

**CABINET (LOCAL PLAN) COMMITTEE**

**16 September 2015**

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Read (Chairman) (P)

Godfrey (P)

Pearson

Weston (P)

Other invited Councillors:

J Berry (P)

Evans (P)

Hutchison (P)

Ruffell (P)

Tait (P)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Izard

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Susan Cook, Dibden, McLean, Miller, Power, Rutter and Weir

Mrs Steventon Baker (TACT)

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1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2015 be approved and adopted.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Godfrey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of the following items due to his role as a County Council employee. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

He also mentioned a possible disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of Winchester College, if any Winchester College matters were to arise during

the Committee's deliberations. However, no such matters arose during the Committee.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Questions and statements were made under the following item.

4. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 2 (LPP2): DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND SITE ALLOCATIONS – APPROVAL OF PLAN FOR PUBLICATION**

(Report CAB2711(LP) refers)

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting about 15 members of the public, some of whom addressed the Committee on the appendices, as set out within the report. A summary of their comments are outlined under the relevant appendices below.

The Head of Strategic Planning introduced the Report and explained that this was the first of two meetings examining the responses to the LPP2 consultation (the second to be held on 6 October 2015). The purpose of the meetings was to recommend final changes to the Plan for approval at Council on 21 October 2015. There had been extensive consultation on the Draft LPP2 and the detail of this was set out in a separate consultation statement.

The Committee noted that its next meeting would consider reports relating to New Alresford, Winchester Town, and the Development Management policies, in addition to a revised version of the Local Development Scheme.

The Committee then discussed each Appendix/settlement area, as contained in Appendices A to L of the Report.

**Appendix A – Chapters 1 and 2 – Introduction & Background and Meeting Development Needs**

In response to questions about employment provision, the Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that the Inspector would expect to see a degree of flexibility in the Plan. If, for example, more employment sites were required over the course of the Plan, this could be achieved either within the policies of the Local Plan or, if not, by Local Development Documents on specific issues.

The Head of Strategic Planning emphasised that the South Downs National Park (SDNP) had their own Plan in development and it would not be appropriate to link to this directly in the introduction of the Local Plan Part 2, although where allocations were situated close to the boundaries of the SDNP this was taken into account.

The Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that the calculations of housing supply just referred to numbers of dwelling and not types. An update on housing supply numbers for Winchester Town would be reported to the next Committee meeting.

The Committee noted that a reference to the introduction of “green belts” to protect gaps between some settlements had been included within the Council’s recent submission to Government on devolution.

The Head of Strategic Planning explained that, where appropriate, settlement boundaries had been amended to ensure all allocated sites were included within the new boundaries. The appendices included maps indicating the existing (2006 Local Plan) boundaries (shown as blue dotted lines) and the proposed new boundaries (shown as solid blue lines).

In response to concerns about whether Policy CP17 should be strengthened following recent flooding incidents, the Head of Strategic Planning advised it was not possible to change policies within LPP1. In addition, he emphasised Government advice in this area had not changed and the Environment Agency had commented that CP17 was a strong policy regarding flooding.

#### Appendix B – Bishops Waltham

During public participation, Robert Shields (Bishops Waltham Parish Council) addressed the Committee and, in summary, stated that there were no major issues of concern regarding the intended sites. As site development plans came forward, the County Council would be requested to address traffic issues along the B2177. He thanked the Strategic Planning Team for their help through the LPP2 process.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning explained that as part of the LPP2 process, a full assessment of different categories of open space had been undertaken. Allotment allocations had not been included within Bishops Waltham as this study had not indicated any deficiency of allotment space in the area.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that some inconsistency of approach to whether or not a master plan was required had been found and this would be addressed. The intention was for a masterplan, establishing key development principles, to be required for larger housing developments (over 100 dwellings) or more complex mixed use developments.

#### Appendix C – Colden Common

Four people spoke during public participation and their comments are summarised below.

Richard Osborn (Pro Vision, agent for Bargate Homes) spoke in support of two alternative sites promoted by Bargate Homes at Main Road and Lower Moors Road as the most sustainable option with no objections from any statutory consultees or many members of the public. He emphasised that Bargate Homes had engaged with the local community at an early stage and that both sites could deliver the housing numbers required. In his opinion, the Sandyfields site could not deliver the number of houses required and should be rejected in favour of the Bargate sites.

