

CABINET (LOCAL PLAN) COMMITTEE

29 February 2016

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Read (Chairman) (P)

Godfrey

Pearson (P)

Deputy Members:

Councillor Horrill (Standing Deputy for Councillor Godfrey)

Other invited Councillors:

J Berry (P)

Evans

Hutchison (P)

Ruffell (P)

Tait

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors McLean

1. **MINUTES**

At Cabinet on 2 December 2015, it was noted that Councillor Power had drawn attention to a correction required in these minutes. On Page 5, there was reference to “unoccupied retail space” in New Alresford that “was in need of improvement.” The statement should have referred to “unoccupied commercial space”. The Committee agreed to this correction.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the above correction, the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2015 be approved and adopted.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Corporate Director advised that he was a resident of New Alresford but, as the proposals did not impact on him or his family personally, he did not have any interest to declare.

Councillor Read made a personal statement that he lived approximately a quarter of a mile from Bunkers Hill, Denmead, which was referred to by a

public speaker in reference to Report CAB2782(LP) below. He remained in the room, spoke and voted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Various questions and statements were also made on specific agenda items and are summarised under the relevant items below.

4. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 2: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND SITE ALLOCATIONS – UPDATE FOLLOWING PUBLICATION CONSULTATION**

(Report CAB2782(LP) refers)

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Plan together with supplementary information would be submitted to the Planning Inspector by the end of March. It was anticipated that the Planning Inspector would produce an examination timetable with hearings expected in late June and July 2016. The Council had already given delegated authority to the officers to make minor changes. It was not expected that changes would be made in advance of submission, but points could be raised before, during or after the examination, and it would be necessary to hold a six week consultation on any proposed modifications. It was intended that the Plan would be adopted by the end of 2016 and would exclude the South Downs National Park area. Preparation of the development plan document for gypsy and traveller accommodation in the District had commenced and work was ongoing and a draft plan was anticipated to be ready by November 2016 for consultation.

When LPP2 is submitted to the Planning Inspector, it would be accompanied by the representations received to the consultation on the pre-submission version in full, together with numerous background documents. The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Plan to be submitted had complied with all procedural requirements and was regarded as being robust and ‘sound’, a key test of the examination procedure.

In reply to Members’ questions, the Head of Strategic Planning stated that the draft local plan for the South Downs National Park had received approximately 400 representations and was expected to be ready for submission during 2016.

Councillor Hutchinson suggested the production of a design statement for Winchester Town. The Head of Strategic Planning responded that the High Quality Places Supplementary Planning Document (adopted July 2015) was very detailed and related to the whole of the Winchester District including the town area. Winchester Town was covered by many Neighbourhood Design Statements which offered design guidance, and it was suggested that this subject could be discussed further with the officers outside of the meeting.

During public participation, the following comments were made and are summarised below:

Margaret Hill (Vice Chairman of Colden Common Parish Council) supported the City Council's approach and its reinstatement of the settlement boundary, in relation to Main Road, Colden Common.

Sarah Foster (representing Bloor Homes, Wickham) stated that Bloor Homes would continue seeking the allocation of their land for development in the local plan. Bloor Homes' view was that there would be difficulty in meeting housing supply with just the two sites allocated for development, and the land owned by Bloor Homes could play a role in linking pedestrian walkways and providing play areas in association with the proposed allocated sites. It would also provide solutions for improved drainage and help to create a better development. Ms Foster stated that Bloor Homes were willing to work with the other developers.

Neil Holmes (Agent) stated that his representations were not listed in detail in the report and referred to NPPF Paragraph 47 which refers to the need to significantly boost the supply of housing, but commented that the Council had delivered less housing in the last four years. He also commented that for the Plan to be sound, the Council should include a housing trajectory within reference to both market and affordable housing, and in relation to policy CP4 on affordable housing, windfall and exception sites should be separated. Following the Zurich challenge, the Council should be providing a housing trajectory to guard against under provision, to ensure a five year supply is maintained.

Bob Tutton (Agent) stated that he wished to raise four issues:

- Waltham Chase had been allocated 250 houses in Local Plan Part 1 (Policy MTRA2). Currently there was an over-provision of 32 and this was not consistent with the local plan. He also requested an allocation of land at Sandy Lane, Waltham Chase.
- Reference was also made to an employment land which he suggested should be allocated to north of Chase Road, Waltham Chase.
- The settlement boundary to the north east of Colden Common was arbitrarily drawn, and should be redrawn so that the boundary included the full garden depths, in this location. He commented that the review of the settlement boundary has resulted in changes which were unsound.
- Land at Bunkers Hill at Denmead was built up and should be included in the settlement boundary and allocated for development.

Bryan Jezeph (Agent) spoke of drainage problems in Wickham and commented that Policy WK1 was contrary to policy and guidance in the NPPF and NPG and lacked an evidence base. His clients (Bewley Homes) could not make a financial contribution to resolve the drainage issues as it would not be compliant with Government regulation. Bewley Homes had instructed Counsel for advice and this could lead to a Judicial Review if the Inspector supported the Council's approach in Policy WK1.

