

Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Saturday 8th February 2014

Place	The Ralli Room, Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall 10.00 - 12.45 pm
Present	Bob Cane (BC), Ray Cane, Gordon Chilton, Mary Cooper (MC), Tony Cooper, Mark Everett, Roy Guy (RG), Paula Hancock, Paul Hancock, David Hawksworth (DH), Nigel Herbert (NH), Chris Hunt (CH), Kathy Lewis, John Longstaff, Carol Mack, Jim Malynn (JMa), James Millar Craig, Denise Newman (DN), Glynis Peterkin (GP), Peter Smith, Sue Stansfield, Di Stirling (DS), Chris Townsend (CT), Tony Tuley (TT), Pam Ventham-Smith and Patricia Wiltshire.
In attendance	Jane Smith (JSm) MVDC
Apologies	Maggi Altham, Jean Bradley (JB), Daphne Burnett, Andy Ellis (AE), Zoe Green, David Harper, Elizabeth Hrywniak (EH), John Morgan, Marie Pigden, and Alex Tombs.

Topic	Action
<p>1. Introduction and Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TT welcomed everyone to the meeting especially the three new members, Carol Mack, John Longstaff and James Millar Craig. • According to the constitution, the following were no longer to be considered members of the Forum having attended no meetings last year nor sent apologies: Quentin Armitage, Jamie Chandler, Len Dilley, Roger Evans, Dan Roberts, Felicity and Jeremy Ross. It was however noted that Jamie Chandler is still actively helping ACV. • In answer to a question, Tony confirmed that a quorum is 50% of the membership, which now stands at 40. • The minutes of the last meeting were then approved and signed. 	
<p>2. Matters Arising Not Covered by the Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the list of members on the ACV website is still not up to date. Nigel Herbert, who is now working hard to rectify this, apologised and said that he was unable to spend as much time as he would like on the process due to the extreme pressure of work. He also explained that the software used to create the site was not the easiest to use. • The results of the Ashtead Village Day 2013 Survey had yet to be added to the website. They are to be sent to NH by DS. • Regarding the possibility of the Leatherhead allotments being moved to within Ashtead, TT reported that there had been an earlier offer to ACV to discuss the plans but at that point they had been declined. He now thought that it could be appropriate to agree to such a meeting. JMa said that the ARA committee had agreed to such a meeting but as yet none had taken place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TT confirmed that a letter had been sent to MVDC concerning the allotments and ACV's need to be involved. ○ JSm told the meeting that the allotment site is one of eighty sites being consulted on by MVDC and as yet no conclusions have been made. ○ CT stated that an Open meeting with the allotment holders is planned. ○ When asked what influence it was thought ACV might have in the matter TT thought that it might be little, as it would be an allowable use of Green Belt land. DH thought that regardless of that ACV should still 	<p>NH</p> <p>DS / NH</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;">be involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TT stated that now work on the GBBR was drawing to a close, work would now be resumed on the Neighbourhood Development Plan. 	
<p>3. Green Belt Boundary Review</p> <p><u>3.1 Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The various changes to the GBBR identified at the last meeting had been completed before release of the document for comment by residents. • TT apologised that because of the work on the GBBR he had failed to organise a trip to each of the Green Belt sites. He asked if anyone was still interested in such a trip and there being no-one, the idea was dropped. <p><u>3.2 Open Day</u></p> <p>TT reported on the Open Day held at Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall on 18th January, when the village was given the opportunity to give their reactions to the Forum's review of the Green Belt around Ashtead. The survey and the Open Day event were publicised as much as possible through many different channels and media and 200 people attended the meeting at the hall. A total of 529 people answered the survey. GP was able to ensure the meeting that IP addresses had been tracked to ensure that multiple answers hadn't been submitted online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The written comments had been circulated to all the members prior to the meeting and have now been sent to the new members. <p><u>3.3 Results of the Consultation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP ran through an analysis of the survey showing the percentages of those for and against the conclusions drawn on the each of the sites reviewed. JL severely questioned the interpretation of the figures regarding Area J. • PW reported that Chris Grayling had written to her to say that he felt there was little scope for much more building in Ashtead, and that he did not agree with the ACV plan. PW had replied asking him to write to Andy Ellis to clarify his objections. It was not clear whether he objected to ACV's suggestions for Areas J1-3, or whether he favoured building in any of the other areas of Green Belt. It was stressed that ACV are not recommending that any of the sites should be built on. JSm was able to confirm that having seen the draft of the Review, MVDC were not getting the message that ACV were in favour of building in Ashtead and were aware of the many objections regarding Area J. • GP continued that the overall agreed conclusion of the Review was that Area F could be a possible site for development and although J was another possibility the majority were against it. The conclusions on all the remaining Areas were accepted. • JL queried the qualifications of those undertaking the Review. He was told that the only qualification was to be a resident of Ashtead, as the point of the exercise was that lay people would undertake the process. DN reminded the meeting that within ACV there were members who were more than appropriately qualified for some of the specialist tasks involved. It was stressed that the conclusions in the Review had been made after a considerable amount of work and with discussions held with MVDC. Every conclusion had to be based on fact and ACV had worked hard to achieve total 	

