



## Steering Committee Meeting 6 January 2021

**Present:**

Cllr John Crawford  
Cllr Jean Curteis  
Cllr Kate Walder  
Irene Dibben  
Joseph Franklin  
Siggi Nepp  
Sue Quinton  
Stephen Sidebottom  
Graham Smith

**Apologies:**

Helen Whitehead

**Also in attendance:**

Richard Masefield  
Tony Fullwood  
Richard Eastham (Feria Urbanism)  
Laura Mulhern (Feria Urbanism)

### **01. Minutes from last Meeting**

Minutes of 2 December 2020 were accepted and approved.

### **02. Feria Urbanism**

Siggi welcomed Richard Eastham and Laura Mulhern to the meeting and introduced them to Tony Fullwood. Richard explained that FU's role was to assist with the six-week public consultation of the Reg 14 Plan by making all 'reasonable efforts' to raise awareness of it among the local community, for example by driving traffic to the website and using social media. He reported that their methods had achieved good results with other NPs last year despite Covid 19 restrictions. They will do some preparatory work ahead of the start of consultation period to ensure we are ready to go by the time the Reg 14 Plan is ready.

Richard pointed out there are obligatory requirements that need to be met:

- For the pre-submission consultation we must contact certain organisations such as the LPA and various statutory bodies such as Natural England to let them know what we are doing. This must be done before the consultation gets underway. (Action – Comms to compile a list with TF)



- There are also discretionary requirements. These are the ‘reasonable efforts’ referred to above. There is no prescribed set of measures we need to adopt as each NP will use different methods depending on their particular circumstances. (Action FU to discuss this with the Comms team to come up with a tailored plan)

There was some discussion on the consultation questionnaire including types of questions asked. A mixture of targeted and more open-ended questions was likely to be used. Richard said it was very important to get the wording of the questions right. Tony pointed out that responses often come in at the ‘back end’ of the consultation period, and that the statutory bodies may submit their responses in letter format rather than complete the questionnaire. Richard said that all responses are logged and the qualitative information extracted. Ideally the responses will highlight things such as which policies are most important to the public, and where there may be gaps or a lack of clarity in the Plan.

John asked how residents who don’t have access to technology are catered for. Richard confirmed that there would also be an offline version of the questionnaire which could be advertised via a leaflet drop. The results can then be digitally collated together with the online responses. John suggested that TTC could be requested to help if necessary and we should give advance notice. (Action – Comms to discuss with town clerk)

Richard also pointed out that the SC is required to prepare a Consultation Statement. This forms part of the evidence base and Reg 15 audit trail. This normally comprises a table detailing all individual responses, with columns showing where policies are supported or rejected. There should also be a column showing what action the SC intends to take as a result. As the document goes into the public domain a decision is needed as to whether to redact the names of individual responders.

The TNP website and social media was discussed. Siggie and Kate were keen for Laura to take over management of the website as a proven successful working partnership with UF in the past, to which Laura agreed. Laura also recommended building a better social media presence using existing local platforms where possible. Joseph and Laura to identify and review these. Richard said we should agree a strategy for building an online presence leading up to the public consultation and that timing of announcements is very important. He confirmed that the March target was workable. Tony confirmed that the deadline worked for him too, subject to events beyond his control such as delays to work carried out by others or Covid 19 developments. (Action - The Comms team will continue to liaise with FU on website and social media presence, and on other preparatory work and comms requirements ahead of Reg 14 consultation).

Siggie noted that there was still some work to be done with Gravity on document production. She suggested that a meeting be set up with Gravity, Richard Masefield and relevant members of the SC to discuss the details. FU to be invited as well. Tony suggested that some of the



finished Working Group background documents could be sent to Gravity to experiment with. (Action – Siggie to organise).

Following this discussion Richard Eastham and Laura Mulhern left the meeting.

### **03. Working Group evidence base documents**

Siggie noted that the aim was to sign off these documents at this meeting if possible.

**Business Sites:** No comments. Stephen noted that a site plan was needed as well as photos of the buildings.

The paper was approved subject to these additions and signed off.

**Tourism:** JC asked what policies would be produced in support. Tony said that these are covered in his draft structure, but that they would be aimed at keeping the tourism industry in Tenterden buoyant. Irene asked whether AirBnB accommodation was covered, which Stephen confirmed. Kate asked how these policies dovetailed with ABC Local Plan; Tony said that the NP would supplement rather than contradict anything in LP.

The paper was approved and signed off.

**Markets:** No comments.

The paper was approved and signed off.

Stephen made the point that the above documents may need small adjustments but that for all intents and purposes they are signed off. Tony added that in his view this is a milestone meeting that draws a line under the evidence base and allows us to move forward.

**Shop Fronts:** Some discussion about individual shop fronts. Stephen suggestion that the Silver Vaults could be replaced by Ladbroke's as a bad example of a shop front. He also suggested that notable forecourts could be included. Siggie and Tony agreed that Siggie would forward photos of forecourts to Tony for him to draft some text. Siggie to look again at the Silver Vaults and will replace if possible.

The paper was approved subject to these alterations and signed off.

**Routeways:** Stephen noted that this is the first iteration of the document. Some additional information is needed regarding the old railway and Historic England farmsteads. Tony queried what was meant by the 'green fingers' referred to in the document. Stephen said he could either remove these refs altogether or provide some examples, either of which Tony was happy with. Tony also commented that he would like to see all the historic routeways



mapped, including those outside the AONB. He cited the Drovers Road on Limes Land as an example.

