

## Minutes of a meeting of Better Mid Sussex Advisory Group held on 28th July 2011 from 10.00 a.m. to 13:00 p.m.

**Present:** Jack Callaghan (Chairman)\*  
Tim Farmer (Vice-Chairman)

Andrew Barrett-Miles\*  
Katy Bourne  
David Dorking  
Margaret Hersey\*

Catrin Ingham  
Anne Jones  
Denis Jones

Natalie March\*  
Edward Matthews  
Mandy Thomas-Atkin\*

\* Absent

**Also Present as Appointed Substitutes:** - Councillors Cherry Catharine, Jim Knight, Jacqui Landriani and Gordon Marples.

**Also Present:** Councillors Richard Bates, Graham Knight, John de Mierre, Kathleen Dumbovic, Garry Marsh, Garry Wall

**Also in Attendance:** David Carden, Clerk to Burgess Hill Town Council  
David Clarke, Network Rail  
Alan Lockhart, New River  
Charles Miller, Acting for New River  
Paul Turner, Acting for New River  
John Robinson, Solum Regeneration  
Chris Slamon – Architect for Solum Regeneration  
Steve Trice, Clerk to Haywards Heath Town Council

### 18. CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Farmer, the Vice Chairman, took the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

### 19. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

#### RESOLVED

That Councillor Matthews be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.

### 20. SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE – COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 4

The Advisory Group noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 - Substitutes at Meetings of Committees etc. – Councillors Catharine, J. Knight, Landriani and Marples had replaced Councillors Thomas-Atkin, March, Callaghan, Barratt-Miles respectively for the duration of the meeting.

### 21. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Barrett-Miles, Callaghan, M. Hersey, March and Thomas-Atkin.

## **22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

## **23. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 were agreed as a true record subject to the inclusion of Members who were also present.

## **24. SOLUM REGENERATION – HAYWARDS HEATH RAILWAY STATION**

Representatives from Solum Regeneration gave a presentation on the indicative proposals for the development of the station area and invited Members to comment.

A full discussion amongst Members followed and the following issues were raised:

A number of Members welcomed the proposed development.

In response to a query from a Member concerning the probable timescale, if approval was given, John Robinson from Solum Regeneration stated that it was hoped a planning application would be submitted in a year's time. He stated that once planning permission was granted it would be approximately an 18 month project.

In response to a query from a Member concerning disabled access to the station, John Robinson stated that engagement would be carried out with the relevant disabled access groups and the development would be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act. It was felt by a Member that disabled parking should be brought to the front of the scheme.

It was felt by a Member that a cycle-hire shop or mobility shop might be appropriate for the completed site. John Robinson noted that a bike hire scheme was currently used at Guildford and this could be considered.

In response to a query from a Member concerning the development of the bus station, John Robinson stated that it was not proposed to build a large bus station as there was not the space for this but much could be done redeveloping the bus shelters, signage and directions from the station to improve use. He also noted that work would be done in conjunction with Haywards Heath Town Council to develop "way finding" signage for the town.

In response to a query from a Member concerning when engagement with the public would start, John Robinson stated that this was the next stage in the process after plans were developed. He stated this would probably begin in the late Autumn 2011.

It was felt by a Member that it was important that any retail offerings catered for commuters, who would most regularly use them. It was felt by a Member that possibility of the Bluebell Railway linking to Haywards Heath Station could provide a design focus to which would promote tourism in the area. It was noted that this had been a successful approach in Paignton. It was felt that too many modern buildings could draw away from a heritage experience. John Robinson noted that land would be retained as a possible future platform for the Bluebell Railway.

It was felt by a number of Members that it was important for the Bluebell Railway to be consulted as a key stakeholder.

In response to a query from a Member concerning the possibility of a bridge or subway access to the station from the car park, David Clarke from Network Rail stated that this was an expensive approach and would leave little funding for any other station improvements. He added, in response to a further query about levies from the car parks being used to fund this, that this funding would go to Southern Rail. It was felt by a Member that even if a bridge or subway could not be built as part of this development, it should be a consideration for future development.

In response to a query from a Member concerning whether rail services would increase to match possible increased usage of the station, David Clarke stated that any project would have to ensure sufficient capacity was built in until 2035.

It was felt by a Member that it was important for sufficient attention to be given in developing the site as a transportation hub. It was felt by a Member that there should be secure cycle facilities on both sides of the station.

In response to a query from a Member concerning the safety of the proposed pathway, Chris Slamon the Architect for Solum Regeneration stated that the site was being developed so that it would naturally provide a level of security. David Clarke noted that any proposal would need to be approved by the British Transport Police. Some members were concerned about the distance along this path from the station to the main parking area to the south.

It was felt by a Member that it was appropriate that the site did not contain any residential development.

