

Seething Wells Working Group Meeting Notes - 30 January 2023

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome and Introductions

Apologies

Councillor Holt, Councillor Liz Laino (Elmbridge BC)

Attendees

Councillors - Cllr Schaper, Cllr Yogantahan, Cllr Hayes, Cllr Green.

Co-Chairs - Sarah Onions and Cllr Green (chair 30/01)

Community Members - Phil Renton, Ian Wilson, Hubert Kwisthout, Marcus Oxley, David Cooper, Alan Pemberton, Mark Herbert, John Meakin, Matthew Fouracre, Tai Lai Ling, Ros Pritchard, Divya Venkatesh, Charles Deacon, Anthony Evans, John Allen, Simon Tyrrell

Council Officers - Tim Naylor (TN), Herman Kwan, Wilson Lui (local plan)

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome and introductions

Agenda Item 2 - Minutes of the previous meeting of 28 November

- Minutes agreed

Agenda Item 3 - Actions from previous meeting of 28 November

- a) Biodiversity Action Plan - Tim Naylor (TN) to liaise with officers and Cllr Green to speak to Cllr Manders - TN & Cllr Green - 28/11/22 In progress, discussions underway - Cllr Schaper requested timeframe for delivery. **30/01/23 Update - Report containing the Biodiversity Action Plan is going to Place Committee meeting to be held on Thursday 9 February 2023 at 7.30pm at the Guildhall [here](#) - Complete**
- b) TN to speak to officers regarding EA justifications about the herbicide spraying requirements - TN - **30/01/23 Update - in progress, no response to date.**
- c) ~~Note of the publication of the draft Local Plan for consultation on 01 November - All (note: consultation launch subsequently deferred to 28 November) - complete~~
- d) ~~Note the next Business Sub-group on 22 November - All - complete~~

- e) ~~Note the Kingston Society meeting 16 November to discuss the Local Plan~~
All **complete**
- f) ~~Ongoing s215 process – currently sub-judice, information to be shared as it becomes available – TN~~ **to be provided under Agenda Item 4 f) below**
- g) ~~Report back regarding ongoing conversations about the electrical cabinet as relevant – Charlie Deacon~~ **complete**
- h) ~~Minutes for this meeting to be circulated – TN~~ **complete**
- i) Co-chairs to write to owners via officers to express disappointment that they are not represented at the SW Councillor Working Group meetings to address questions - Cllr Green & Sarah Onions - **30/01/23 Update - positive response received from the landowner, date for meeting is currently being arranged.**
- j) ~~TN to remind Cascina, the owners of the site that the option to attend the meeting virtually is also available – TN~~ **complete**
- k) ~~Officers requested to make further representations to the owners, Cascina, requesting the provision of a day to day representative on the site~~ **complete**
- l) ~~Officers to provide further information whether the site qualifies under the criteria for designation as an Asset of Community Value – TN~~ **in progress**

Agenda Item 3 - River Thames Scheme

John Allen, and Phil Renton and Sarah Onions have produced a document on behalf of SWAG to incorporate SW into their scheme as a biodiversity opportunity. They have also been in dialogue with the Environment Agency regarding potential project/enhancement opportunities provided through the [River Thames Scheme](#) (RTS).

Marcus Oxley raised opportunities to explore the integration of small-scale hydro power projects into the river infrastructure upgrades that are currently being proposed. The possibility of using Seething Wells (SW) as a water attenuation opportunity was also raised in the context of climate change and risk of droughts and potential use of the existing beds to create additional storage capacity to augment dry season flows.

Cllr Hayes suggested alignment is necessary regarding the interdependencies and synergies between the River Thames Scheme, the Thames Water (TW) [Water Resources Management Plan](#) (currently undergoing consultation) and the Thames Landscape Strategy and to combine the wider opportunity potential with a review and enhancement of the Riverside South Conservation Area so that they are contribute to the same vision and ambition as part of a coordinated approach.

A short conversation about Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans followed.

