

FONTMELL MAGNA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

MONITORING GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held at 2.00pm on the 24th April 2023 at the Village Hall

Present: Michael Humphreys (Acting Chairman)
Andrew Davis
John Gilbert
Anita Harvey
Michael Hobbs
Roy King
John Knight
Robert McCurrach (Acting Minutes Secretary)
Laura Scott Walby
Dick Stainer
Ian Ward

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Chairman welcomed members, and introduced Laura Scott Walby, who had recently joined the Parish Council, and Anita Harvey, who was interested in observing the workings of the Group.

2. Apologies

Aidy Lister

3. Appointing New Chairman and Secretary for the NPMG

MH said he was prepared to continue for a short time only as Chairman & Secretary, and the Group was currently without both officers. He asked members to consider how those roles could be filled.

4. Blandford's Farm Barn (Site 22)

MH updated the meeting on the recent meeting with Intelligent Land, at which they had submitted a possible plan for developing the site. There are three problems with this:

- i. There are only 9 dwellings, all large with large gardens;
- ii. There is no plan for redeveloping the barn area;
- iii. Access to the site is from West Street.

On the number of dwellings, AD suggested that under the proposed new Local Plan, FM was already in line to achieve its target of 40 dwellings, and did not really need Site 22. LSW felt that it would be unrealistic at this stage to withdraw Site 22. Members agreed that 9 large dwellings did not reflect the NP's aims, and AD questioned whether 20 dwellings would be viable.

Regarding the barn, it was felt that it should be demolished. DS pointed out tht NP had suggested employment facilities, but members felt that it could provide space for 5 or 6 affordable homes.

The access presented a more difficult problem. At the meeting with IL they had been asked to contact Vernon Christopher to negotiate on the “ransom” strip, but there was no sign of their having done this. LSW suggested that a new road in the Conservation Area might raise questions, and it would be a development of Site 24. She also asked whether IL were intending to provide the footpath to the VH which was envisaged in the NP. The new sewage outlet from Spring Meadows would create quite a large gap in the hedge between the two Sites. It was felt there would be strong opposition from residents to access from West Street.

The Chairman asked for members’ views on how to proceed, and it was agreed that PC should ask for the barn to be demolished and 5 affordable dwellings be included, making a total of 14 dwellings.

Regarding the access, DS suggested that the PC has little power in these circumstances, and that it might be better to let IL put in a planning application. The latest proposed changes to the NPPF would strengthen the NP and, in addition, a rewording of Policy FM20 could reinforce the argument against West Street access. RK suggested that paragraph 9.27 should be reworded or dropped completely.

IL has asked to hold a public consultation, with a four-hour drop-in session in the Village Hall. LSW felt this could be helpful, to get feedback from residents to IL, but that there should be a PC meeting first, to formalise the approach.

To conclude this item, Chairman noted that the NP Review Group would be redrafting the final paragraph of Policy FM20, as well as paragraph 9.27 of NP, but checking with Jo Witherden that any changes were within the scope of the review.

5. Review of Recent Planning Applications, and Effectiveness of New Process

Chairman reported that PC had reviewed its opinion on P/FUL/2023/01303 (Penn Hill Dairy Barn), following delayed receipt of DS’s comments. The PC had written to the applicant to explain that it is objecting to the application.

On the process, LSW asked whether PC needed to meet in order to come to a decision, and AD replied that this could be done between meetings by email when necessary. AH enquired whether discussions needed to take place in public, but it was felt that the process was adequately recorded and transparent.

DS raised the revised application for Middle Farm (P/FUL/2022/06530). The objections remained unchanged.

6. Any Other Business

IW reported a conversation with Wessex Water engineers who had explained to him where the sewage outlet from Spring Meadows would go. This will require (at least) several days' closure of West Street.

LSW also had heard from Wessex Water, who were asking about the number of dwellings planned for Site 22. The sewage plant is nearing capacity and could require upgrading, depending on planned new development.

The meeting closed at 3.40pm.

MH/RJMcC
26/4/23