Draft minutes: version 1: 28/1/25

**Sellindge Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on**

**Monday 27th January 2025 at 7pm**

**in the Durling Hall, at the Village Hall**

1. **Welcome and apologies**

Present 12 – which included members of the Steering Committee, members of the public and Parish Councillors.

Apologies received from 3 people.

1. **Minutes of last meeting (held on 6 January 2025)**

The Minutes were approved. The Chairman used the minutes as an opportunity to update the current meeting and revisit action items listed:

**Walkabout** - see below

**Woodlands in Sellindge** – there is still the need to identify historic woodlands in Sellindge and (most importantly) to mark them on the Parish map. Bob Edden agreed to take this action point away and to generate a list/incorporate onto the Parish map.

**Traffic Studies** – It was decided at the meeting that a summary report was now not required for this as Cllr Simon Instance had provided the Ethos traffic report to Jim Boot and also made it available via Dropbox for the purposes of incorporating relevant sections into the NHP.

**Otterpool Development** -Parish Chairman Stephen Parish noted that the planned meeting for January 2025 did not take place – the next meeting of the Otterpool ‘steering group’ is set for 27th February 2025. The NHP Group Chairman reiterated the importance of having the Otterpool Masterplan available to both the NHP Steering Group and to members of the public. This is one of the first questions that members of the community raise – and needs to be addressed within the Parish map. It was accepted that albeit not up to date – plans are available on the Otterpool website. Bob Edden kindly agreed to print off and overlay these plans so as to be available at the Visioning Event to be held on 15th February.

**Assets of Community Value/Heritage Assets**

The NHP Group Chairman thanked Richard Barnes for his research into the railway guns. More work is needed in this important section of the NHP and further volunteers were requested to come forward to assist Richard and Deborah.

**Mapping** – see below

**Resident Engagement** – see below

1. **Report and actions form Aecom design visit**

The NHP Group Chairman reported that Aecom (the Design Code consultants appointed to assist in drawing up plans for the ‘look and feel’ of future development in Sellindge) had undertaken a 4 hour site visit to Sellindge earlier that day (27th January 2025). Simon Instance and Stephen Parish had taken the Aecom representatives on a general tour of the village by car, followed by a walking tour (accompanied also by Bob Edden). The Aecom representatives had taken extensive photographs evidencing the type of housing and architecture within the village and discussed proposals which would be tailored to meet the needs of this particular Parish. Aecom aim to have a draft Design Code available by the beginning of April.

A set of 6 questions prepared by Aecom to help guide their thinking was circulated to attendees of the Meeting – each attendee was asked to provide input as soon as possible. The questions would also be reflected in the community questionnaire to be drawn up by Scarlet Hazelton (see below).

1. **Walkabouts: discussions on findings and follow up actions**

The NHP Group Chairman noted that members of the community had completed 6 walks and 1 cycle tour of the village in the period 4 January 2025 to 20 January 2025. The aim was to identify features and aspects of the entire Parish to feed into the NHP – particularly to identify any sites which may be categorised as ‘Local Green Spaces’; any ‘views’; any community assets; any heritage assets. The walks are not the only ones which can be undertaken and the Chairman encouraged people to repeat the walks and/or find new ones and to report back.

There then followed a general discussion around what can be categorised as a ‘Local Green Space’ under the NPPF essentially requiring that such space be ‘demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife’. A ‘proposals’ list was put forward and sites debated.

1. **Mapping**

This is an essential part of the NHP allowing the Steering Committee and community alike to really understand the extent of the Parish and its characteristics. It was noted that features such as TPOs, hedgerows, woodland, PROWs, heritage assets, community assets all need to be collated and represented on the Parish map. This is ongoing work led by Bob Eddon.

1. **Project Plan Going Forward**

The meeting noted that the main next steps are to plan for the Visioning Event and to draw up and circulate the Community Questionnaire. Scarlet Hazelton agreed to provide a draft of the Questionnaire by the start of February such that the Group could comment and provide any feedback. The importance of the Questionnaire was noted and also the plan for it to be made available both in paper form (by way of handout); QR code and via Facebook. The Questionnaire will be a key aspect to feed into the Visioning Event.

Jim Boot noted we are bit behind schedule. The next phase will be for Alison to start writing the policies – potentially requiring a meeting mid March.

Otherwise **it was agreed that the next meeting of this Group will take place on Monday 3rd March at 7pm**

1. **Visioning event – Saturday 15th February 2025**

Jim Boot to circulate a draft agenda for this event. Agreed timings of the event – 10am to 2pm. As things stand, it was decided that it may be too early to host an exhibition as well as a visioning event and so it was proposed that we split the event into 2 separate community engagement events – concentrating (also in line with the Community Questionnaire) with canvassing local views BEFORE the NHP Group can translate this into an Exhibition. Maureen Stanley to advise on Village Hall availably from the start of March onwards.

1. **Primary school event – 11/12 February 2025**

There was a general discussion around engagement with the school via the Parents’ Evenings taking place on 11 and 12 February 2025. The proposal is to have the Community Questionnaire available for parents to access and more generally to serve as a general awareness raiser of the fact that there is a NHP being drafted and to give this large section of the community the opportunity to have their say.

A follow-on discussion then highlighted that the view of the school pupils themselves should be included in any vision for the future of Sellindge. Jim Boot noted he had a script for ‘Postcards from the Future’ and that he would share this with us and Scarlett noted a simplified questionnaire could be drawn up for pupils to complete too.

Maureen Stanley and Bob Eddon will raise both the Parents’ Evening and Pupil engagement at the next Board of School Governors meeting and to confirm proposals asap. Maureen Stanley to also consider to roll out the ‘Postcards from the Future’ to the scouts/ cubs/brownies too.

1. **Meeting close** The meeting closed at 9.05pm.