



DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

PROPOSED INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING AND ACCESS

TOPIC – FAREHAM CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

If you wish to make representation on this proposed Decision please contact the relevant Portfolio Holder and the following Committee Administrator by 5.00pm on 17 February 2009.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer:

Greg White, Tel: 01962 848 418, Email: gwhite@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator:

Ellie Hogston, Tel: 01962 848 155, Email: ehogston@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

Fareham Borough Council is currently consulting on a Development Plan Document, the Core Strategy 'Preferred Options'. Any representations on those options will need to be submitted by Monday 23 February 2009.

- Various matters are dealt with in the Core Strategy's Preferred Options. However, the main issue of concern to the City Council is centered on the options for the Fareham North Strategic Development Area (SDA). The principle of an SDA of up to 10,000 dwellings is established in the draft South

East Plan and has been endorsed, both by its Public Examination Panel and, more recently, the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the Plan.

- The South East Plan requires the 'precise form and location' of the SDA to be established in Local Development Documents. However, a broad location is indicated as being 'within the Fareham Borough to the north of the M27 motorway'. Supported by the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes, the emerging SE Plan also requires that areas of open land will be maintained between the SDA and Wickham, Funtley and Knowle 'to prevent the coalescence of the SDA with neighbouring settlements and in order to protect the separate identity of individual settlements'.
- Fareham's earlier Core Strategy 'Issues and Options paper' recognised these requirements in setting out broad parameters for delineating the potential boundaries of the SDA - although it anticipated that some land in the Winchester District might be required to maintain an effective gap between the settlements and, in addition, provide some of the necessary 'green infrastructure' for the SDA (Appendix 1).
- In its consultation 'position statement', Fareham BC states that "for the purposes of this consultation, and at this relatively early stage of planning for the SDA, the Council is still assessing the potential constraints within the broad area of search and the capacity for mitigation measures to be undertaken". While the current 'area of search' continues to show a significant area of land to the east of the A32, the position statement also suggests that "much of the land to the east of the A32, particularly beyond the Wallington river has a number of significant environmental constraints, is highly sensitive visually and not likely to be suited to any significant built development".
- If, in drawing up plans and making more detailed preparations for the delivery of an SDA to the size and residential scale required, Fareham BC finds it necessary to focus built development to the west of the A32, this would then put considerably greater pressure on the search areas to the west and north-west. This, in turn, would increase the likelihood that a well designed SDA, including an appropriate ratio of green infrastructure, could not be fully contained within the Borough. Certainly, the current position statement makes it clear that achieving "the full 10,000 dwellings" within the area of search, but excluding the 78 hectares of that area which is within the Winchester District (shown by cross-hatching on the appended plan), would be "very challenging".
- In consequence, the possible option of not providing for a full development of 10,000 dwellings is one which is raised through the position statement. In terms of background evidence for this contingency a Capacity Study, conducted by consultants on behalf of the Borough Council and looking at different development scenarios and density options, concluded that "...a more realistic view would be that the SDA is unlikely to achieve 10,000 dwellings regardless of the proposed boundaries".

