Ide Parish Council

Minutes from Weir Meadow Working Group

The Hub, Ide. 7pm, 9 April 2019

1. Present: Rich Cloke (Chairman), Mel Liversage (Parish Clerk), Doug Bell, Phil Willcock, Stuart Brooking, Barry Hookins, Nick Bradley.

2. Apologies: Pete Skinner, Tony Stearman, Mark Thomas, Cheryl Haddy

3. Minutes of last meeting on 15 January 2019 approved.

4. NB reported on:

a) **Planning Application**

i) Advice taken from John Goodey, our Neighbourhood Plan officer David Kiernan, TDC planning guidance and the TDC planning department was that full planning permission, not outline, will be needed. To do this requires expertise and technical information. This is because grant making bodies such as National Lottery, English Cricket Board, Football Association and Sport England will need to see that we can develop the field for sporting use which fulfils their criteria: men and women, boys and girls; appropriate changing, shower and toilet facilities, parking; and proper specifications of pitches and courts. They will also need to know that plans for a new track and bridge over Triangular Field, if that is how we decide to proceed, are feasible and approved.

ii) NB therefore sought advice from The Fields Trust and Devon Communities Together. They advised on a recommended landscape architect experienced in designing recreation grounds: Peter Leaver of David Wilson Partnership, Barnstaple. The appointment of David Wilson Partnership was formally confirmed at an extraordinary meeting of Ide Parish Council, called specifically for this purpose, on 6 Feb 2019.

iii) Peter Leaver visited on 30 Jan for an initial meeting and site tour. He advised submitting a pre-application advice request to TDC (free for Parish Councils) to establish what additional assessments and reports would need to accompany a planning application. NB did this on 4 Feb. Peter Thomas, senior planning officer for TDC, met with Peter Leaver and NB on 20 March to discuss what would be needed. Peter Thomas formally reported TDC’s advice on 10 April (the day following the last WMWG meeting) – see attached advice.

iv) Matt Theedom, development manager for Devon Cricket visited the site on 7 Feb w NB and advised on the size of ground, cricket pitch dimensions, technical aspects for turf, soil and drainage, and funding opportunities. In principle, he was enthused that Weir Meadow is a rare piece of Devon flat ground, of the right size, ideal for cricket and other sports.

v) Julian Perrett and Stuart Brooking have kindly agreed to provide a Wildlife & Environmental report, and an Arboricultural report, respectively pro bono, and will liaise direct with Peter Leaver who will co-ordinate the full planning application.

vi) The site was topographically surveyed by West Country Surveys at our instruction during w/c 11 March 2019.

vii) Peter Leaver will obtain a luminescence plan in relation to floodlights on the MUGA. He will obtain a flood risk assessment which we will have to pay for.

viii) Peter Leaver has drawn several drafts of a site layout plan, the latest of which is here attached.

**b) Access to Northern Fields**

i) At the January 2019 WG meeting, we agreed to pursue the costs and feasibility of constructing a track across Triangular Field and the NE corner of Weir Meadow, with a new bridge across Fordlands Brook from the north corner of Triangular Field. Two builders’ (Setter & Saunders, and Mark Williams Building Solutions) written estimates have been obtained, and give broadly similar prices (provided to members at the meeting, but not minuted here for reasons of commercial sensitivity). The sums are significant.

ii) Members discussed an alternative: the purchase of the Northern Fields by the Parish Council. This would allow us to control the access route to those fields, buy an appreciating asset rather than spend money on a track and bridge we did not need or own; and generate income from the fields by letting to contribute to the cost. The fields are 16.75 acres – about 15 acres of which are ploughable.

iii) NB confirmed that the Church Commissioners have confirmed this month that they would in principle be prepared to discuss this option of selling the fields to us again. NB shared an estimated per acre land value (not minuted) for the fields provided pro bono by PS. PS also advised on 10 April that we might expect about £125 p.a. per acre in rent for ploughable land.

iv) NB reported on the Public Works Loan Board, from which parish councils can borrow money for such purchases at favourable rates, over up to 50 years.

v) The group felt positive towards this approach and asked NB to pursue enquiries on the possible purchase of the N Fields. Action: Nick

vi) Meanwhile we agreed to keep the track and bridge scheme in the full planning application, so that we had that as an option should we need it.

Action: Nick

**c) Option to Purchase Agreement**

Until we have resolved the access problem, and have planning permission, we are not in a position to proceed with our intended three year option to purchase agreement with the CCs; so this must wait for now.

**5. Funding.**

We have £2,600 in the account, after paying for the topographical survey, enough to proceed with the planning application.

**6. Membership**

It was agreed that Stuart Brooking will take over now as WMWG chairman, as discussed at our very first meeting. We also agreed to invite Trevor Gardner to our next meeting as an expert fund raiser (Ide Shop) and also involved in the Orchard project. Action: Nick contact TG

**7. Next Meeting:**

**Thursday 11 July 2019, 7pm, Ide Cricket Pavilion.** Action : Stuart agenda

Attached documents:  
- Meadow layout plan

- TDC’s pre-application advice

cc to Peter Leaver for info.

Drafted by NB 14 April 2019

Approved at meeting held 11 July 2019.