Richard Cutler (Bloombridge Development Partners) stated they had an option on land at Church Lane and agreed with the previous speaker that the Sandyfields site be rejected. He emphasised it was adjacent to SDNP and queried whether meaningful engagement with the Park authority had been undertaken. He believed the Church Lane site was preferable as it was closer to the school and that the Sandyfields site would require children to walk further to school along the Main Road. He queried why the proposal was for 165 dwellings on the Sandyfields site, rather than the 120 originally proposed.

Steve Carrington (Foreman Homes Group) spoke in support of the Sandyfields site which was the preferred option locally. He confirmed that the number of units was deliverable, it would provide public access into woodland, there are few public views into the site, the access is already in place and arrangements for its improvement are proposed.

Margaret Hill (Colden Common Parish Council) emphasised that the proposed sites in LPP2 had resulted from extensive consultation with local residents who had expressed a clear preference for the Sandyfields site. She added that site 1874 (land east of Highbridge Road) was the site least favoured by local residents.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Izard addressed the Committee as a local Ward councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council in support of the proposals in the Appendix. He also emphasised the local consultation on the alternative sites that had taken place and that Sandyfield had been the most favoured site. He thanked officers for adjustments made to the settlement boundary at Main Road and queried how changes had come about along Church Lane and whether it was possible to make further minor adjustments to settlement boundaries?

The Head of Strategic Planning explained that some realignment of the boundary along Church Lane to the east of Nobbs Crook was proposed so as to be consistent with the principles in the Settlement Boundary Review regarding the inclusion or otherwise of rear gardens.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning explained that more housing had been allocated to the Sandyfields site following discussions with the potential developer. The view was taken that if additional numbers could be allocated to this site it would not be necessary to allocate site 2494 (one of the Bargate greenfield sites) to meet the numbers required. The Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that SDNP had been consulted at an early stage and had supported the draft Local Plan proposals. It was acknowledged that there had been delays with the planning application for the Sandyfields site, but in terms of LPP2 Officers were satisfied that the whole area covered by Policy CC1 (some of which was outside the control of Foreman Homes) could accommodate 165 dwellings.

The Committee requested that Policy CC1 be amended to include a requirement for a masterplan. This was agreed.

### Appendix D – Kings Worthy

The Head of Strategic Planning reported that three sites were shortlisted for public consultation in Kings Worthy which were all fairly evenly balanced in terms of their respective merits. However, on balance and having regard to the views of the public and Parish Council it was concluded that the Lovedon Lane site should be selected in the draft Local Plan and this remained the officers' recommendation.

He highlighted that Paragraph 52 of Appendix D should have recommend inclusion of reference to a Groundwater Protection Zone within the Policy itself, rather than the explanatory text (the revised policy does include this change).

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning explained that a recent development at Hookpit Farm Lane had been permitted as a rural exception site. Exception sites were not able to be included within housing numbers under Policy CP4. 25 units had already been developed in this area, with an application for a further 25 units to be considered at Planning Committee on 17 September 2015. The Committee noted that an application for development at Lovedon Lane was also due to be considered at the same Planning Committee meeting.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning acknowledged that the Lovedon Lane site was sensitive in terms of landscape, but the setting of Kings Worthy meant this was the case for any sites around its outskirts. Landscape setting was only one criteria used in selecting sites and he confirmed that, although it was finely balanced, the Lovedon Lane site was considered to be the preferred site under the LPP2.

### Appendix E – Swanmore

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the site area proposed in Policy SW2 was approximately 0.2 hectares and it could therefore only accommodate approximately 5 dwellings. Policies aimed at retaining the character of the area would prevent a significantly larger number of dwellings being approved.

Members commented that the numbering used in Policies was confusing and should be clarified throughout (e.g. by referring to 'former' Policy SW1).

The Committee asked whether the wording of new Policy SW1 should be strengthened to acknowledge that the area did flood. In response to questions about the suitability of such land for development, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Environment Agency had not raised any objections, and the Plan already referred to drainage requirements.

### Appendix F – Waltham Chase

The Head of Strategic Planning acknowledged that a number of sites had come forward as alternatives to the preferred site. In particular he referred to

Savills' promotion of Van Diemens field which had initially been assessed as part of a larger area with regard to its potential to meet housing requirements and had been rejected. Subsequently Savills had put forward a smaller site, submitted after all the site assessment work had been completed. This had been assessed but the conclusion remained that it would not be a more suitable site than those proposed for allocation. The Head of Strategic Planning stated that he believed that the Parish Council remained in favour of the sites as set out.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the consultation on housing allocations had been Parish Council led and the results favoured splitting development up onto smaller sites. To achieve this, it was recognised that site allocations would encroach into gaps and there had not been any objections from Swanmore Parish Council regarding this.