In response to a query from a Member concerning whether the lack of residential development would impact on the District Plan, Tim Barkley the Better Mid Sussex Planning Leader noted that this would be considered as development of the Plan went forward.

It was felt by a Member that spoil from the site should be disposed of sustainably by rail.

Steve Trice, Clerk to Haywards Heath Town Council noted that the Town Council would soon meet with Solum Regeneration and welcomed this engagement.

The Chairman moved as per the recommendations in the report subject to the amendment of recommendation 3.3 to read:-

“To recommend to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder that the Haywards Heath Station Quarter Landowner Brief approved in 2007 is withdrawn.”

This was agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That:-

- (1) Solum Regeneration be requested to develop their thinking for a scheme at Haywards Heath Railway Station working in partnership with the Haywards Heath Town Council; and
- (2) it be recommended to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder that the Haywards Heath Station Quarter Landowner Brief approved in 2007 is withdrawn.

## **25. BURGESS HILL TOWN CENTRE**

Representatives from New River gave a presentation on the proposals for the development of the Burgess Hill Town Centre and invited Members to comment.

A full discussion amongst Members followed and the following issues were raised:

The scheme was welcomed by a number of Members.

In response to a query from a Member concerning how many parking spaces would be available, Alan Lockhart from New River stated that there would be 751 car spaces available.

In response to a query from a Member concerning whether New River was working with LaSalle, another of the landowners, Alan Lockhart confirmed New River had already met with LaSalle and a further meeting was planned.

In response to a query from a Member concerning how the proposed community facilities compared in size to the current, Paul Turner, Acting for New River stated that the allocated area was the same as the existing facilities. He added, in response to a further query concerning whether retail units would be located in the ground level of the proposed Arts Centre, that details for the community facilities were still being developed in consultation with the District and Town Councils.

In response to a query from a Member concerning why the town centre was not being developed as a hub, Charles Miller stated that the Town Centre was being developed as a pedestrian friendly zone and that transportation links would be available around the town. He noted that consultation would be carried out to understand the highways issues.

It was felt by a Member that residents would be most interested in seeing the facades replaced first.

In response to a query from a Member concerning whether it would be likely that Compulsory Purchase Orders would be used, Alan Lockhart stated that these would only be requested as a last resort and small businesses were unlikely to be affected. He stated that he was keen to negotiate and reach agreements with interested parties.

In response to a query from a Member concerning whether the anchor store could stipulate which retailers were permitted in the town centre, Charles Miller stated that whilst New River recognised the importance of having comparable shops around the anchor store, the anchor was not allowed to stipulate which other retailers were allowed in the town centre. Alan Lockhart added that it was illegal for an operator to build into an agreement the exclusion of other types of retailers.

In response to a query from a Member concerning disabled access, Paul Turner stated the consultation would be carried out with the relevant disabled access groups and the development would be suitable for disabled users.

Concern was expressed by a Member regarding the lack of residential development within the town centre. It was felt by a Member that residential development contributed toward a night-time economy and provided additional security. Alan Lockhart noted that an increase in residential provision could be looked at. He added

that there would be 24 hour security. Charles Miller stated that in the current market residential schemes above commercial schemes outside capital cities were not performing well.

It was felt by a Member that residential development was not appropriate in a Town Centre location due to the noise and disruption experienced by residents.

In response to a query from a Member concerning the anchor store being sited across areas controlled by both New River and Mid Sussex District Council, Alan Lockhart stated that all proposals would be negotiated with the District Council. He noted that the location of the anchor store was driven by its size, operational needs and parking requirements.

In response to a query from a Member concerning whether energy conservation measures would be in place, Paul Turner stated that a sustainability review would be carried out across the scheme and tenants were able to implement energy efficiency measures.

In response to a query from a Member concerning where bars and restaurants would be located, Charles Miller stated that the site was being developed as a family friendly area and commensurate facilities would be available.

In response to a query from a Member concerning when the anchor store would be announced, Charles Miller stated that New River were hopeful they would be able to announce this toward the end of the year.

It was felt by a Member that whilst the proposed development was attractive and designed with a Sussex-focus, it was important for it to be distinct from Haywards Heath and East Grinstead.

In response to a query from a Member concerning landscaping on Civic Way, Paul Turner noted that it was important for there to be good landscaping coming into the Town Centre. He noted, in response to a further query, that the landscaping was being considered in conjunction with Burgess Hill Town Council.

It was felt by a Member that a 2014 completion date was an ambitious target.

It was felt by a Member that development had to be carefully planned to minimise disruption.

The Chairman moved as per the recommendations in the report.

These were agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

That:-

- (1) New River be requested to develop their thinking for the town centre scheme in partnership with Burgess Hill Town Council; and
- (2) New River be invited to submit a proposal to Mid Sussex District Council, the latter as Freeholder, to review.

**26. WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED**

That the Work Programme be noted.

Chairman.