Robert Fowler – New Alresford, representing the Sun Hill Action Group stated that the report's recommendation was that it be noted, but that the Committee should scrutinise the representations as 85% of respondents were against

the Plan as it affected New Alresford. Reference was also made to the pie chart on page 27 of the Report which illustrated that only a tiny minority supported the Plan. The Council had not listened to the representations that had been made and the Committee was not representative of the Alresford Wards. Alresford residents were challenging the Plan, they considered it was not sound, as the detail had not been sufficiently examined which could lead to a reputational risk to the Council. An alternative plan for Alresford was required and dialogue was needed to restore trust with the public.

Janet Barker – New Alresford, stated that the proposals for New Alresford had been rejected since 2012 and meetings attended by up to 600 residents. Residents were not in favour of the Plan and had not been involved in the consultation process. All developments had been excluded except those agreed by Cabinet in 2009, from when the Plan was unchanged and presented as a “done deal”. There is a refusal to accept facts and the process lacked integrity and trust.

Patrick Davies enquired about procedure and the timescale to the hearings. He asked when the dates of the hearings would be known so that preparation could take place, especially if it coincided with the holiday season.

In reply to the question raised by Mr. Davies, the Head of Strategic Planning clarified that in accordance with the Planning Inspectorate Procedural Practice guidance dated December 2013, there would be six weeks’ notice of a hearing period commencing. The dates would be published on the Council’s website and those who were involved in the process would be notified. In accordance with the Planning Inspectorate’s published guidelines, if the Council was to submit by end of March 2016, then the hearings could be held about the end of June/ early July.. Both the Council and other participants would have three weeks to prepare responses to answer the matters raised by the Inspector.

The Head of Strategic Planning responded to the points raised by Mr. Holmes, and commented that the Council had demonstrated a five year supply, including a trajectory in its most recent .Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Local Plan Part 1 had addressed the District’s objectively assessed housing need, which had led to the identification of strategic land allocations in that Plan, and Local Plan Part 2 was concerned with the allocation of smaller sites for housing purposes in accordance with the development strategy set out in Part1. During preparation of policy MTRA2, a significant amount of evidence was prepared and during the examination into LPP1 the housing numbers to be allocated to the larger settlements was much debated. The figures in MTRA2 were expressed as ‘about’ to provide some flexibility. The Council’s website included the full evidence base for both LPP1 and LPP2.

In respect of the points raised by Mr. Jezeph, Policy WK1 was supported by Southern Water and the Environment Agency. Southern Water was leading the preparation of a more detailed report which would inform this, so as to address the drainage issues, experienced in Wickham. This work would help to determine what improvements would be required in Wickham. In

determining planning applications, the Council would only seek contributions that were appropriate and reasonable to the development on question.

In reply to a Member's question regarding current proposed changes by the Government to planning policy, the Head of Strategic Planning commented that if the Inspector raised these as issues for the local plan, the Council would offer a response and suggest modifications to be made if necessary. The Corporate Director added that if legislation did change, the Council would be requested to look at the update in that context only, rather than recommencing the process.

The Head of Strategic Planning continued that with regard to housing allocations, these covered the 20 year period from 2011 to 2031 and the spatial distribution was established in Local Plan Part 1. Three broad areas were covered: Winchester Town, South Hampshire Urban Areas (PUSH) and the remaining Market Towns and Rural Areas. A settlement hierarchy was established to identify which settlements could accommodate more growth. The process in Local Plan Part 1 provided housing numbers, through a detailed and soundly based strategy, and Local Plan Part 2 provided the identification of sites for the development.

In respect of the issues raised by the representatives of Sun Hill Residents Association, the Committee noted the process adopted towards production of the Plan had been the same across the District. In the case of Alresford, the Corporate Director commented that although the process was the same, the outcome was not, in that there was no consensus as to the development strategy and consequential allocation of sites to follow.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the outcome of the consultation and update on future stages be noted.

5. **ADOPTION OF BISHOPS WALTHAM VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**
ADOPTION OF DENMEAD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT
ADOPTION OF SHEDFIELD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT
 (Report CAB2783(LP) refers)

During public participation, Robert Shields, representing Bishops Waltham Parish Council, stated that the parish endorsed the development plan which was incorporated within Local Plan Part 2. In response to developers' focus on specific sites, the Parish Council and residents had produced the Village Design Statement (VDS) before Committee. There had been a lot of contributions and public consultation to produce a sound document. The formatting of the document would be revised prior to printed publication and all those contributing to its production were thanked.

The Chairman forwarded his thanks on behalf of the Committee for the production of the VDS.

Councillor McLean stated that the document had been produced by local people under the leadership of the Parish Council. Local groups such as the Bishops Waltham Society and Photographic Society had also contributed to the VDS, which provided guidance to developers. He commended the VDS for adoption by the Committee.

In answer to a Member's question, the Head of Strategic Planning stated that the refresh of the numerous VDSs was a continual process. When Local Plan Part 2 was adopted then this would be an appropriate opportunity to refresh the VDSs.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Design Guidelines/Policies in the Village Design Statements for Bishops Waltham, Denmead and Shedfield, amended as set out in the Appendices to the report, be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents.
2. That the 2007 Denmead VDS be revoked as SPD following the adoption of the 2016 SPD.
3. That the Head of Strategic Planning be given delegated authority to make minor factual changes and corrections, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment, prior to the publication of the documents.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.20am

Chairman