

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR EGERTON

WORKING GROUP

Meeting 8pm Tuesday 22 May 2018 at the Sports Pavilion

Present: Jane Carr (Chair); Chris Burgess, Graham Howland, Richard King, Ian Mella, Claire Stevens, Lois Tilden (Secretary).

1. **Apologies:** Elaine Graham, Mel Rawlinson, Peter Rawlinson.
2. **The minutes of the meeting on 28 April** were approved.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes, notably action points not covered under main Agenda items:**

- a. **Meeting with ABC**

JC, RK and LT met Ian Grundy at ABC offices on Friday 4 May to discuss the progress of the Plan to date and next steps - including use of consultants, an audit, facilitators for workshops, funding, and the basis of a specific questionnaire to assess housing needs to include scope for lower-cost private rentable properties. A note of the meeting had been circulated to the members of this Group and it was agreed that a copy should be sent to Ian Grundy for information (and any comments he might like to make on it). It was agreed that this would present an opportunity to remind him of the need for facilitators at the workshops in June. The key message from the meeting was that the timing of ABC's plan – to be published in advance of Egerton's Neighbourhood Plan – was advantageous. JC reported that Ian Grundy had also provided a copy of the newly-issued draft national policy framework which, should neighbourhood plans not be available, might require the local authority to impose housing targets on communities. **Action: LT to send note & reminder to ABC**

- b. **Newsletter and input to the Egerton Update following the Parish Assembly**

The overwhelming sentiment of those present was that the published article did not convey information in the overt way that had been intended and agreed at the previous meeting. JC and LT explained that as soon as it emerged that there had been editorial changes they had aimed to get the Newsletter layout, map and wording reverted to its original form - but that as the re-draft had gone to print there were limits as to what could be retrieved in time. Through hasty dialogue with the Editor the result had been a compromise.

It was agreed that all members of the Group should be invited to attend all meetings unless a sub-group meeting is convened by agreement of the main Group. Any sub-group must put its recommendations to the main Group for decision-making. When the main Group (with at least a quorum of three) has made decisions, such decisions must not be altered or overturned afterwards:

- a) unilaterally by any individuals or by a set of individuals or sub-group; nor
- b) by the Group as a whole (unless there are changing circumstances or if new information renders the original decision invalid).

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Reactions from the Newsletter and other media about the N Plan were sparse. It was agreed that more effort was needed to get people to take an interest, reinforce the objectives and magnitude of a NP and influence the outcome. Suggestions made to generate attention were:

1. using fewer words and more headlines
2. door-to-door canvassing (to target non-IT literate residents) through taking on more volunteers
3. making use of membership of other societies to spread the net **Action: All**
4. utilising space in the Hall for a stall at the Village fete 7 July, with large map (EG had booked this)
5. talking to neighbours – CS had begun this: **Action: All**
6. drawing on the “My Next Door” facility **Action: GH**
7. using the Neighbourhood Watch & Community message network **Action: LT**
8. putting up posters **Action: LT and CS will do this initially for the workshops**

4. **Bluebell Walk 12 May & Bluebell Run 13 May: Views and Vistas**

GH reported there was good take-up for the walk but it had been too difficult to snap photos of views and vistas bearing in mind his role in planning, organising and directing the walk. Nevertheless the beauty and tranquillity of Egerton were popular observations during the walk. Other ways of obtaining photos was discussed. One resident had helpfully been in touch with a range of photos to be considered. **Action: All in the Group to take photos and note the location and direction on each one.**

5. **Accounting**

IM had met the Clerk to EPC earlier in the day, and she and RK had confirmed that EPC’s budget heading “Village Projects fund” would be used to handle costs and receipts for the Neighbourhood Plan. EPC had budgeted for £500 towards NP costs this financial year and there might be more available if necessary from EPC’s contingency fund. JC had spoken to Geraldine Dyer (ABC Ward councillor) about the possibility of gaining a £500 grant, and IM had spoken to Charlie Simkins (KCC councillor) for a grant of £1,000. It was agreed that an application for funds from “Locality” should be pursued urgently. Some aspects of the application form were simple, others more complex. **Action: IM and JC would work together on the “Locality” application.**

6. **Social media/Communication**

GH and JC had spoken to Sandra Laws about a designated website and she was designing one that would be compatible with mobile phone access (egertonnp.co.uk). Costs would be advised. Minutes of the NP Group would need to be sent to SL to place on the site. GH would continue to use Instagram, Facebook and My Next Door to promote the work of the group and generate responses. GH had yet to speak to Martin Chapman about joining the Group or volunteering for a specific role. **Action: GH, and LT to send minutes to SL.**

7. **Workshops and pre-workshop sessions – i) identifying land for building and defining site criteria and ii) identifying views and vistas**

