

Sandy Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Thursday 30 May 2024 at 7.30pm

Sandy Town Council Chamber, 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy

Minutes

Present: Nigel Aldis, Rob Baker, Richard Barlow, Anne Elliott-Flockhart, Arnie Gilpin, Joanna Hewitt (Chair), and Chris Patterson

In Attendance: Nicola Sewell, Paul Sharman

Apologies: Briony Blackley, Lewis Hedley, Anthony Lock, Ruth Lock, Nick Thompson

1. Membership

Councillors Briony Blackley and Nick Thompson had agreed to join the Steering Group.

2. Minutes

Richard Barlow agreed to take the Minutes on this occasion.

3. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2024 were approved as a correct record.

4. NP Progress

Progress was reported and actions agreed as follows:

Foreword - Joanna planned to complete the Foreword this weekend.

Designated Green Spaces - Joanna was now dealing with the designated green spaces.

Feedback from CBC - Chris reported on discussion yesterday with Sally, and would continue to liaise with her. Feedback had still not been received from CBC on the screening but it was now understood that screening did not need to be completed before Regulation 14 consultation commenced.

Policy Maps - Sally was actively chasing CBC on the maps, and it was hoped that these would be made available shortly. If the maps had not been received by 9 June, **Rob** would produce what was required.

Roman Sandy - Sally and Hannah Firth at CBC had liaised on the NP wording for Roman Sandy, and **Richard** had reviewed their conclusions.

NDHAs - **Richard** had responded to Sally on NDHAs.

Green Spine - **Arnie** had almost finalised the Green Spine text following review by Richard of a further draft.

Aspirations - Community Energy Schemes - **Chris** had drafted some generic text and would circulate this for information.

Front Page Design - **Rob** would propose a front page design featuring a positive future version of Sandye Place.

Formatting and Screening Version Review - **Rob** had circulated the formatted screening version. Anne, Richard, Rob and Chris had reviewed the text and **Chris** had input their comments to Sally.

Consultation Statement - **Chris** would circulate the current draft of the consultation statement this weekend for review.

Dates - Chris had input relevant project dates to Sally.

Correct/Latest version of GIP for Printing - **Joanna** was still checking relevant documents. STC would be asked to endorse the GIP as a stand-alone document which would carry some weight in planning matters.

5. Next Steps

It was agreed, having established that CBC screening did not need to be completed before Regulation 14 consultation commenced, that the NP be put to STC at its next meeting on 24 June. STC had seen the various elements of the NP as they had been drafted, so it should present no surprises. STC would be asked to recommend Regulation 14 consultation.

It was noted that CBC planned a 12 week consultation period on its proposals for Sandye Place Academy and Allison House commencing on 24 June 2024 and concluding on 17 September 2024. The Regulation 14 consultation would also commence on or about 24 June but would be for 6 week period. Thus there would be two concurrent consultations, in part covering the same

ground, but the Regulation 14 consultation on the NP would be concluded ahead of the outcome of the CBC consultation.

6. Carnival - Saturday 15 June 2024

The Carnival on 15 June, concluding at Sandye Place, would provide an ideal and timely opportunity to publicise and explain the forthcoming consultations. A gazebo stall would be arranged. It was understood that set up would be from 10.00am, public entry to Sandye Place would be available from 12.00noon, the parade would reach Sandye Place at 2.00pm, and the event would close at 5.00pm. **Nigel (part-time), Rob, Richard, Arnie, Joanna, and Chris** expected to be available to serve on the stall. Visitors on the day would be asked to provide their email details so that they could be advised directly of the consultations. **Rob and Joanna** would assemble the relevant display materials.