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<p>accuracy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CT asked if residents in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell within sight of Area J would be involved in the consultation process. JSm confirmed that for the first time Epsom & Ewell Borough Council had objected to a recent building application on the site of the Ashtead Park Garden Centre. It was agreed that the residents of the Ridgeway who overlook Area J would be informed of the consultation when the village are asked for their comments on the Site Assessments under review. 	DS
<u>3.4 The Revised Document</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new introduction to Broad Area J was accepted. 	TT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TT pointed out the other changes to J and these too were accepted. 	TT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rewording of the Introduction on page 4 paragraph 2 beginning "The purpose of the Forum...." was also accepted. 	TT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MC asked for the analysis of J within the report on page 42 to say "50% of the respondents disagreed with the report's original conclusion." This was agreed by the Forum. 	TT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A slip was pointed out on page 6 on the last line with the word "hundred" being superfluous. 	TT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH asked if the controversy over Area J put the whole process into jeopardy but was assured by JSm that it would not cause a problem 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TT asked the Forum to vote to accept the Revised GBBR (draft version 12) subject to the changes agreed and it was passed by a majority. The document will now be issued to MVDC, along with the comments received. 	
<u>3.5 Minor Boundary Changes.</u>	
<p>JSm explained the background to the minor changes to the Green Belt that the Forum was being asked to consider and which had been circulated before the meeting. It was part of the overall Green Belt Review now being undertaken by MVDC and part of a process that takes place every 20 years or so to rationalise relatively small anomalies. She hoped that the six sites could be included in the next public consultation to be undertaken by the Forum.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The residents of the properties involved have not been consulted and the sites have not been visited. So far the exercise has been conducted simply by studying the relevant maps. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the six sites, it is thought that there should be no changes involving Broadhurst and Oaken Coppice. 	ACV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MVDC are looking to ACV to undertake the task of assessing the sites which has to be completed by May at the latest. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was agreed that the Forum needed more time than the morning allowed to come to any conclusions and that ACV should consider how best to approach the consultation process. This may involve emailing the results to the Forum their views. The consultation process will include notification of landowners directly affected. 	JSm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JSm is to send the addresses of the owners of the sites to ACV so that they can contact them. 	

