

**Draft Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Renhold Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Monday  
13<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 at 7.30pm.**

N.B. – To save space, Actions to be taken are highlighted in Turquoise

**Present:-** Amanda Quince (Chair), Claudia Dietz, Keith Herkes, Ian McIver, Peter Norris, Tony Ploszajski, Kirstin Rayner, Julie Roberts and Paul Sawford

**Welcome & Apologies** AQ welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking JR for taking the Minutes

Apologies received from Nicola Gribble, Denis Ivins, Sarah Mitchell-Wood

**Declarations of relevant interests** No interests were declared

**Minutes & matters arising from previous meeting**

All matters arising are included in the agenda other than update on David McGrath Planning Training. No further information received, possibly going ahead with Parish Council rather than with Neighbourhood Plan Group **NG to confirm**

Discussion took place re sending pdf copies of Minutes to Bays Media to put onto P.C. website. They must be submitted in the same format as previously if they are to align with those already on the website. Robbie's remit is not to alter anything given to him **AQ**

**Dark Skies Policy – questions from P.C.**

After the Policy was submitted to the Chair and Clerk of the P.C, Chair responded suggesting that it requires references, and that there is no mention of street lighting

References were agreed to be a good idea

KR said street lighting does not have to be mentioned (although it could be put into the text to make it clear) as the policy covers all forms of lighting, and will state the definition of lighting, i.e. should be downward facing, low, with reduction of intrusive lighting. It may be wise to have an Introduction before each policy

Street lighting would be the responsibility of BBC not the P.C.

A dark skies policy cannot be enforced retrospectively, but will apply to future new buildings, extensions, etc. Once the policy is in place it is possible that some residents may respond positively if asked politely to reduce their existing intrusive lighting

PN suggested that a clear definition of "intrusive lighting" might be needed prior to approaching anyone with a view to reducing their light levels

Achieving a low level of lighting applies to the whole Parish, not just the old village

**TP** to make the amendments and send to the P.C. for their next meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November

**Housing Sites Report – matters arising**

Flyer – this is basically points 15 & 16 of the Housing Sites Report, which were read to the meeting by AQ

A mismatch within the documentation has been noticed with regard to the number of units required. It varies from 10,12 & 14 in the Plan. It was agreed that 12 is correct; 7 affordable homes and 5 open market homes **TP** to alter, so numbers are consistent.

Point (e) is repeated in point (f) to be deleted

It was agreed that this forms the basis of the flyer, but it needs to be made more user friendly, with a snappy title, before being issued to the general public

AQ to draft a flyer stating that of the 8 assessed sites RNPWG from the BBC Call for Sites as possibly being able to fulfil a future housing requirement for Renhold, only the land at Charity Cottages was deemed to be suitable. A plea to be put out to anyone who considers they may have a site which would fit the criteria of up to 12 mixed housing (7 affordable and 5 open market) to come forward. This limit on numbers should deter a repeat application from landowners whose sites have already been put forward in the 2030/2040 Local Plan Call for Sites.

When created the flyer to be put on the P.C. website

“The three characters of the existing local area will be safeguarded” needs to be rejigged into a policy each time, with an introduction on each to make it clear.

The Flyer has yet to be produced and delivered, so it was agreed that a deadline for responses by of end of January is realistic (AQ would actually prefer a mid-January deadline in order to quicker progress the information to AECOM). The editors of the village magazine have indicated that they will no longer consider putting any flyers into the magazine. TP/IM to broach this subject at the magazine committee meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, gently reminding them that the P.C. make a sizeable contribution to the costs of the magazine. However, this will not help with delivery of this flyer as there is no magazine in December. There are 1450 houses in Renhold. A team to do a leaflet drop to be investigated after the flyer has been finished AQ

(8) ‘Small Settlements’ PN pointed out that there is an opportunity to include Ravensden Road from nos. 52 & 59 to the Parish boundary. KR suggested including this in Regulation 14 where landowners have an opportunity to challenge it, and this was agreed TP to add

