



Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan

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Rowlands Castle Parish Council Meeting Monday 5th October 2020

Report of Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Since the last Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) report to the Parish Council (PC) on 20 July 2020, the NPSG has continued to meet regularly via Zoom and to develop the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) draft policies, as recommended in Consultant John Slater's report.

Following the PC's decision at its July meeting to appoint terra firma Consultancy Ltd, to produce a Townscape Character Assessment and Design Statement covering the built areas in the parish, a contractual letter of employment was sent to terra firma by Lisa Walker on 21 July. The NPSG provided supporting information and reviewed a pilot study, to allow the full study to proceed. While good progress has been made, there has been a short delay to the proposed programme. However, a full draft Study Report has been produced, and is now being finalised with terra firma. It draws on the content of the draft Development Guidelines document published in the RCA magazine. The detailed report describes the key characteristics of the main built areas within the parish, and includes future Development Considerations and recommended Management Objectives for preserving and enhancing the character of these areas. The final version is expected to meet the requirement to inform and support the content of the developing Neighbourhood Plan, as intended.

The NPSG held a meeting with EHDC and SDNPA planning representatives on 6 August to provide progress reports and discuss queries raised during NP development. NPSG confirmed the intention to proceed with production of the NP as soon as possible, subject to ongoing restrictions. This approach and the Character Assessment/Design Statement work, seem to be supported by publication that day of the Government's Planning for the Future White Paper. This consultation may well have an impact on the timescale for completion of the EHDC Local Plan. Further progress meetings with EHDC and SDNPA are intended.

Recent NPSG activity has also included seeking further input from residents, and approaching businesses in the parish to seek their inputs to the NP. It is intended to proceed with further consultations with residents, though the ongoing restrictions might affect the timescale for this activity.

The NPSG continues to be very grateful for the ongoing vital support of Lisa Walker and Gill Whatley in facilitating the NP development activities.

Ian Young
Chairman RCNPSG