7. Sandye Place

Nicola Sewell and Paul Sharman were attending the meeting specifically for this item. Other Councillors had been invited. Joanna outlined the sequence of events culminating in the CBC report “Sandye Place Academy and Allison House residential home” dated 4 June 2024 being made available immediately before a meeting on Sandye Place, arranged by CBC, and held on 21 May. This had been attended on behalf of Sandy by Joanna, Chris, and the Sandy Ward Councillors. Joanna also quoted from subsequent correspondence with CBC about this report. A visual plan relating to the report but showing much more detailed proposals had subsequently been made available and was shown to today’s meeting. The status of this visual plan was unclear but it was dated 3 January 2024, indicating that (contrary to statements they had made at earlier meetings) CBC had been working on these proposals for some time. Arising from the issue of the Report:

- CBC would discuss the matter at an Executive Meeting on 4 June at 9.30am;
- STC had convened an Extraordinary Meeting on 31 May at 6.00pm at which the public would be welcome;
- The Ward Councillors for Sandy had posted a Facebook request for depositions opposing the CBC proposals.

The Steering Group considered points that might be made in response to the CBC Report, taking account of but not referring specifically to the visual plan, and concluded as follows:

- It is unhelpful and misleading to combine consultations on Allison House with consultations on Sandye Place. Provided it is explained that a new care home at Sandye Place will take up only a small part of the Sandye Place site, the care home proposals should command the support of Sandy whereas CBC's proposals for housing will not;
- The decisions not to open Sandye Place for general public use, and thus minimise value to the Sandy community, have been made by the education authorities and CBC, not by Sandy;
- The decisions to spend CBC money on SEND and sports facilities at Sandy Secondary School and the Jenkins Pavilion rather than at Sandye Place have been made by CBC, not by Sandy;
- The CBC proposals produce no mechanism for the safeguarding, maintenance and use of the Mansion House as a heritage asset;
- Disposal of parts of the site to developers would put the developers rather than Sandy in charge of what community facilities are actually provided;
- By seeking to provide both open space and housing on the Sandye Place site, neither objective of CBC is likely to be successfully achieved;
- Having youth facilities as part of a care home seems a strange combination;
- The findings of the 2021 consultation on the site's future should be made public;
- It is not true to say that Sandy has not been a target for developers. Proposals for developments north of current Sandy have been rejected by CBC;
- Funds from resale of the present Allison House site should be used to fund the new Allison House at Sandye Place;
- Access and egress to the site for the proposed housing and other facilities are not addressed;
- Traffic flows into and out of the site for the proposed housing and other facilities are not addressed;
- The parking provision for the proposed housing and other facilities is not addressed;
- Sandy has its own plan for Sandye Place and this should be the starting point;
- Having regard to all the above, CBC should not proceed with its consultation as presently proposed.

It was also agreed that the **Mayor and Town Clerk** should arrange to send the Sandye Place Master Plan and relevant consultation results to the members of the CBC Executive without delay, so that they would be in no doubt as to the views of Sandy Town Council and Sandy people.

Anne suggested and it was agreed that STC be recommended to consider a back-up plan in the event that CBC proceeded with their current proposals irrespective of what Sandy wanted. Anne hoped that a third party might be found who was prepared to develop Sandye Place along the lines of the Master Plan. She also suggested that crowd funding might generate funds that would assist in this regard.

Richard felt that, if no alternative of this kind became available, it would be preferable to make some of the existing recreation space in Sunderland Road and Bedford Road available for housing, using the resulting income to fund recreational facilities at Sandye Place.

Richard also reported on the Asset of Community Value status of the Sandye Place site. Sandy Historical Research Group (SHRG), as the organisation which registered the site, would be informed by CBC of any decision to dispose of it. SHRG would then be given six weeks to let CBC know in writing whether it wished to be treated as a potential bidder for the asset. This would trigger a six-month moratorium period that would enable SHRG (with the help of the Sandy community) to develop and submit a bid to purchase the site. CBC had written to SHRG on 24 May giving assurances that SHRG would be kept informed and consulted accordingly.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Arrangements for the next meeting will be notified in due course.

RAN/NP/31.05.2024