(11c) change the first use of the word “reasonable” to acceptable TP

### **Oakwood Stores as a Parish Council Asset**

AQ spoke with the owner, in whose opinion it was a non-starter. He is not prepared to separate the shop from the house. The matter was raised at the last P.C. meeting and after consideration the P.C. decided that they do not have the capacity to register it as a parish asset. KR explained that to register it as a community asset does not mean that the P.C. have to buy the property, and it does not mean that the current owner cannot sell it. It means that once registered unless the owner goes through the process of removing it as a village asset, if they wish to sell it on they have to offer the village the opportunity to buy, it and give them the time to do so.

It would appear that there is no community desire to keep the shop, no one has come forward to the P.C. with a request, and therefore this matter will not be taken any further

### **AECOM – update**

The form was completed yesterday by AQ and IM but could not be submitted on-line as Renhold Parish Council was entered in one part, and Renhold Parish Council Neighbourhood

Plan in another. Only one body can be entered. Locality (who issue the grant forms) have been approached and they will speak with the form designer as this was very frustrating. AQ has investigated what AECOM will wish to know from the Group, and it is fairly basic: What stage has been reached? Has a Housing Needs analysis & a site assessment been done? Will the design code be the same for all parts of the parish? KR suggested putting figures to the 'wish list' which has been created

### **Report on meeting with PROW officers at Borough Hall**

AQ and TP had a very positive meeting with Alison Nelson and her superior, April Quinn, from the Countryside and Public Access Team from Borough Hall. AQ/TP's report to be attached to these Minutes, with people's initials removed and substituted with "Landowner". AQ

Comments on the report:-

4 and 9 Reinstating south-east section of FP2 to Church End and reinstating the current gaps in FP19 & FP20 Can only happen with the agreement of the Land Owner. No. 4 has a legal intervention, and it is thought that no. 9 was stopped at the same time. There might be a record at the archives. AQ to ask a resident who volunteers at the archives if she would look for the legal precedent as to why the RoW were stopped

10 Bark chip FP2 from rear of church towards Great Early Grove to prevent flooding and widen access A parish councillor believes they may be able to get bark chipping foc from a local resident, but this is only a temporary fix as it deteriorates quite quickly. PS said the only successful method, particularly for wheelchair access, is a boardwalk

PS explained that a radar gate is key operated, using the same key as locked disabled toilets. People who qualify for the key have to apply to the council to get one, for which there is sometimes a small charge. The locks themselves costs approx. £5. These openings usually have a large gate, with a key, and a smaller gate for general access

This point to be expanded upon so that everyone understands it TP

11 Improve and sign FP38 opposite village hall TP to take photographs of the raised mound and send to Alison Nelson along with the photos of stiles  
5<sup>th</sup> bullet point "BBC cannot authorise a gate" to be removed

12 Provide RoW signage for FP6 & BW7 at Ravensden Road No intervention required by RNPWG as Alison Nelson is going to check on this

13 Create new footpath from southern end of Hookhams Lane heading north-west along brook to FP31 PN said that the footpath goes along the brook down to F13, a short distance along Hookhams Lane, & could connect with FP31 which goes around the school. AQ to speak with Alison Nelson as the footpath is not already in place, as first thought.

14 Resolve issues regarding the southern end of FP8 (Brook Lane) – overgrown and blocked TP to walk this path and take photos. AQ to pass these to Renhold's C.P.O. Vito Napoli with regard to the possibility of walkers being bitten by the resident's dog, which has happened.

15 Replace all stiles with gates or gaps as appropriate on the Polhill Estate TP to photograph all stiles on the estate to send to Alison to check that they conform with regulations.

Funding raising will include seeking grants to replace stiles with gates if landowner is in agreement.

