for the future and NPSG members advised that the presentation and guidance was very helpful.

The Acting Chair thanked the SDNPA representatives for their informative and helpful presentation.

## **2. Chairman's Update**

A meeting had been arranged for representatives from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Ideally one member from each working group) and the Admin Officer to attend Shipley Parish Council premises on Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.00 pm.

If other visits were required members of the NPSG were asked to contact the NPSG Chair or Vice Chair and arrangements would be made by the Admin Officer.

## **3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The NPSG minutes of the meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Acting Chair

## **4. Update on the Community Feedback - None**

## 5. NPSG Terms of Reference

At the Full Parish Council meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 the Chair of the NPSG invited members to note the revised draft Terms of Reference for the NPSG. The decision was deferred until the April meeting as further amendments might be required. The original NPSG Terms of Reference remained in place.

## 6. To confirm the representatives to sit on the working parties and to note new members

The current Lead on the Housing and Development Working Party requested he stand down as he lacked the technical know-how but would remain in the same group.

The Acting Chair advised she would speak to the Chair when available for changes to be discussed. The Acting Chair proposed herself to lead 'Environmental, Heritage and Countryside', the Chair to lead the 'Housing and Development', Councillor Seeley remained the lead of 'Traffic and Transport' and Councillor Wild remained the lead for 'Community, Infrastructure and Business. Councillor Hill confirmed he was on the 'Traffic and Transport' Working Party and remained a non-member of the NPSG.

If changes were agreed by the Chair Appendix 1 to the NPSG meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 would be updated and residents informed. **ACTION: DP**

## 7. A.O.B

The Acting Chair mentioned to the NPSG the website 'Locality' for Neighbourhood Planning.  
<https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/neighbourhood-planning/>

The Acting Chair asked for 5 copies of the South Downs Local Plan be obtained from the SDNPA.  
**ACTION: DP**

Councillor Keller (Chair of the Parish Council) requested the Parish Clerk arranged access for the Admin Officer to the Electoral Roll so demographics for the Parish could be investigated. **ACTION: KL/DP**

**Date of the Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020 at 6.30 pm in the Small Hall, The Village Hall, Village Green, East Dean.

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.10 pm*

Signed.....(Chair)

Date.....



## Appendix 1

Minutes of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020

| Housing and Development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 1. i) Environment<br>2. ii) Heritage<br>3. iii) Countryside                                                                                                                                                                    | Traffic and Transport                                                                                                                                                                                      | Community, Infrastructure and Business                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To ensure all new development is of high quality design, adheres to construction management plans and supports the defined needs and wishes of the community and is located within the existing village of East Dean and Friston and the hamlets of Birling Gap and Crowlink. | To maintain enhance and protect the rural setting and character of the Parish and improve access to and enjoyment of green space for the benefit of all. To encourage and protect biodiversity and to protect heritage assets. | To enhance accessibility and traffic safety for all across the Parish, including the reduction of traffic speed. To protect the character and nature of the parish from damage by poor traffic management. | To secure communications infrastructure that provides for the day-to-day needs of residents and businesses. To support small business development and employment opportunities for the parish. |
| Working Party a)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Working Party b)                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Working Party c)                                                                                                                                                                                           | Working Party d)                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Cllr Tim Bryant (Lead)<br>Bob Salmon<br>Richard Coomber<br>Sue Duncan<br>Jane Tatum                                                                                                                                                                                           | Cllr L D'Urso (Lead)<br>Megan Davis<br>Bernie Ewer<br>Annemeike Milks<br>Cathy Vine<br>Peter Williamson                                                                                                                        | Cllr Paul Seeley (Lead)<br>Cllr Tim Bryant<br>Cllr Kevin Godden<br>Cllr Phil Hill<br>David Lockyer                                                                                                         | Daniel Wild (Lead)<br>Vanessa Farmer<br>Cllr Kevin Godden<br>Paul Hill                                                                                                                         |

\*Additional members may be added to the Working Parties.