

## **Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan (BNAP) Community Steering Group Meeting Minutes: 6 August 2020**

**Present:** Terry Betts (Hertford Civic Society); Brendan Clifford (Folly Island Association); Cllr. Alex Daar; Hilary Durbin; Nick Gough; Brenda Heningham; Mike Howarth; John Howson (Chair); Paul Keyworth (Molewood Mill Race Action Group); Mark Lynch; Ben Penrose; Cllr. Peter Ruffles; Neil Rickards (Molewood Mill Race Action Group); Cllr. Andrew Stevenson; Kate Tyrer (Molewood Mill Race Action Group); Jacqueline Veater (Consultant).

**Apologies:** Beth Knight (Hertford Town Council); Cllr. Ben Crystal; Cllr. Mari Stevenson

### **Introductions and agenda order**

1. John welcomed Kate, Mike, Neil, and Paul to the meeting. With a full agenda, and to enable attendees (at this Zoom meeting) to exit after completion of relevant items, it was agreed that clearance of the Minutes and Action Points from the last BNAP CSG meeting would be left to the end.

### **Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan Regulation 16 Consultation**

2. Jacqueline advised that East Herts District Council (EHDC) have organised the Regulation 16 Neighbourhood Plan consultation, which runs from the 16 July to the 10 September 2020. EHDC, in consultation with Hertford Town Council (BNAP CSG may also be consulted) will choose an independent examiner. Jacqueline will produce a document for the examiner, in response to the Regulation 16 comments, within 14 days of the end of the consultation. If clarification is needed, any queries will be referred to the CSG within this time. EHDC will receive a confidential Fact Check report from the examiner. The final report will be publicly available. EHDC then have 5 weeks to resolve that the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made'. Although all referendums (including that for the Neighbourhood Plan) are postponed until May 2021, once the decision is taken by the examiner, weight is given to the Neighbourhood Plan when decisions are taken by EHDC on planning applications within Hertford Bengeo Ward.
3. In response to a query from John, Jacqueline advised that, although the Regulation 16 consultation is generally utilised by those requesting modifications to the Plan, residents, if they wish, can elect to demonstrate support for the Plan.

### **Government White Paper: Planning for the Future**

4. Jacqueline advised that the White Paper (published on the 6 August 2020) is supportive of Neighbourhood Plans. [Proposal 9 in the Paper is: '*Neighbourhood Plans should be retained as an important means of community input, and we will support communities to make better use of digital tools*'].

### **Neighbourhood Plan Action Plan**

5. Sustainable Travel Town (STT). BNAP support for a Hertford-wide STT bid is included within the Neighbourhood Plan Action Plan. Alex, Andrew, and Hilary updated the CSG on this and related road and travel issues. A Hertfordshire County Council Highways decision on STT bids, due in

April, will be delayed for some time. Separately, Hertfordshire has been allocated around £6m of funding for the implementation of the government's recently announced cycling and walking schemes. Approximately 280 funding bids have been submitted. Andrew can provide more information after he's met with Trevor Brennan from HCC Highways.

6. Traffic speeds on Byde Street and junction parking on the corner of Nelson and Wellington Street were discussed. Pavement or carriageway planters to slow traffic have been suggested in local meetings as well as double yellow lines for pinch-point junctions. Highways have advised that Byde Street pavements are too narrow to accommodate planters and pedestrian traffic. Discussions and decisions have been pushed back at least 6 months due to significant 2020 events.
7. Community Garden. Brenda updated the group on meetings in March 2020 with EHDC officials regarding the landscaping of the plot on the corner of Duncombe Road and Tower Street. The plot is owned and managed by EHDC. Mudlarks have offered help and advice. Decisions will need to be taken on the most appropriate ownership/leasing/management arrangements for the plot. John suggested that a sub-group be set up to take this forward.
8. Terry advised the CSG that Herford Civic Society are keen to support and be involved in the Neighbourhood Plan Action Plan.

#### **Action Point 1:**

- John and Brenda to set up a Community Garden sub-group

#### **Rights of Way**

9. John has submitted Modification Orders to Hertfordshire County Council for two new rights of way (1) between Sacombe Road and Byway 1 and (2) between the B158, opposite footpath 13, and Byway 1 (on Bengoe Field). John advised that completing this work successfully will require a substantial amount of time and paperwork (and possibly financial resources) and sought support from the CSG. Suggestions were made by Alex, Ben, Hilary, and Mike, including raising the matter at a Molewood Residents' Association meeting, discussing with neighbours, seeking input from the Ramblers Association, Footpath Society, and Health Walks group. Mike offered help with recording use of the paths. John will set up a sub-group to take this forward.

