

Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan Steering Group Meeting Minutes: 7 November 2019

Present: Steve Bayley; Brendan Clifford (FIA); Cllr. Alex Daar; Hilary Durbin (LoBRA); Veronica Fraser; Brenda Heninghem; John Howson (Chair); Mark Lynch; Trevor Mason (HCC); Ben Penrose (MRA); Malcolm Ramsay (Hertford Civic Society); Joseph Whelan (Town Clerk).

Apologies: Cllr. Ben Crystall; Katriina Cooper; Cllr. Andrew Stevenson; Cllr. Mari Stevenson; Jacqueline Veater.

Introductions

1. John welcomed Trevor Mason from Hertfordshire County Council and Malcolm Ramsay from the Hertford Civil Society to the meeting and group introductions were done.

Declarations of Interest

2. John declared his association with the Beane Marshes Conservation Group.

Bircherley Green Development

3. Brendan is representing the Folly Island Association at a November meeting arranged by Chase Homes to outline their Bircherley Green proposals. The consensus from meeting attendees was that early images and available information on the redevelopment are more promising, and more suited to the local area, than those from the previous developers. Veronica stressed the importance of the provision of a medical centre within the new development. Brendan asked for any further comment to be emailed to him.

Minutes of the BNAP Steering Group meeting on the 26 September 2019

- 4.. The Action Points from the last meeting have all been cleared.
 - Alex arranged a meeting with Nicholas Maddex from HCC Rights of Way
 - Ben arranged a meeting with Mark Smith, School Governor at Bengeo School
 - Joseph confirmed that the Regulation 15 Draft BNAP Submission does not require clearance through the HTC Working Party prior to submission to EHDC. The responsibility has been delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairs of the HTC Development and Leisure Committee and Neighbourhood Plan Working Party
 - Brenda copied Cllr. Rob Pinkham into the BNAP response to the Bengeo Nursery planning application, prior to the HTC Planning Committee meeting on the 30-09-19.
5. It was agreed that the Minutes from the meeting on the 26-09-19 were accurate.

HCC Sustainable Travel Town Programme

6. In May 2019, a Sustainable Travel Town Proposal was submitted to HCC by Alex, on behalf of the Hertford Sustainable Travel Town (STT) Steering Group. The submission of a STT proposal is listed in the Action Plan of the draft Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan.

7. Trevor Mason from HCC explained the background to the STT programme and said that the programme requires local groups to champion and promote it and that it's not a 'one size fits all' programme; success will be dependent on achieving 'mind set' changes to reduce car use and increase sustainable modes of travel. Trevor strongly encouraged widening the scope of the proposal (which currently represents Hertford and Kingsmead Wards) to a 'Hertford wide' one as a unified proposal, representing residents, traders, local organisations, and supported by HTC and local Councillors, is more likely to achieve success.
8. Malcolm Ramsay, representing Hertford Civic Society, said that the Society has been a long-term proponent of sustainable travel, supports the STT initiative, and would be keen to work with the Hertford Travel Town Steering Group to take the proposal forward. Joseph advised that he can approach the Hertford Traders' Association with a view to them participating in the forum.
9. Trevor advised that HCC will lead on STT plans, working with those who submit bids, plus relevant bodies. STT bids will be discussed at the HCC Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and Economy Panel meeting in February 2020. John thanked Trevor for his very helpful information on the STT programme. John also thanked Malcolm for his input into the discussion.

Action Point 1: Alex to liaise with Malcolm to set up a Hertford wide STT forum with the aim of submitting a revised STT proposal to HCC in time for the February HCC Panel meeting.

BNAP update

10. Brenda provided the following update on actions since the last Steering Group meeting:
 - BNAP responses have been sent to EHDC on the HERT4 Bengo Nursery and Hartham Leisure Centre planning applications
 - Jacqueline and Joseph have advised that BNAP can object to planning applications but, if they do so, responses should be sent on behalf of the BNAP Chair as opposed to the BNAP Steering Group
 - Alex, Steve and Brenda attended a meeting on the 18 October with Nicholas Maddex from HCC Rights of Way. As a result of the meeting, the bi-annual mowing of the edges of Byways 1 and 13 have been added to the HCC schedule of works; Brenda has submitted the footpaths from Ware Park Road to Hertford Lock to Nicholas, for inclusion in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and BNAP will submit paths for status upgrade to HCC
 - Brenda has entered BNAP responses to the Pre-Submission consultation on an excel spreadsheet and, taking account of feedback from EHDC and other respondents, has revised some of the policies to make them more deliverable. The spreadsheet is with Jacqueline for review and clearance
 - Joseph confirmed that the BNAP Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report will be sent to EHDC on the 8 November for a 5-week consultation. Following consultation, the final version of the SEA, together with the Regulation 16 Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan, will be sent to EHDC for the 6-week EHDC consultation
 - Brenda will attend the presentation on the 11 November of the early proposals for the Hertford Theatre redevelopment. The theatre is primarily in Castle Ward, but a small section of it intersects with Bengo Ward.

Action Point 2: John to submit a Modification Application to the HCC Rights of Way team to upgrade the short section of footpath just before St. John's Wood to Byway/Bridleway status and will also submit Modification Applications for other paths identified for status upgrading.

Bengeo Primary School

11. On the 23 October, Ben Penrose met with Mark Smith, a Governor at Bengeo School to discuss the local parking situation and the potential impact of the HERT4 Bengeo Nursery development. Ben advised that the following issues were discussed:
- on-site school parking for staff and parents has been explored but not taken forward due to site limitations and the access dangers onto Sacombe Road
 - the school consider that access onto the development site from Sacombe Road will increase traffic danger levels
 - following complaints from residents about school drop off/pick up parking, some parents are now parking further away and walking their children to/from school. Some are doing this to increase exercise levels.
 - the school anticipates that the Bengeo Nursery development will bring class numbers up to preferred levels
 - Cllr. Andrew Stevenson has written to the school to set up a meeting between the school and EHDC planners to discuss s106 contributions

BNAP Projects

12. Due to time pressures, it was agreed that this item will be taken forward to the next meeting.

AOB

13. The group discussed the planning application to demolish the Castle Joinery building in Tower Street and erect 2 new homes. As demolition conflicts with BNAP Policy HBC4: Non-designated Buildings and Structures, it was agreed that an objection to the planning application will be sent to EHDC by the BNAP Chair.

Action Point 3: John to submit a response to the Castle Joinery planning application, objecting to the application

14. John advised that HTC have awarded the Beane Marshes Conservation Group a grant of £30,000 towards the purchase of the land, subject to the remainder of the purchase funds being raised. The Group have also applied for heritage lottery funding.
15. Ben advised that the Molewood Residents' Association have registered an interest in the purchase of the relevant section of the subsoil under Byway 1 on Bengeo Field. This is on the EHDC Assets of Community Value register. This will now trigger a 6-month moratorium on the sale to enable the possibility of community purchase funds being raised.
16. Ben thanked Brenda for her Neighbourhood Plan work.
17. It was agreed that the next Steering Group meeting will be in January, when the group will discuss projects.