**EWHURST PARISH COUNCIL**

**WITH ELLENS GREEN**

**Clerk to the Council: Joanna Cadman Tel: 01483 268627 email: clerk@ewhurstellensgreen-pc.gov.uk**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**Notes of a meeting to discuss action in response to NPPF changes**

**Tuesday 26th March 2024**

**Present:** Cllrs N Clowes, M Higgins, T Bloomfield

 Alison Eardley, Consultant

 The Clerk, Mrs J Cadman

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| 1. | **Apologies for Absence:** all invitees were present. |
| 2. | **Welcome from Chairman:** Cllr N Clowes welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them that they were present to discuss the changes to the NPPF, specifically Para 14, which stated that Neighbourhood Plans would be protected for 5 years where the plan allocated a site. However, Ewhurst and Ellens Green's Neighbourhood Plan would not receive protection because they did not allocate a housing site.  |
| 3. | **Report from Alison Eardley*** The NPPF has been updated several times since the E&EG NP was made.
* Speculative development occurs where the Local Plan has not been updated
* WBC do not have a 5 year housing land supply, its probably nearer 3 years
* If there is no Local Plan in place and a NP has been made less than 5 years ago and identifies housing requirements, it will carry greater weight.
* The E&EG NP policies still carry weight in the planning system, but there is a risk of speculative development, with a tilted balance in favour of development because we did not allocate a site.
* However, before the recent change to the NPPF, speculative development could still be an issue for this reason. The intention of Para 14 was to give greater protection to NPs, not less, by emphasising their weight where housing sites have been allocated.
* E&EG will not receive the extra layer of protection afforded under Para 14 because it has reached and exceeded its allocated number of houses.
* WBC are updating the Local Plan. Parameters have been relaxed with regard to the Green Belt, SSSIs and AONB, so that the Local Plan can be more flexible. The Local Plan may be ready by 2027, although this is not certain.
* Using standard methodology, WBC need to allocate 710 houses per annum across the borough.
* We need to consider how to protect this parish against speculative development as we are not in the Green Belt or an AONB.
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| 4. | **Responses from other parishes**The Clerk had talked to the Clerks of both Witley and Alfold. Witley were unaware of these changes, Alfold were of the view that they would not be affected, as all the sites that had been identified in the call for sites had been built on by developers, and so there was no need to allocate sites. |
| 5. | **Next Steps***Options as follows:*1. Do nothing and see how Local Plan develops
2. Endeavour to get involved in the Local Plan process.
3. Look at allocating sites in the NP. This will mean going through the whole of the NP process again, including the referendum.
4. Put a site into the current WBC Call for Sites. This might not stop WBC from allocating another one and we are still vulnerable to speculative development because of the WBC situation, but it would give some protection.
5. Wait until after the election and see if new policies are introduced.
6. Site to be considered: There is one site in the parish that may be possible for re-development, more investigation to be done.
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| 6. | **Liaising with Waverley**A meeting will be arranged with Katherine Dove to look at the option of working with WBC in parallel.  |
| 7. | **Action to take before March 31st deadline**It was agreed not to take any action at present, as the submission of a site after the deadline is bound to be accepted. |
| 8 | **Actions agreed**1. To work with WBC.
2. NC to talk to the owners of the possible re-development site and establish their intentions.
3. Alison to write a report prior to the meeting with WBC.
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| 9. | **Any other business**No other matters were raised. |