

Minutes of the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: Thursday, 10 January 2013

Present

Nigel Kay, Faversham Town Councillor (FTC) – Chairman

Mike Cosgrove, Swale Borough Councillor (SBC) – Vice Chairman

Trevor Payne, Faversham Town Councillor

Mike Henderson, Swale Borough Councillor (SBC)

Anne Salmon, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group member

Andrew Osborne, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group member

John Sell, Faversham Town Council Planning Agent

Tony Fullwood, Independent Planning Consultant

In attendance

David Simmons, Mayor, Faversham Town Council

Jackie Westlake, Faversham Town Council Clerk – Secretary

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Natalie Earl, Senior Planner, Swale Borough Council.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 13 December and matters arising

2.1 The minutes were approved.

2.2 On matters arising, key issues were:

- Faversham Town Council to approach KCC Highways to discuss the different proposals for the replacement of the swing bridge and to seek a long term solution that would incorporate a moving bridge (either swing or lifting) and the sluice gates. To be presented as a formal resolution to the Town Council on Monday, 14 January (Update: Resolution carried)
- Further FTC representation. NK would seek a representative at the Town Council meeting on Monday, 14 January (Update: John Coulter has agreed to be one of the Council's representatives)
- NK/JW to invite the Town Council to the next Steering Group meeting to discuss the Council's collective views on the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) development. FTC had heard a presentation by NK on 12 January
- Tony Fullwood (TF) to be instructed by the Town Council to draft the NP, following the presentation to the Council in January 2013. To be presented as a formal resolution to the Town Council on Monday, 14 January (Update: resolution carried)
- JW to prepare a designation letter for Town Council sign-off. To be presented as a formal resolution to the Town Council on Monday,

14 January (Update: resolution carried. Letter sent to James Freeman, Head of Development Control, SBC, on 15 January)

- CPRE to be asked to help with the communications and engagement strategy/ CPRE to provide support for a pre-independent examination feasibility study on the viability of sites' proposals where there was limited or no consensus. The latter to be discussed under Agenda item 5 but a meeting on communications and engagement had been proposed for 1 February
- Presentation. Any comments to be with NE by close on 11 January

3. Feedback from the meeting with SBC policy planners

3.1 TF gave an update on the meeting. The NP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. The emerging Core Strategy would need to be considered as well, to "future proof" the NP. It was reasonable to argue the agreed overriding approaches around the NP (see Annex A) complied with the strategic policies with the exception of AAP2. Despite the aims of AAP2, it was felt that there had not been any development and, consequently, there had been stagnation around the Creek.

3.2 There were a number of options:

- a) "Unsave" AAP2;
- b) Await the replacement of the Local Plan by the Core Strategy (not likely to be until 2014/15); or
- c) To make the NP more compliant with AAP2, identify the Inner Basin for B1 use and identify mixed or housing development on other sites as agreed at the workshop on an exceptional basis.

3.3 The group discussed the options in turn. They identified issues around each option, including significant time delay, an absence of planning policy which could lead to speculative development, and the presentation of exceptions on the majority of sites. It was agreed that the closer the NP came to the Core Strategy being adopted, the greater the likelihood of the independent examiner taking it into account. However, he or she was legally obliged only to take into account the Local Plan.

3.4 TF said there would be two 6 week consultation periods: one from FTC on a draft NP; the other by SBC once all the public feedback from the first draft had been taken into account. It was likely the period between the two consultations would be of some length, given the amount of interest and likely feedback. That would bring the NP nearer to the adoption of the Core Strategy.

3.5 There was some discussion as to whether options (a) and (c) should be progressed at the same time. It was agreed to go with option (c), but TF stressed the importance of clear guidance on each site from the

Steering Group. JS asked about the viability of development proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. TF agreed that some of the proposals would have to undergo a viability test. JS also suggested that the NP should examine undesignated heritage assets around the Creek some of which would not be listed e.g. walls and wharfage that contributed to its character. This would also need to take account of the Streetscape Strategy. He agreed to prepare a list of undesignated heritage assets for the next meeting. AS would assist. On archaeological issues, TF said he had spoken to KCC. They had agreed it was an area of archaeological potential, but there were no identified remains. They would be prepared to condition any permissions.

ACTION: JS/AS to prepare a list of undesignated heritage assets

4. Budget

4.1 There was nothing to report as there had been no expenditure that had an impact on the budget since the update by James Freeman.

ACTION: JW to get an update on expenditure from SBC in time for the next meeting

5. Proposal for further workshop/one-to-one discussions with stakeholders

5.1 The group considered whether another workshop was necessary. It was agreed this was something CPRE could assist with, and during the drafting of the NP all options for engagement should be explored.

ACTION: To be discussed as part of the communications and engagement meeting. Invites to key stakeholders after that meeting

6. Any Other Business

6.1 The following were raised under AOB:

- ZF5 Footpath: It was agreed FTC be asked to lodge a formal complaint about the conduct of the Panel hearing on 21 November 2012
- Correspondence with individual members of the public: Responses should be made public so everyone had an opportunity to understand the debate and the surrounding issues
ACTION: JW to draft responses
- FOI requests: Again, all information provided under FOI should be made public
ACTION: JW to deal

7. Date of the next meeting

7.1 The date of the next meeting was confirmed:

- 7 February 2013 (**Update: meeting has been rearranged to Wednesday, 13 February 2013**)

Emerging Neighbourhood Plan strategy

There are a set of agreed overriding approaches:

- Preserve or enhance the area's special archaeological, architectural and historic character
- Preserve or enhance landmark and other important buildings, waterside structures and details
- Preserve and create access to the waterside, including wharfage and moorings, and provide a creekside walk with high quality materials as specified in the streetscape strategy
- Retain existing green space and provide additional open space to connect Town Green with the bridge
- By use of its design, scale, form and theme of materials, be creekside in character
- Achieve repair of the sluice gates and the opening of the bridge with the practicality of delivering this aim is under further investigation
- Enable mixed use developments on the available sites with some for employment use retentions, some for residential use and others for mixed use

This approach has received public endorsement and there is agreement on most of the sites with continued debate at the Creek Basin.