

# A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR EGERTON

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## WORKING GROUP

### Note of meeting held at 7.30pm on 4 November 2020 via Zoom

**Present:** Jane Carr (Chair), Jerry Crossley, Elaine Graham, Ian Mella, Claire Stevens, Lois Tilden (Secretary). **Apologies:** Graham Howland, Richard King

**Declarations of interest:** EG (Orchard Nurseries site for older people's housing)

The minutes of the meeting via Zoom on 8 October were approved.

#### 1. Action points from previous meeting as itemised separately below:

##### a. Update on Natural England guidelines and ABC concerns about adverse effects to River Stour from development

JC had heard in writing and LT by phone from Southern Water that the cleansed effluent from the Stone Hill sewage treatment works eventually discharged into the River Beult and not the River Stour. This confirmed our original thinking that ABC's interpretation of Natural England's (NE) concerns was unfounded. Sewage from any new development would also be expected to follow the same course although capacity in the existing sewerage systems would need to be verified by Southern Water. **Action: JC to write to NE and ABC to verify there would be no adverse impact on the Stour from future development arising from the NP.**

##### b. Update on minerals screening – KCC had flagged up potential concerns about “Hythe beds limestone” (Kentish Ragstone) on the Orchard Nurseries site as development that could jeopardise mineral workings

LT had researched the geology and JCr had discussed this with former colleagues at KCC. Again, it seemed that ABC had not researched this adequately as their original advice was that there would be no need for a screening. In correspondence KCC have confirmed that the insignificant quantity of Kentish ragstone is not commercially viable or practicable on a small site surrounded by housing, and therefore no development likely to result from the NP would be of concern to KCC in that regard. **Action: JC to write to KCC and ABC to confirm.**

##### c. Update on ABC advice on site assessments

In spite of their original advice on out of scope sites, ABC had advised JC that site assessments for sites suggested by landowners/developers even at this Reg 14 stage of consultation should still be considered and assessed in the same way as all the other sites had been. After discussion about maintaining equity and in context of all other sites and the lack of any detail about the proposals, it was agreed that the sub-group led by CS would carry out an assessment of the new Stone Hill site based on an average assumption of about 10 houses per acre. **Action: The sub-group would prepare its report to JCr for review for a final version to be issued to JC, who in turn would send it to ABC for a reaction as to its status and any further consultation needed before a decision in or out of the NP.**

**d. Interactive map and web site updates**

JC reported that Sandra Laws had put in more work to improve the website and add more material. Our consultants from the South Downs National Park Authority had been helpful in producing some technical aspects to this, including all the maps. The aim was to enable viewers to click on a site put forward by a landowner as shown on a map, then reveal the site assessments which included comments by members of the public. Subject to further refinement and consistent formatting this should be ready before the end of the month. **Action: All to assist JC in refining the texts, submitting photos of the public events and enhancing additional material about the events to demonstrate transparency.**

**e. Progress on re-drafting the Plan**

JC had begun to edit the Plan to take account of comments received to date. Offers of help were invited. LT agreed to draft a new section on community consultation. JC had raised with our Ward Councillor Ken Mulholland the NP Group's concerns that throughout the process there had been misleading, conflicting and confusing advice from ABC. This could in part be explained by changes in staff or unforeseen policy changes, but either way it was unhelpful and on occasion appeared to be obstructive. It also seemed that the NP group was expected to be proficient in technical/ professional fields when ABC and SDNPA should have been relied upon for that. It was agreed it should be recorded that this had led to some abortive or duplicated work, all of which was frustrating and wasteful of limited volunteer resources. JC would set out the key issues in writing so that KM could take this up with the Chief Executive. **Action: JC to redraft the Plan with input from all; LT to draft a section on consultation; JC to draft letter to KM for comment before issuing to KM.**

**2. Any Other Business: An update on the Orchard Nurseries site was awaited**

**3. Date of next meeting via Zoom: Thursday 3 December 2020, 7.30pm**

**The meeting ended at 20.35**