

OUR REF: DP
ASK FOR: David Phillips - 01892 602587
DATE: 22nd Jan 2014
YOUR REF: JM/H'Cx / N.Plan

Janet McInnes
Clerk to Herstmonceux Parish Council
Herstmonceux Village Hall
Hailsham Road
Herstmonceux
BN27 4JX

Head of Planning Policy
and Economic Development

Dear Janet Mc Innes,

HERSTMONCEUX PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2014 – 2027 PRE-SUBMISSION PLAN

Wealden District Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2027 Pre-Submission Plan. The Council does have some general concerns and comments about the processes followed and the wording of policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan that it feels need to be addressed prior to submitting the document for examination.

We believe that these concerns would be best discussed with yourself and Members of the Steering Group in person as they are quite detailed in nature and we need to better understand the context in which these policies have been arrived at. If you consider that there is benefit in this suggestion we would be pleased to hear from yourself/ your consultant with a view to agreeing a suitable date.

However, notwithstanding the above general comments, the Council notes that some of the policies and wording, as drafted, within the Neighbourhood Plan are not necessarily sufficiently robust to stand up to the tests under examination. Furthermore, the Council understands that, due to a potential lack of support within the Parish for the Neighbourhood Plan at referendum, the Steering Group will need to consider how best to address this issue which we understand has, in part, stemmed from other conflicting and perhaps misleading information that has been circulated within the Parish from third parties.

In addition to the above points, there appears to be a lack of clarity in the information on the consultation that may have been carried out on alternative options and sites for development, and why these were dismissed in favour of the approach as now proposed to be included in the Plan. If this information does exist then it needs to be clearly evidenced as it is an important element in the process and provides an audit trail for any examination Inspector.

Overall the Council supports the development of the Neighbourhood Plan process and the ethos behind the policies and feels that in addressing the issues the Council has raised the Parish will have an enhanced prospect of a robust Neighbourhood Plan going forward.

I am aware that officers from the Planning Policy Team will shortly be attending your meeting on the 11th February to talk about our emerging Delivery and Sites Allocations Local Plan and the interrelationship between this and emerging Neighbourhood Plans. I am accordingly taking this opportunity to copy in Marina Brigginslaw, Wealden's Planning Policy Manager into this response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Phillips', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David L. Phillips

Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development.

cc Marina Brigginslaw WDC Planning Policy Manager
cc Natalie Bumpus WDC Planning Policy Officer