

Opinion

Planning Update

with Margaret Howell
Chair of the Group

Battle Neighbourhood Plan
Your monthly update

Inspector will ensure the plan delivers

By the time this article appears in this newspaper, the next stage of the neighbourhood plan, for the whole of the civil parish of Battle, will have been reached.

The independent planning inspector, appointed as our examiner by Rother District Council, commenced his examination on Monday.

He has many years of experience, having spent 34 years as a local authority planner, and then setting up his own consultancy in 2012.

He will not be contacting either Rother District Council, or anyone in Battle, so his independence and integrity are preserved.

He has completed over 50 examinations in all parts of England, and also helps groups to prepare their own plans.

He has also examined plans within Rother District Council, so is by now well used to the restrictions of the AONB, and rural communities. He also seeks to ensure that the plan delivers what the community is looking for, while at the same time ensuring the plan meets the legal and other requirements.



This is why a planning consultant for the Battle plan was appointed, to deliver a plan that meets those requirements. It was clearly not likely that the volunteers on the

Steering Group had the necessary know-how to master the ramifications of the legal and other requirements.

The examination itself is extremely

thorough, and judging by the results from Rye, Ticehurst and Robertsbridge and Salehurst, (which were carried out by the same examiner above), can take two to three months to complete.

If there are any major queries, the examiner may write, hold a meeting or a hearing (maybe not, with Covid-19 restrictions), and the plan may have to be modified. Let's hope that our preparation has been so sufficiently researched that this will not be necessary.

Minor adjustments however, can be made without compromising the entire plan. A draft report will then be issued, for fact checking purposes, and if all is well, the final report will be sent to Battle Town Council and RDC. The latter publish the report, and then consider whether or not to progress the plan to referendum. If this decision is reached, RDC will carry this out, in the same way as elections, at no cost to Battle Town Council.

You can keep up to date with the progress of the plan on our website www.battleneighbourhoodplan.co.uk or the Rother District Council website for neighbourhood plans.