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<p>4. Site Assessments</p> <p><u>4.1 Process</u></p> <p>TT emphasised that decisions involving the sites under discussion would be made by MVDC and not by ACV. All the sites had been proposed by the land owners and not at the request of ACV. Five of the sites had been known to MVDC since the year 2000 and the rest had been submitted when it was known that the Green Belt was to be reviewed.</p> <p>TT then ran through the process of assessing a site as set out by MVDC and which had been followed by ACV. The four criteria omitted from the standard nineteen objectives were in line with those not included by the council because their description and ratings would always be the same and so could be ignored. Once these Assessments are approved by the Forum they will then be presented to the village to consider.</p> <p>During the course of the discussions on the sites it was queried whether the opinions of the proposer of a site be included especially if the statement were thought to be not entirely accurate. JSm advised that the statements should be kept so that the documents are in line with the other submissions being sent to the council. The time to disagree with a proposer's statements would be at the public consultation.</p> <p>One of the members unable to be present had asked that the Forum be reminded of the extent of recent flooding along the Rye Brook and that any further development would put further pressure on an already inadequate sewage/drainage infrastructure.</p>	
<p><u>4.2. Specific Changes</u></p> <p>The Forum then looked at each of the sites and it was agreed that the following additions and changes be made:</p> <p><u>AS03</u></p> <p>Page 2 paragraph 3 – full stop after countryside, then starts a new sentence. Conclusions to be added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A biodiversity study <u>still</u> needs to be carried out. • Building on this site would set a precedent for future development. <p><u>AS05</u></p> <p>No changes.</p> <p><u>AS06</u></p> <p>Conclusion to be added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environmental study is required to assess the biodiversity of the site. <p><u>AS07</u></p> <p>Conclusion to be added</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic safety is an issue. The site access is close to the junction of Pleasure Pit Road and Headley Road which is a known traffic black spot. • A water survey would be needed to assess the impact on the Rye Brook. 	<p style="text-align: center;">TT</p>

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AS08

To be added under 'How many dwellings' etc page 6: Wording to suggest it is not possible to suggest the number of buildings that could be built on this site because of the numerous constraints.

AS10

Under Access and Transport it needs to be added that Park Lane is a rat run to and from the M25 particularly in the evenings.

Conclusions to be added:

- Under the second one add "and in the evenings when used by commuters".
- Building on this site would set a precedent for future development.

AS11

Conclusion to be added

- The ancient path on the site needs to be preserved.

Slight change of wording for No 3: The proposed development area excludes the ancient wood of beech trees to the north of the site along Ermyn Way but it would need to be protected.

AS12

The (historic / rural) setting of this site needs to be emphasised.

Conclusion to be added:

- Building on this site would set a precedent for future development.

AS13

Under 'Nature Conservation and Biodiversity' add "A full ecological assessment would be required as the site could be of importance for chalk grassland species.

Add to Sustainability Criterion No 12 "The site could be of importance for chalk grassland species and a full ecological assessment would be needed.

Conclusion key point to be added:

- A full ecological assessment of the chalk grassland would be needed.

AS14

It was suggested that the wording within the Conclusion section is weak. The concerns detailed in the report should be expressed more strongly and those regarding flooding need to be added. Flooding is already experienced north of the site and further building could exacerbate this situation.

Conclusions to be added:

- A water survey would be required because of the pond on the site which feeds the Rye Brook.
- A survey of flooding on the site and the areas north of site would be required.

TT told the meeting that the agreed amendments to the Assessments would be made and then published on the website for the village to give their reactions. There will be an Open Day at Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall on 29th March for the village to discuss their thoughts.

- TT confirmed that a further Newsletter will need to be delivered throughout the

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village to advertise the consultation.	
5. Membership The Forum now consists of 40 members and there is still a good balance between each of the three village wards. However, there are still too few younger people so all were encouraged to recruit in this age range if possible. It was suggested that a call for younger residents could be added to the next Newsletter.	TT
6. Any Other Business As she had to leave the meeting before the end, Kathy Lewis was unable to raise an item that the Forum should be aware of: Chris Grayling has written a letter to all "rail locked" residents regarding possible alternate arrangements for a traffic railway crossing in Ashtead. He has asked for opinions in writing by Monday 3rd March. This is not strictly within the remit of the Forum unless it affects land use: for instance, if there was a suggestion to build a road bridge or tunnel at the M25 end of Links Road with a new road going across the pony field. If that were the case, the Forum would wish to be consulted about the change of use of part of the Green Belt.	ALL
7. Dates of the Next Forum Meetings The dates of the next Forum meetings are as follows: 17 th May, 9 th August and 8 th November. Note that the May date is not the second Saturday as the hall is unavailable.	ALL
8. Date of the Next Open Meeting Saturday 29 th March at Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall. Timing to be advised.	ALL