TN to arrange for Co-Chairs, Cllr Manders and SWAG representative to meet with the appropriate contact at the Environment Agency (EA) to discuss the RTS and the opportunity presented by SW to act as a biodiversity improvement project.

From the parliamentary side of things, Councillor Green is intending to arrange a meeting with Sir Ed Davey MP and Sarah Olney MP to discuss matters related to the RTS Development Consent Order (DCO).

Simon Tyrrell requested support from the Council through the recommendations to the Place Committee.

Agenda Item 4 - Updates and discussion

a) Sub-groups

Business Planning Sub-group

- January meeting did not take place. Hubert Kwisthout has been developing the business plan which has been distributed, although financial details are not available. Hubert would welcome any feedback that people would care to offer.
- Charles Deacon has written to GLA confirming existing policy status and protections on the site. As Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) any development proposal would be referred to The Mayor.

Evidence Sub Group

Simon Tyrrell is looking to research the value of the site and some research into the viability study provided by Cascina has been carried out. The current estimated land cost is c£1.65m and also £ spent subsequently managing the site. MOL designation is a development constraint which does have an implication for land value.

FoSW are updating the website to add historical background on the site. The Council has the planning history which is in the public domain. SWAG also has information. A discussion followed regarding the merit of a third party central repository as a separate entity to the various groups involved, providing a unified database and collective vision on a single independent website. It was suggested that the next SWAG meeting on 22 Feb may provide an opportunity for SWAG and FoSW to meet to further discuss.

Cllr Green suggested that it may be possible to receive funding from Ward Councillor grant to assist with the set up costs to develop a website. Simon and Tai agreed to work together to develop this proposition. Cllr Green agreed to speak to the Neighbourhood Manager, James Geach regarding the protocols involved in orchestrating this as a one off payment.

b) SWAG

- Tai mentioned that there had been some comments on Facebook by someone from the local community who had filmed the activity taking place on SW site which had elicited an abusive response.

c) Friends of SW

- The general view is that the SW Councillor Working Group has been a helpful forum through which to communicate more fully. Clear about outcomes and learned a lot collectively from this process. Shall be submitting representations through the Local Plan consultation process and the keen to be involved in formulation of recommendations to go to the Place Committee.

d) Land Owner

- Nothing additional (not in attendance)

e) Others

- Marcus Oxley - provided further detail about the TW Water Resources Management Plan (aka Thames Water River Scheme) which intends to extract 50 - 150 mega litres from the Thames and upstream of Teddington will be adding 50 - 150 mega litres of effluent to maintain the levels which is likely to have a deleterious effect on the habitat and biodiversity of SW.

f) Council

- Nothing additional

Agenda Item 5 - Actions/ Next Steps

- a) Application for designation as an Asset of Community Value - response expected by 31 March - all to note.
- b) TN to confirm a date and schedule the meeting with Co-chair's and the landowner Cascina.
- c) TN to provide details regarding the consultation on the TW Water Resources Management Plan <https://thames-wrmp.co.uk/> - **complete**
- d) Update Report to go to Place Committee 21 March - TN to add to forward plan and can defer to the next cycle in July if contributor information is still being generated.
- e) TN to arrange for Co-Chairs, Cllr Manders and SWAG representative to meet with the appropriate contact at the Environment Agency (EA) to discuss the RTS and the opportunity presented by SW to act as a biodiversity improvement project - TN
- f) Councillor Green to follow up possible discussion with Sir Ed Davey MP and Sarah Olney MP to discuss matters related to the RTS Development Consent Order (DCO) - Councillor Green.
- g) Cllr Green agreed to speak to the Neighbourhood Manager, James Geach regarding a Ward Councillor grant to assist with the set up costs to develop a website - Councillor Green.
- h) Simon and Tai agreed to work together to develop the website proposition should Ward Councillor grant funding be available - Simon Tyrrell and Tai Lai Ling

Ongoing actions

- i) TN to speak to officers regarding EA justifications about the herbicide spraying requirements - TN

Agenda Item 6 - Date of next meeting

- Monday 17 April 17:30-19:30 hrs - Council Chamber, Guildhall.
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