

Mid Sussex District Council

Street Naming & Numbering

Northern Arc street naming and numbering considerations

February 2020 (updated 06/02)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper sets out the issues surrounding the street naming and numbering of the Northern Arc development site. The intention is to use the discussion generated to arrive at an agreed framework for delivering a successful street naming and numbering scheme for the next major expansion of the town.

2.0 General approach

- 2.1 The size and scale of the Northern Arc is such that the District Council needs to ensure that the street naming and numbering of the development is undertaken in a considered and consistent manner from the outset.
- 2.2 Whilst the District Council will adhere to its policy of allowing the local council's to take the lead on choice of names, it does have to have regard to the overall scheme.
- 2.3 Although the Northern Arc is being promoted as a 'Burgess Hill' development by the District Council and Homes England (website and newsletter material already in public domain), it is a fact that the majority of the land comprising the overall site lies within Ansty & Staplefield parish to the north and Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common parish to the west.
- 2.4 This replicates the situation that existed when the previous western expansion of Burgess Hill was undertaken in the early 1990's, and the affected parishes were Hurstpierpoint parish and the now superseded, Clayton parish.
- 2.5 The District Council wishes to encourage the three local council's to come to common agreement on the choice of names to be used across the Northern Arc area. This can be way of joint consideration and supply of names, or by a decision to delegate authority to another.

3.0 General street naming - volume and approach

- 3.1 The Northern Arc will generate a very significant demand for new street names. It is likely that at completion, over 100 names will be required to service the number of streets that will be constructed. The initial application by Countryside Properties has generated an immediate requirement for 14 street names.
- 3.2 Early consideration must be given to how such a demand will be serviced. Burgess Hill has received a high level of development over the post war period and so many of the historical references available to the town have already been utilised within its street names. Most significantly, the key historic industry of brick making has been referenced in the 1970's Kings Way development and the ongoing Keymer Brickworks development, so many potential names have been used up.

- 3.3 It is understood that when the western expansion of the town was undertaken in the 1990's, local schools may have been asked to provide suitable names. This may well be a potential option for the Northern Arc, although councillors should be alert to how public appeals can result in undesirable outcomes. The experience of the Natural Environment Research Council in 2016 and the naming of the Antarctic survey ship now known as RRS Sir David Attenborough is a salutary lesson in how well intentioned appeals for help can end in unexpected naming solutions if not properly managed from the outset.
- 3.4 The District Council advise that consideration be given to establishing a set of themes from which names can then be derived. Themes should be generic in nature and not utilise anything from popular culture that might incur claims for copyright.
- 3.5 Another consideration might be to use names from the town war memorial. Names from the first world war in particular, being over 100 years old, can be considered as beyond living memory.
- 3.6 Given the very significant level of support being offered by Homes England and their development partner Aecom, it may also be possible to ask for assistance in undertaking research into a potential list of street names.
- 3.7 In the absence of any other approach, then the developer of each phase can be asked to provide a list of names. This approach is commonly used across many development sites in the district. Local councils then have the option of either agreeing the supplied names or providing their own.
- 3.8 The District Council can provide a listing of street names already in use within Burgess Hill as a reference aid to prevent duplication of names. This will need to be augmented with names in use in that section of the north eastern town that lies within East Sussex (Lewes District Council).

4.0 Spine road - single continuous street

- 4.1 The District Council is aware that there is a desire to have a single name for the spine road that runs continuously through the Northern Arc from east to west.
- 4.2 The numbering of properties on the spine road is dependent on the phasing. At this stage only indicative phasing is available to the District Council and further advice is being sought from Aecom who are managing the delivery of the overall scheme.
- 4.3 It may not be realistic to pursue a single road name for the whole length of the spine road for a couple of reasons:
- If no guarantee can be obtained as to the integrity and persistence of the phasing plan throughout the duration of the construction.
 - If the phases of construction are commenced in a non-contiguous fashion.
- 4.4 To cater for the potential of split phasing, consideration might be given to naming sections of the spine road as 'Western Avenue' and 'Eastern Avenue'. This would even permit a 'Central/Middle Avenue' were it to prove necessary due to phasing. The benefit of this approach is that although segmented, it does convey a general sense of location combined with continuity along the length of the spine road. The use of the suffix 'avenue' would seem appropriate given the landscaped residential aspect of the spine road.

5.0 Spine road - numbering

- 5.1 If a single continuous spine road is used then more innovative solutions to numbering may have to be found to account for non-contiguous development along the length of the spine road.
- 5.2 As it will not be possible to number sequentially without knowing the total number and distribution of properties along the street at the outset, it may be necessary to consider US style block numbering, with a block representing a phase. This would be unusual and would generate artificially high street numbers, as the US street numbering system for urban areas is dependent on incrementing the block numbers usually in increments of 100.

6.0 Spine road - use of twin town name

- 6.1 MSDC has noted that BHTC passed a recommendation in August 2018 to name the spine road as Schmallenberg Way. Schmallenberg Way will not be supported by the District Council as it is considered too cumbersome for practical use and may be prone to misspelling. Even allowing for an increasing online culture, where addresses are frequently selected from a list on a screen, consideration must be given to residents having to convey it verbally and in written form in their daily lives.
- 6.2 It is also known that Schmallenberg is associated with a sheep borne virus and concern has been expressed over sensitivities regarding the use of the name.
- 6.3 The District Council advises that the name be used in connection with one of the public open spaces or communal urban spaces that will be created as the development progresses.

7.0 Royal Mail - postcode area

- 7.1 The District Council will be liaising with Royal Mail to try to ensure that the RH15 postcode sector is retained across the Northern Arc area. The site currently comprises the RH15 and BN6 postcode sectors.