- The fact that Fareham BC is at least considering the possibility of delivering an SDA of less than 10,000 raises issues of concern to this authority. If such an option was to be adopted, it would result in: an inability to meet the emerging requirements of the South East Plan in regard to the South Hampshire sub-region; a failure to provide that part of the PUSH growth strategy to which Fareham had previously consented and; uncertainty as to how and where the 'missing' dwellings would be found.
- Any significant reduction could also lead to the PUSH partnership having to revise its overall strategy and this, in turn, could lead to additional pressure being put on other authorities and other parts of the PUSH area. Should any such reduction within its own boundaries be pursued by Fareham BC, the City Council may need to submit formal objections at the appropriate time.
- Among a number of draft development principles included in the current position statement, is one which refers specifically to the separation of the SDA and the need to prevent its coalescence with existing settlements. To achieve this, the principle seeks: "the provision of green buffers to prevent coalescence with Knowle, Wickham, Funtley and Fareham". However, in order to avoid uncertainty or ambiguity, it would be preferable for this particular development principle to follow the South East Plan's requirement for appropriate "areas of open land [to] be maintained...", in order to provide this separating function.
- One further area of concern relates to the potential means of access to the SDA. Under the 'Issues and Options' consultation alternatives were suggested: to retain the existing arrangements with the limited-moves Junction 10 being the main route into and out of the SDA; to improve Junction 10 to an all-moves junction; or to create a new route up to Junction 11. The first two of those options appeared most likely to increase traffic in a northerly direction towards Wickham and beyond and were, therefore, objected to by the Council. The current consultation indicates that "the emerging likely option for gaining access to the strategic road network is at Junction 11 via a re-aligned A32. The existing Junction 10 would then be likely to be made into a bus and high occupancy vehicle only access". While the consultation acknowledges that there would be significant environmental (and other issues) to be resolved, the option of creating a new route to Junction 11 would be the least damaging as far as the Winchester District is concerned and offers the potential to design access routes which direct traffic to the south, rather than the north.
- WCC'S previous comments on Fareham Borough Council's Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' consultation in February 2008 are attached to this Decision Notice. (Appendix 2)

PROPOSED DECISION

It is recommended that Winchester City Council comments to Fareham Borough Council, as follows:

“Winchester City Council notes the updating Position Statement relating to the North of Fareham Strategic Development Area and, from this, the Borough Council’s intention to publish a Preferred Options paper for further consultation on its SDA proposals, in mid-2009. The City Council generally supports the draft development principles referred to in the Position Statement, on condition that any resultant ‘preferred option’ (to be carried forward and refined through an Area Action Plan/Supplementary Planning Document, master plan and other detailed studies) will ensure that all of the SDA including built development, required open space, natural greenspace etc., is contained within the Fareham Borough as required by the South East Plan.

The fact that the Borough Council is considering an option of delivering an SDA of less than 10,000 dwellings raises issues of concern to this authority. If such an option was to be adopted, it would result in: an inability to meet the emerging requirements of the South East Plan in regard to the South Hampshire sub-region; a failure to provide that part of the PUSH growth strategy to which Fareham had previously consented and; uncertainty as to how and where the ‘missing’ dwellings would be found.

Notwithstanding this, the City Council would expect to see that, in carrying forward its proposals, Fareham Borough Council ensures that a sufficient gap is maintained between both Wickham and the SDA and Knowle and the SDA. The City Council would anticipate that the SDA’s open space, within and around the built development, will be situated within Fareham Borough in such a way as to provide those separating “areas of open land” which is a long-term objective of the South East Plan. To avoid uncertainty or ambiguity in interpretation, the City Council would recommend that the reference to “green buffers” in the draft development principle at paragraph 1.46, be replaced by the phrase, “areas of open land will be maintained”.

Winchester reiterates its support for an option to create a new access link to the SDA, leading from junction 11 of the M27, provided this did not cause undue environmental impacts and was designed to ensure that traffic on the A32 through Wickham and beyond is minimised”.

REASON FOR THE PROPOSED DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

To ensure that the Fareham Strategic Development Area accords with the requirements of the South East Plan, does not impinge on the Winchester District and does not generate unacceptable environmental or traffic impacts in the Knowle and Wickham areas.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

None, as yet.

PHD: 200
Ward(s): Whiteley
Wickham
Boarhunt &
Southwick

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

Councillor Keith Wood – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access

Appendix 1 – North of Fareham SDA

Appendix 2 – PHD 132 - previous comments on Fareham Borough Council's Core Strategy

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

TOPIC – FAREHAM CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATIONS

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer: Steve Opacic, Tel: 01962 848 101, Email: sopacic@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator:

Frances Maloney, Tel: 01962 848 155, Email: fmaloney@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

