



June 2020 (i)

# Rudgwick Neighbourhood Development Plan - News

## Chairman's Report

Due to an error at the printers, the report we inserted in last month's magazine was cut short with only half of it being printed .... twice! The first half of this report is therefore similar to what I was hoping to say to you last month regarding the Public Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan and the resulting review and re-write of the plan.

We had well over a hundred responses from local people to the plan with over 75% of those declaring their support for it. In addition we had responses from a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees including the Rudgwick Preservation Society (RPS) and Horsham District Council (HDC). The input from RPS was most helpful and constructive and we have now incorporated many of their suggestions into the latest draft of the plan.

The input from HDC ran to fourteen pages, much of which focused on planning technicalities and what we can and can't say in our policies. Since the close of the public consultation period we have been working closely with the consultant who is advising the RNP Steering Group on revising the plan. The revisions are quite extensive as we have had to make changes to comply with regulations and maximise the chances of success when we get to the examination stage.

The main plan has also been made more concise, reducing its length by almost half and moving some content into the supporting evidence. This makes the plan a much more digestible read with the evidence documents available as backup. There are some differences in Policies between the original and the revised plan. In the second half of this newsletter a brief analysis is provided to aid your understanding.

The result of all these changes is that we believe the revised plan is materially different to the previous iteration which means we are obliged to re-run the Public Consultation which is known as Regulation 14. (cont.)

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The consultation will take a different format to the last consultation due to COVID-19 and details of how to participate in the consultation follow.

The Rudgwick Parish Council (RPC) approved the revised plan at its May meeting with a consultation period running from 18th May till midnight on Monday 13th July.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and we hopefully look forward to your support for the revised plan.

**Ian Maclachlan - RNP Chairman** (P.S. RPC website has May Newsletter in full)

### **HOW DO YOU PARTICIPATE?**

#### **ACCESS A COPY OF THE PLAN**

***At the Parish Council Website: [www.rudgwick-pc.org.uk](http://www.rudgwick-pc.org.uk)***

(If you are unable to do this and require a paper copy to be printed off & posted to you then please contact the Parish Clerk (details below) and this will be organised. N.B. This time we do not have a supply of pre-printed booklets, they will only be printed & despatched on individual request).

#### **PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS**

***Via our 'very easy to use' online survey form on the Neighbourhood Plan page at the Rudgwick Parish Council website.***

(But, if you wish, there is a comments form (pdf) there for you to print off, complete and return to the Parish Clerk).

***Please remember that you can support/object to the Plan without the need for any or extensive supplementary comments. Also note that if you feel that your previous comments are not satisfactorily dealt with in the new Plan, you must submit any outstanding concerns to us again.***

#### **Parish Clerk:**

clerk@rudgwickpc.co.uk - 07927 702321 - 01403 822678 (Mondays & Fridays only)

***Finally, please note that the regulation copy of the plan and all supporting documents deposited at the Parish Council Offices and normally available to view by appointment at the Rudgwick Village Hall are not currently accessible due to COVID-19 restrictions. If you do wish to attend to view these documents, please contact the Parish Clerk forthwith and you will be notified as and when the easing of restrictions will allow safe physical access to be made available.***

## **A brief analysis of the changes to our Neighbourhood Plan**

*....a personal view by Paul Kornycky, member of the RNP Steering Group.*

### **So what's changed ?**

The first thing to note is that the new plan has 17 policies compared to 15 in the old plan. This increase of 2 has been caused by the fact that we previously had 2 'design' policies and now we have 4. Before, we had Policy 3 limiting building height and Policy 7 simply invoking the existing Parish Design Statement. These have now been replaced by 4 detailed policies (numbered 6 to 9) covering Height, Materials, Style & Street Scene. We are grateful to the Preservation Society for their expertise in helping formulate the content of these design policies.

The remaining 13 policies generally cover the same subject matter as the old, but with some differences. In the analysis below, New/Old Policy numbers are shown in brackets to assist your referencing them.

**(New No.1/Old No.1) Spatial Strategy & Settlement Boundaries.** Some significant consultees (including HDC) were concerned that our plan should not be so prescriptive on settlement defensible boundaries given that we were not evaluating or allocating sites. Mindful of the fact that HDC has anyway now reviewed all Rudgwick Parish sites as part of the Local Plan review and published their findings, the Steering Group felt that this policy could consequently be 'safely' modified to simply recognise & reinforce the identities & boundaries of the parish's 6 settlements (i.e. Rudgwick, Bucks Green, Cox Green, Tisman's Common, The Haven and Rowhook). This approach, together with the aforementioned design policies, will help embrace some key components of the Parish Design Statement but now as formal planning policy, thereby carrying considerable weight.

**(2/2) Market Housing Mix.** This has been revised from 5% 4+bed, 30% 3bed, 65% 1or2bed to be 5%/40%/55% to reflect the fact that although we do require smaller homes, 3-bed are still very much needed in Rudgwick.

**(5/4) Housing Density.** A less prescriptive wording but density is still to reflect the surrounding area & now also settlement.

**(4/5) Affordable Homes.** Much as before but now recognising that there

are now other Affordable Ownership options, not just Shared Ownership.

**(3/6) Sheltered Accommodation.** Now generalised to promote homes for older (or disabled) people (bungalows & sheltered) and that all new major developments must provide a significant proportion of such homes. Also that all new homes should be readily adaptable to make them more versatile and usable through all stages of life.

**(10/8) Local Economy.** Sensitive proposals to improve/expand businesses within our 3 designated employment areas (see map at last page of Plan) are encouraged to foster local employment. Home alterations or extensions to facilitate more home working are also generally supported.

**(11/11) Infrastructure.** The poor broadband/mobile infrastructure is recognised by a policy to support such new infrastructure. Locally we cannot have much influence on wider infrastructure (Schools, Roads, Health etc.) beyond the policies HDC already has in its local plan.

**(14/12) Sport & Recreation Facilities.** Minor change to insist that any ensuing landscape harm must be mitigated, insofar as is possible.

**(15/13) Allotments.** Modified to ensure adequate off-street parking.

**(16/14) Local Green Space.** The Holy Trinity Churchyard has been removed as it is adequately protected by its existing designation. The other six areas nominated for local green space protection are unchanged.

**(17/15) Green Infrastructure & Trees.** Reference to Ancient Woodland has been removed as it is already adequately protected. The wording for our 'tree retention policy' has been modified but has an equivalent effect.

**(12&13/9&10) Accessibility for non-car users.** These policies have been substantially rewritten. Eight sites of key local facilities have been identified as needing easy & safe non-car access from any new development. As an example proposals incorporating a safe route for pedestrian/cyclist access from Rudgwick Village to/from King George V playing fields (Bucks Green) would be supported. Other new such routes in the parish are encouraged.

***Hopefully you will concur with the view that this is a good plan for Rudgwick and will help ensure that future development respects our rural parish whilst meeting our identified needs. Please support it if you can.***