If landowner is concerned about dog walkers and livestock, we could suggest to him notices stating that all dogs must be kept on leads, as they are in National Trust grounds AQ

23 Provide interpretation panels to elucidate map & Rights of Way information

Chair of P.C. to be approached to ask whether there is any money left in the Ward Fund to pay for these. AQ

An approach to be made to BedsRCC to see if they can provide quality footpath maps AQ

Alison Nelson to be asked whether there is any funding available for the numbering of the footpaths on the footpath signs AQ

24 Provide seating at viewpoints & along Rights of Way for all walkers

There were some very basic benches many years ago which were well used, and there was never any litter. The landowner may be more amenable to memorial benches. AQ to ask the question

26 Create a footpath link from Pedley Way play area to BW26 There is no actual footpath, there is grass which gets very boggy. The Polhill bridlepath sweeps away leaving a swathe of grass to be crossed PN to take photos to send to AQ and on to Alison

### **Updated work plan & recommitting to RNPWG**

The updated schedule shows an end date of 2025, but this is the worst case scenario. KR suggested doing the consultation on the AECOM Design Code and Regulation 14 at the same time, which would save both money and time. Everyone agreed to continue their participation. With regard to the Design Code although it would cover the whole Parish but it would not be the same for all areas

AECOM to be invited to the next RNPWG meeting and to be asked whether the member of their staff who worked on the Ravensden Plan could also work on the Renhold Plan, which would shorten the process. AQ to ask Steve Arnold if he knows the name of that person, and CD suggested it might be on the report

### **The future of the Village Hall – trustees required – Open Day 14<sup>th</sup> January**

With regard to the proposed Open Day AQ has seen a copy of the article sent to the editor of the village magazine by the Chair of the Trustees and there is no mention of it, that article is

simply an advertisement for Trustees. The existing 2 Trustees have previously advertised for more Trustees and no one came forward. If more Trustees cannot be found we are told that the Charities Commission will close the Hall and even though it and the land belongs to the Parish of Renhold and it would be sold, probably to a developer. When the existing 2 Trustees originally approached the P.C. they were asking if the P.C. would be Corporate Trustees of the village hall and take it on in its entirety. It now seems that they are going back to asking for more Trustees to join them. KR suggested asking BedsRCC for advice as no one seems to be sure about the legal stance. AQ to follow this up. Apparently the land is registered to 2 Trustees who have passed away. IM has a copy of the Deeds which he will produce to the Group.

#### Community Christmas Tree Festival – volunteers

AQ asked for volunteers to do the NP tree. TP has already entered a tree. JR has already come up with the W.I. idea, and is willing to help with the actual production for the NP, but does not have any more ideas. It was agreed it would be good for NP to have a presence. If anyone comes up with an idea please let AQ know.

#### **A.O.B**

##### Tree Preservation Orders.

KH spoke with Tree Officer, Alan Elderton (AE), and asked for a paper map of the whole Parish showing the trees which have a TPO, which could be taken out on a walk around to identify trees. Both he, customer services and planning, to whom the enquiry was passed, said that there is not one map, as the information is on their website

Alan was also asked if he would do a walk around with KH/JR. He said he has no capacity to do this. PN suggested that a quick training course to show local people how to use the website easily might help. KH to suggest this to AE.

KH replied it is not the fact that the map of trees cannot be accessed – although we can only take screen shots in A4 sections – it is the fact that the map has to be cross referenced with individual pieces of paper dating back to the 1950's. There is no one place where you can find all the TPOs in Renhold. Some on the list say “subject to confirmation”, so it even has to be established whether a particular tree was granted a TPO. It is possible to do all this, but it is a very long process. CD said that this is very much worth doing as it will assist AECOM. KH agreed to carry on with the work he is doing on this, and JR will assist as and when required KR suggested Cliff Andrews, Beds RCC should be contacted to ask if he has anything on this, and whether he can help KH

Meeting closed at 9.15pm with AQ thanking everyone for their hard work and for their continued commitment

Date of next meeting to be based around the availability of AECOM, with our suggestion being the evening of Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30pm at the chapel or on Zoom AQ