So far there had been just a few wishing to take part, most for the “Building” sessions and the following “Building” workshop. Numbers would be reviewed nearer the time. ABC had been asked if they could field

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facilitators for the two workshops but there had been no response. **Action: LT to chase up ABC; All to consider other options**

- i. It was agreed that each participant in the “Building” session at 7.30pm on Thursday 8 or Friday 9 June (subject to numbers wishing to attend) would be allotted a 15 minute time-slot in an invitation to be issued before the session. Members of the Group would meet up at 6.30pm. The starting point would be for individuals to be asked to set out their stall in no more than 2 minutes – i.e. “You are invited to make your case for building on the site you propose – where it is on the map, the acreage, what do you envisage on the site?” whilst also pointing out that this would be a tentative exercise, with no promises. Two or three members of the group would then discuss this further with the individual, with reference to the criteria drafted to date. A projector would help if available. Participants would be invited to join in the subsequent workshop on 27 June. It was agreed that a review of the session(s) would take place at the Group’s next meeting on 11 June in preparation for the workshop. **Action: LT and CS to provide copies of criteria on one side of A3 paper, make laminated posters to place around the village to advertise the workshop using placards held by MR and PR. Laminated large scale map with special marker pens to be available. GH to check on projector availability with PR. All to decide who should be present from the Group and who would act as “guides” at the follow-up workshop on 27 June.**
- ii. On “views and vistas” the workshop on Saturday 9 June (no pre-workshop sessions) would be more open, with tables of about 6 plus a facilitator and a “guide” from the group. The opening question would be for each one in turn to be asked: “You are invited to point on the map, and show photos if you have them, the location and direction of the viewpoint you would like to see preserved and tell us why it is special”. **Action: LT and CS to provide copies of criteria on one side of A3 paper, to make laminated posters to place around the village to advertise the workshop, using placards held by MR and PR. Laminated large scale map with special marker pens to be available. GH to check on projector availability with PR. GH to assist deciphering direction of viewpoint using GPS. All to decide who should be a “guide” at the workshop.**

8. Housing Needs Survey

RK had spoken to the Rural Housing Enabler (Tessa O’Sullivan) at Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) about a specific questionnaire. ACRK could handle this at a likely cost of £1k. It was agreed this should be pursued. RK would suggest a meeting between ACRK, LT and JC with the aim of issuing a tailored questionnaire in 2-3 months’ time with analysis by ACRK. **Action: RK to put ACRK in touch with JC and LT direct**

9. Consultancy support

JC had spoken to a few organisations: a) to audit work completed so far; b) to identify next steps; and c) to adapt the Group’s writing style to meet official requirements. These included the South Downs Neighbourhood and Planning Consultancy (daily rates could be £350-£380); ACRK; and Tony Fullward Associates (used by Rolvenden’s NP). **Action: JC would seek quotes from all and would speak to Martin Newman at Pluckley for further ideas**

10. Progress against timetable

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It was concluded that the work towards achieving the NP was still on course although there was still much to do. It was agreed that Jerry Crossley should be approached to see if he would help to examine the Government's revised National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) and the latest version of the ABC 2030 Plan, then review the Group's draft site criteria, with the aim of ensuring that all the essential lines of reasoning and content were covered appropriately in the NP. **Action: LT to ask JCr about this**

The question was debated as to how to proceed in the event of poor turnout at planned and future events or other methods of consultation. There was concern about composing the detailed substance of the NP if there was lack of interest in the village despite all efforts to encourage participation. It was concluded that as there was strong support within the village in the first place for a NP, yet only a few people had volunteered to play a part, and the ensuing Group had made public commitments towards achieving it, the Group would be obliged to do its best and take the lead in formulating the substance of the NP if there were scant input from others. There would still be opportunities for everyone to comment on a draft NP to express discontent with some or all of it (moreover, some villagers might be pleased that the Group had done the groundwork for them). The eventual referendum would be the final means of endorsing or rejecting the NP. It was accepted that rejection would mean a lot of wasted effort but that was a feature of democracy.

11. Any Other Business

In the light of recent concerns in the village about trees being felled or lopped, ditches or ponds filled in and field hedges at risk despite apparent planning permission conditions to protect them, it was agreed that, if possible, consideration would be given to making more explicit references to the need for caution when drafting the NP.

12. **Next meetings:** Group: Monday 11 June, mid-day (bring packed lunch) at the Pavilion if available; Sessions with landowners 6.30 pm for 7.30 pm Thursday 7 June and/or Friday 8 June (Pavilion or Hall?); Workshop on views and vistas Saturday 9 June 10am in the Hall; Workshop on land for building Wednesday 27 June 7-30pm -10.00pm in the Hall. **Action: EG to book the venues.**

The meeting ended at 12.55 pm