#### **Action Point 2**

- John to set up a footpath sub-group
- Ben to ask MRA if anyone can assist John or share information on use of the Bengoe Field paths
- Alex to ask neighbours to share relevant information with John

#### **Molewood Mill Race Action Group**

10. Kate, Neil and Paul updated the group on the work of the Molewood Mill Race Action Group (MMAG), which was set up in May 2020. Following a breach of the river bank and the collapse of a tree at the site of the Waterford Marsh weir, the flow of the River Beane was diverted entirely into the Beane and Goldings Canal. Around 700m of the Mill Race dried up with a consequent impact on its ecosystem, local wildlife, and resident amenity. The Mill Race is adjacent to the Hertfordshire

Way and is mentioned in the Doomsday Book. MMAG are in discussion with the Environment Agency and are aiming to achieve a satisfactory solution which protects the Beane chalk stream whilst restoring water to the Mill Race. Peter expressed support for the aims of the MMAG but wants to understand more about the Environment Agency perspective to enable a considered view.

11. MMAG are concerned about the possibility of the breach impacting on the capacity for Waterford Marsh to act as a flood plain. Andrew has taken this up with the flood authority but suggested that the Environment Agency may be more receptive to approaches from local groups. John suggested that local residents' associations may wish to demonstrate support for MMAG and he offered to write to the EA, supporting MMAG's aims. Mike suggested that the letter could include reference to the ancient connection between Waterford and Beane Marshes. Kate asked Alex if the local Green Party could support MMAG and Alex agreed to discuss with them.

### **Action Point 3**

- John (with input from Brenda) to write to the Environment Agency, supporting the aims of the MMAG. Neil to supply relevant EA contacts.

### **Minutes from the CSG meeting on the 7 November 2019**

12. With limited Zoom time left, Minutes from the last meeting were briefly discussed. All Action Points have been carried out. An annex is attached to these Minutes, summarising BNAP activity since November 2019.
13. A date for the next CSG meeting will be arranged by email. The CSG will consider inviting local developers to a future meeting to give them an opportunity to share their plans.

## Annex 1

<b>BNAP Activity: November 2019 - August 2020</b>	
08/11/19	Submission of BNAP Strategic Environmental Screening Report (by Jacqueline) to EHDC.
21/11/19	BNAP response to Castle Joinery planning application submitted.
25/11/19	BNAP response to Hartham Play Area planning application submitted
24/01/20	EHDC determine that a full BNAP Environmental Screening Assessment is not required
20/02/20	BNAP response to planning application for 2 dwellings to the rear of 41 Fanshawe Street submitted
28/02/20	Following collation of Regulation 14 consultation responses by Brenda, with clearance and input from Jacqueline, the Regulation 15 draft Submission, together with the Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement (prepared by Jacqueline) were submitted to EHDC by Hertford Town Council
05/03/20	John, Steve Bayley, and Brenda attended a meeting with EHDC officials to discuss the plot on the corner of Duncombe Road and Tower Street (with a view to it being landscaped into a community wildlife garden).
10/03/2020	BNAP response to HCC Rail Consultation submitted
12/03/20	Brenda, Steve Bayley, and Nigel Braggins had an on-site meeting with Terry Flynn, EHDC Tree adviser, to discuss the plot on the corner of Duncombe Road and Tower Street
16/03/20	Presentation arranged with HCC on waste management. Postponed due to lockdown.
20/03/20	BNAP response to Bircherley Green planning application submitted
21/03/20	BNAP response to EHDC consultation on Affordable Homes submitted
09/05/20	BNAP response to the planning application for 6 homes on the Tree Heritage nursery site submitted.
16/07/20	EHDC launch their Regulation 16 consultation on the Bengo Neighbourhood Area Plan
Ongoing	Several BNAP articles written for the Bengo Magazine
Ongoing	Updates for the BNAP website and twitter page provided by Steve Beeston
Ongoing	Updates on BNAP activity provided for the Love Bengo and Bengo Residents Facebook pages.
06/08/20	BNAP Community Steering Group Zoom meeting held.