Sue queried how the heritage policy referred to in the document tied in with routeways. Stephen suggested that a separate heritage paper might need to be written which could include a list of non-designated heritage assets and where they might intersect with routeways. In answer to a query from Richard Masefield regarding AB20, Stephen asked the group for information about the local names of any footpaths. John noted that not all the appendices are available yet. Tony felt that there was another iteration of the paper to be discussed before sign-off. Siggie suggested that we sign off today subject to a revised version coming shortly. John pointed out that the heritage document doesn't yet exist. Tony pointed out that unless we have a document spelling out what heritage assets we're seeking to protect, these assets will have very little protection, which suggests that a heritage document is needed. (Action – Stephen to produce a separate piece of evidence on heritage. Appendix 5 would become part of a new document on non-designated heritage assets.)

The Routeways paper was approved subject to Stephen producing another iteration with supporting maps.

Kate queried where we are with maps. More are needed and they need to be amended to remove PW logo. PW can be mentioned in the Acknowledgements section of the Plan.

**Views:** Siggie asked how these should be presented. Tony referred Siggie to the methodology for guidance. The aim should be to protect the countryside itself and the rights of way that cross it. The views most under threat are the views out of the urban area towards the countryside. Special views should support the character of the conservation area, AONB and key landmarks. He also said that important views should interlock with the sites put forward for LGS designation. Siggie agreed the views document is not ready for sign-off and needs a more strategic approach. (Action – Siggie will review the document and consult with the SC via email with a view to signing off the document before the next SC meeting.)

**Local Green Spaces and Biodiversity:** Sue thanked Tony for his review of the 14 site assessments. Tony highlighted that due to the very nature of LGS designations, ABC may question the cumulative impact on windfall policies HOU2 and HOU5. This was noted by the SC, but after some discussion the consensus was that all 14 sites should stay at this stage as it is directed by the evidence and because the wider community would expect this systematic approach to continue. Stephen pointed out that the SC need to see in full all 14 site assessments and sign them off together. (Action - Graham and Sue to complete the process of updating the evidence with the additional information requested by Tony and to circulate ahead of a Special Meeting).



Subject to the outcome of the Special Meeting, Tony suggested that at Reg 14 stage we put forward all 14 sites as LGS options to ask the public for their views.

**Biodiversity:** Richard reported that he and Sam Reed are working with Kent Wildlife Trust on the delivery of Nature Recovery Networks in the borough (as introduced in the Environment Bill) as well as promoting Tenterden as a Wilder Town. Although this activity is outside the NP it will involve talking to landowners and how it may benefit them, so there may be some cross-over in the future.

Tony stated that he would like to respond to Richard's biodiversity papers (3) with a view to presenting them in a separate document as part of the NP evidence base. Siggs asked if the biodiversity material could feed into the Design Code; Tony said yes, if there was information about the specific site allocation that should be included. Siggs noted Richard had forwarded a copy of an Ecology paper on Tent 1B. Tony suggested this be forwarded to AECOM for their information, subject to approval from relevant parties.

Summarising the WG evidence base, Tony noted that he has the following papers to review:

1. Business needs (SS)
2. Note on historic background for inclusion in Design Code (SN)
3. Biodiversity papers (RM)

He also needs papers on:

1. Landscape (SN)
2. Built-up confines map and supporting narrative (HW)
3. Heritage (SS)
4. Town centre boundary map and supporting narrative (HW)
5. Recreation and open spaces (SQ)

Tony suggested we meet in 2 weeks' time to wrap up all outstanding issues (ie the above plus LGS sites). Sue to organise.

#### **04. Draft structure of NP**

Tony ran through his draft outline. John asked why the plan period had been changed: Tony felt that it should be aligned with ABC LP to avoid unnecessary additional work such as allocating other land uses. Tony pointed out some tweaks to the Vision to accommodate the evolving plan, which were supported. Tony assured the group that there would be a further opportunity to discuss in any case. The Policies section is derived from work carried out by the Working Groups and is not set in stone at this stage. Siggs asked about NP4 - conservation areas - Tony suggested a full review of conservation areas may be for a future iteration of the Plan as it would be a major project in itself. In the meantime this Policy would provide some protection. Kate noted that ABC and TTC have been discussing the need for a Conservation



Area Management Plan for some time but nothing has yet come of this. [Note: TTC will organise a review with ABC post Covid]

John asked whether we would need to carry out a SEA - Tony was fairly confident this wouldn't be needed.

John also asked if there is a template for the Consultation Statement. Tony confirmed that the SC need to do this and that it would be good practice to put one together for the Reg 14 submission though this is not required. Richard Masefield reported that he has kept records of previous engagement with the public about the NP. (Action - The Comms team will collaborate with FU on this).

Tony asked if he was on the right track with the draft structure. Siggie confirmed that he was and that we could sign off the draft on the basis that we would proceed with it as a good starting point.

#### **05. Treasurer's report**

Nothing to report

#### **06. Presentation to TTC**

The TNP presentation was positively received at both the Planning Committee Meeting (7<sup>th</sup> Dec) and the Full Town Council meeting (14<sup>th</sup> Dec), with the public invited. The proposed budget was also approved. Siggie has sent a copy to Tony for information.

#### **07. AOB**

Irene stated that the Comms team will report back on progress with FU shortly.

Sue asked about contacting the landowners. Tony said that they should be made aware of what a LGS means and how it affects their land. The letters should be tailored to each landowner and should ask for their comments, with the offer of a zoom meeting if they wish. Representatives of the SC for the meetings to be decided. (Action - Kate is going to draft a letter (or letters) which will be run past Tony before approving at the Special Meeting in two weeks' time).

A Special Meeting to sign off the evidence base etc to be organised for w/b 18th January - Sue to confirm details.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be Wednesday 3rd February, 2pm