- Fareham Borough Council is currently consulting on 3 Development Plan Documents; the Site Allocations Issues and Options; the Fareham Town Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options; and the Core Strategy Issues and Options. Any representations on the options will need to be submitted by Friday the 7th March.
- The Fareham Town Centre AAP raises no issues of concern to the City Council. The Site Allocations Issues and Options paper likewise raises no issues of great concern to the Council, although it should be noted that one of the options to meet a potential shortfall in B8 floorspace is to redesignate a site with planning permission for B2 uses in the Solent Business Park to B8. However this is only one of nine options to meet the predicted shortfall, and even if it were to become the preferred option it should not cause any undue concerns for Winchester.
- The main issues of concern to the City Council are around the options for the Fareham Strategic Development Area (SDA). The principle of a SDA of up to 10,000 dwellings is established in the draft South East Plan and was endorsed by the Public Examination Panel. The South East Plan requires the precise form and location of the SDA to be established in Local Development Documents; however the broad location is defined as being 'within the Fareham Borough to the north of the M27 motorway'. The SE Plan also requires areas of open land to be maintained between the SDA and Wickham and Knowle.

- The Fareham Core Strategy Issues and Options paper recognises these two requirements in setting out the options for delineating the potential boundaries of the SDA, although it anticipates that some land in the Winchester District might be required to maintain a gap between settlements and provide some of the 'green infrastructure' for the SDA.
- Option 2a seeks to concentrate the development on land to the west of the A32 with only limited release of land to the east, which is likely to require a more dense form of development if it is to be contained within the Fareham Borough boundary; this option is more likely to put pressure to develop on adjoining land in the Winchester District.
- While option 2b seeks to allocate a larger area of land, including land to the east of the A32, to accommodate the SDA. In this respect option 2b is the most likely to ensure that the SDA is suitably designed and contained entirely within Fareham, and maintains an adequate gap between the SDA and Knowle. It is recommended that the City Council formally writes to Fareham to give its support to this option.
- The other options of concern are regarding the potential means of access to the SDA, and basically three options are suggested: to retain the existing arrangements with the limited-moves junction 10 being the main route into and out of the SDA; to improve junction 10 to an all-moves junction; or to create a new route up to junction 11. The first two options should be resisted by the Council as these are the most likely to increase traffic in a northerly direction towards Wickham and beyond. While there would no doubt be environmental and other issues to be resolved, the option of creating a new route to junction 11 would be the least damaging as far as the Winchester District is concerned and offers most potential to design access routes which direct traffic to the south rather than the north.
- There are also a number of other Development Plan Documents currently under consultation by adjoining Local Authorities. These include the Basingstoke and Deane Core Strategy Issues and Options paper; the East Hampshire Core Strategy Issues and Options paper; and the Test Valley Core Strategy Preferred Options paper. However none of these documents are considered to raise issues of concern to the City Council.

DECISION

That Winchester City Council writes to Fareham Borough Council to support Option 2b on condition that this option will ensure that all of the SDA, including the built development, required open space, natural greenspace, etc. is contained within the Fareham Borough. Also, in accordance with the draft SE Plan, a sufficient gap is maintained between Wickham and the SDA and Knowle and the SDA. We would anticipate that an amount of the SDA's open space will be situated to the north of the built development within Fareham Borough, to help provide the gap the draft plan seeks.

That Fareham Borough Council be informed that Winchester City Council would support the option to create a new access link to the SDA off of junction 11 of the M27, providing it did not cause any undue environmental impacts, and was designed to ensure that traffic on the A32 through Wickham and beyond is minimised.

That in response to Option 6c the City Council indicates that it generally support this aim but this should not mean the automatic retention of all bus-only links. In particular the Yew Tree Drive bus-only link should be reviewed at an early date in view of the particular accessibility issues at Whiteley.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

To ensure that the Fareham Strategic Development Area does not impinge on the Winchester District and does not generate unacceptable environmental impacts in the Knowle and Wickham areas. Also to help alleviate traffic problems caused by the limited number of access points into Whiteley.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

A Councillor has suggested that the City Council should support Option 2a, which would concentrate development of the Strategic Development Area to the west of the A32. This suggestion has been rejected as it would be more likely to require development associated with the SDA within Winchester District, which would undermine the aim of maintaining gaps between the SDA and Knowle and the SDA and Wickham.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

Councillor Keith Wood – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport