

AMBERLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Notes of meeting with residents at The Sportsman, 28 April 2016, 19.30

Attendees:

NP Team: Geoff Uren, Hazel Allinson, Leigh Cresswell, Geoff Conlon.

Rackham Road residents:

Cyndy and Steve Kennett

Ian and Valerie Galbraith

John Fryett and Ruth

Tony Blunden

Ian and Cilla Horsell

John Gillings

Polly Cooper

Mike Wright

Damien Frizzell

Sue and Jim Endacott

Rhona and Simon Hoy

Mark Gomez

The purpose of the meeting was to engage with the residents of the area of Amberley, commonly (but incorrectly) known as “Crossgates”, which is the part of the Parish extending East along Rackham Road as far as the Parish boundary.

Geoff Uren opened the meeting by saying that the proposal for development in the Parham owned land (referred to as “Polly’s Field”) had been made by Parham Estates following a call for sites from local landowners as required by the Neighbourhood Plan process. Hilda Newland and Horsham District Council had offered land for consideration as well as Parham, and the meeting was to gather opinions from residents living in the vicinity of the Parham site as to its place in the Amberley NP.

Initially, many residents were quite hostile, because they thought that the offer of land had been solicited by the NP team and the Parish Council. GU explained that any landowner had the right to submit sites, and they had to be considered on a neutral basis for inclusion in the NP and for residents to be able to select their preferred housing site.

The discussion then progressed to nominating the Parham site as a Local Green Space, as was proposed for other sites within the Parish. GU explained that nominating areas as “Local Green Space” was proving to be one of the more contentious issues in Neighbourhood Planning, and required strong justification. The NP Steering Group had already been advised that the site offered by Parham did not meet the strict criteria. The Old Piggery had been nominated because it was highly visible from the South Downs, and it was part of the setting and context of the Amberley conservation area. Similar conditions applied to the other Horsham

District Council owned fields. Residents then argued that it was inconsistent to nominate the HDC owned land and not "Polly's Field". This was equally visible from the South Downs, it was grazing land, and therefore classed as "agricultural". The residents felt strongly that it fitted the parameters for nomination as a "Local Green Space", especially in regard to the "Landscape Led" nature of the emerging SDNPA Local Plan.

GU stated that the Parham site would probably be immune from development in any case, because our NP proposed that building should only be permitted on suitable sites within the settlement boundary. This part of Amberley along Rackham Road was not within the settlement boundary, so could not be considered on that basis if the NP was successful. This did not satisfy the residents at the meeting, who wanted a higher level of protection for the Parham site, and felt that it justified inclusion as "Local Green Space" the same as the Old Piggery.

It was agreed that the NP Steering Group would again consider whether nomination of the Parham site was appropriate. It was also noted that development in the "Crossgates" area had been the choice of several responders to our NP questionnaire, but the land adjacent to Newland Gardens was still clearly preferred by the majority of Parishioners.

The meeting closed at 21.30.

(Note: Drinks bill for attendees was £81.95, paid by GU, and to be reclaimed from NP funds)