

Alfold Neighbourhood Plan

Notes of the meeting held on 2.7.19

Including stakeholder consultation with Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Present: Alasdair Denton-Miller (chair); Betty Ames; Chris Britton; Cilla Britton; Rick Dyer; Adrian Erricker; Penni Mayne; Hayley Ringrose; Peter Hartley

Apologies: None received

In Attendance: Tony Ford (Wey & Arun Canal Trust, Project Manager)

Minutes/Introduction

The chairman had circulated notes of the last meeting held on 3.6.19, and there being no comments these were approved. The action on display boards would be taken up by Hayley speaking to Trevor O'Brian.

Action; Hayley

Alasdair welcomed Peter Hartley who has volunteered to help with drafting work on the Plan.

Today's SG meeting will focus on a key stakeholder consultation with Wey & Arun Canal Trust (WACT). Chris informed the SG that contact had also been made with Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWLT) but they had been unavailable to attend tonight – see below for plans for further stakeholder engagement.

NP Process – Drafting

The key themes and policies, having been endorsed at the public consultation on 20th May, will be allocated to SG members to commence drafting work, drawing on evidence gathered.

Action; Alasdair

Stakeholder consultation with Wey & Arun Canal Trust

The meeting was joined by Tony Ford from WACT. Alasdair showed a shortened version of the NP May consultation presentation, emphasising the key theme of 'Environment'. Tony gave a presentation on the WACT's work, and its direct relevance to the Alfold NP. Of particular note were the following;

- The length of the former canal is 23 miles, of which 4 miles is fully restored and in regular recreational use around Loxwood.
- The line of the canal runs almost the length of Alfold Parish, and in particular the current restoration project around 'Summit Level' follows the boundary of Dunsfold Park, along the edge of the NP area. WACT lease this section from the land owner (DP). There are 4 'projects' along this section;

- Compasses Bridge and slipway (COMPLETE)
- Tickners Heath Bridge with habitat enhancement (PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMITTED although not yet validated)
- Elmbridge Road (UNDER CONSIDERATION with Surrey CC)
- A281 Fastbridge (AWAITING OPPORTUNITY following finalisation of new DP access road)
- Sections to the south (Sidney Wood), through Forestry Commission land, and to the north bordering Cranleigh Parish, are on longer term plans for possible restoration. There are considerable land ownership and practical issues to resolve on these sections. Tony is meeting Cranleigh Parish Council next week for a similar discussion. The route northwards is currently under closer consideration, having somewhat less issues than the southern section.
- Relationship with DP Masterplan; DP have liaised with WACT in their development of the plan. The line of the canal is largely unaffected in the draft Masterplan for the new settlement – it is proposed to be retained as a recreational feature, with associated green space and planned construction of a new canal basin. To the south of Compasses there is no towpath at present, nor a Public Right Of Way, though it is anticipated that this will emerge as DP's detailed design progresses.
- .
- WACT is looking for a water storage facility which would require a few acres for a lake or below-ground reservoir. It would not need to be adjacent to the canal. It was noted that about 90% of current runoff from Dunsfold Aerodrome goes into the canal, which helps maintain water levels, but more is needed.
- A question was asked about typical restoration costs; Tony confirmed that a new lock would typically cost £330k and a bridge £750k, assuming volunteer labour. WACT is a charity and depends on subscriptions, gifts and legacies for its income.
- WACT is in contact with Surrey Wildlife Trust, with which it has shared interests and goals. However, it should be noted that SWLT has different roles, acting as consultant, and planning reviewer for Councils as well as running nature projects.

There was a discussion about areas of mutual interest between WACT and the ANP;

- ANP will contain objective and policies in areas such as the following, which WACT agrees would be of mutual interest; Environment, Landscape Buffers (anti-coalescence), Leisure/recreation, and Economy.
- The idea of green corridors (landscape buffers) to help prevent joining –up of urban developments was explained and the opportunity of utilising the line of the canal in places as a natural starting point for such a corridor (i.e. defining a buffer widening beyond the canal) was put forward; Tony agreed that this made sense and in principle WACT would be happy to work on such plans. However as WACT does not as yet own or have control over many parts of the canal, this policy will require agreement with the various landowners.

- It was noted that ‘Green Space’ designation would be unlikely to apply to the canal and its environs.
- Creating public access and footpaths is already on WACT’s agenda (e.g. at Birtley) and they would be happy to discuss similar plans in Alfold.
- In due course, development of a new canal bridge at the proposed Fastbridge site will include an underpass for the canal towpath which could provide a safe crossing of the A281 for walkers and cyclists.

Any Other Business

Stakeholder Consultation; the SG will press ahead with other key stakeholder consultations as follows;

SWLT – Chris to follow up, and invite to next SG meeting

Action; Chris

Forestry Commission – write to invite to a stakeholder meeting

Action; Alasdair

Key landowners – the SG may need to approach some landowners in respect of the landscape buffer policy

Action; Alasdair/Adrian

Dunsfold Park – discussions about the Masterplan are commencing shortly, and where applicable we will make DP aware of emerging policies in the NP for information

Action; Penni/Alasdair/Chris

After discussion about engaging with landowners, it was clear that land ownership is complicated and constantly changing. A Land Ownership map might be useful, or may already exist through Parish Online resources – consult Parish Clerk.

Action; Alasdair

Next Meetings

The next meetings will be held on;

- Monday 29th July, 7.30pm in the Green Room
- Tue 3rd September, 7.30pm in the Green Room

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Guide to abbreviations used in these Notes

BLR	Brownfield Land Register
CSP	Colin Smith Planning
DP	Dunsfold Park
LPA	Local Planning Authority (Waverley Borough Council)
LPP1	Local Plan Part 1 (adopted by Waverley Borough Council 2018)
LPP2	Local Plan Part 2 (under development by Waverley Borough Council)
NOMIS	A service provided by the ONS (https://www.nomisweb.co.uk)
NP	Neighbourhood Plan ('The Plan')
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2)
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PiP	Permission In Principle
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance)
SCC	Surrey County Council
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
(ANP) SG	(Alfold Neighbourhood Plan) Steering Group
SWLT	Surrey Wildlife Trust
WACT	Wey & Arun Canal Trust
WBC	Waverley Borough Council