With regard to policy WC3, the Head of Strategic Planning explained that site constraints had limited the scale of development being proposed.

Following some concerns raised by Members, it was agreed that Policy WC4 be amended to clarify that both sites should provide their own open space and infrastructure elements.

#### Appendix G – Wickham

The Head of Strategic Planning emphasised that the decision as to site allocation had been finely balanced between a number of sites. However, local consultation had indicated a wish for development to be spread around a number of smaller sites if possible.

A traffic study had been commissioned on the impact along the whole corridor between Wickham and Twyford and this had included the impact of the Welbourne development and other proposed developments within Eastleigh Borough Council area. This had concluded there was sufficient capacity generally, although some junctions would require improvements as they would reach capacity by 2031. References to off-site contributions were proposed in the Winchester Road site allocation to enable this.

The Head of Strategic Planning also drew the Committee's attention to revisions to Policy WK1 regarding drainage and flooding to reflect the conclusions of the Wickham Flood Investigation Report.

Three people spoke during public participation and their comments are summarised below.

Anton Hanney (Wickham Residents' Association & Wickham Society) expressed concern about the impact of the development proposals on Wickham and in particular about the impact on traffic. He disputed the results of the traffic study, especially regarding the significant impact of the Welbourne development which he believed would result in large increases of traffic travelling through the village. He welcomed the proposed amendments to not permit new development until the drainage plan had been approved.

Michael Carter (Wickham Society) spoke in support of the Mill Lane site rather than the proposed site at The Glebe. He stated that Mill Lane was closer to important facilities, such as the school and doctors' surgery whereas The Glebe was further away and would necessitate crossing the A32. Mill Lane could be connected to cycle paths and remove the need to use the A334.

Sarah Foster (Bloor Homes – Mill Lane site) did not agree with the conclusions of the report in relation to Wickham and distributed plans to the Committee. She believed that the Council had overly relied on the views of the Parish Council and that Mill Lane should be the preferred site as it was not separated from Wickham by the A32. The developers could provide a large area of public space dedicated to the parish council, allotments, a mixture of housing types and 40% affordable housing.

The Head of Strategic Planning emphasised that although the above speakers had concentrated on accessibility to the school, etc., this was only one factor which had been considered. Pedestrian crossings would have to be provided for The Glebe site, which could also benefit existing residents. He also highlighted that the views of the Parish Council had been taken into account.

He acknowledged the scepticism regarding the traffic study but emphasised that this had been challenged at the Welbourne Local Plan examination and was stated to be the best evidence available and accepted by the Inspector for that Plan.

As a member of Wickham Parish Council and the Plan Steering Group, Councillor Evans highlighted that the proposals were supported by 60% of respondents. She highlighted that during the LPP1 process, Wickham had opposed the allocation of 250 homes but this had been a requirement introduced by the Inspector in order to meet affordable housing needs. She welcomed that Bloor Homes had kept the local community informed about their alternative proposals and also acknowledged the views of the Wickham Society. She agreed with comments made regarding the underestimation of the impact on traffic within the study.

During discussion of Policy WK1 there was some concern expressed that the wording should be strengthened to prevent development before the DAP was completed. The Corporate Director emphasised that it was important not to be overly restrictive in the wording as development might be necessary to help provide the infrastructure improvements required. It was agreed that amended wording be agreed by the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Chairman.

With regard to WK2, it was agreed that wording be included under “nature and phasing” to clarify the requirement for sports pitches, a pavilion and parking, and that the requirement for a masterplan also be added.

#### Appendix H – Denmead

The Committee noted the contents of Appendix H.

### Appendix I – Smaller Villages and rural area

Eleanor Bell (Hursley Parish Council) spoke during public participation and in summary highlighted that although Hursley was designated as a settlement under MRTA3, the parish boundary stretched to the outskirts of Winchester, at Pitt roundabout. However, as Pitt village was not a designated settlement it did not have the protection of a gap around it and she believed the area between Winchester and Pitt village was therefore more vulnerable to speculative development.

The Head of Strategic Planning acknowledged that Mrs Bell had promoted this gap for inclusion within LPP1, but as it was not agreed, it could not be introduced at the LPP2 stage. However, he emphasised that the area referred to was covered by countryside policies which offered a reasonable level of protection.

### Appendix J – South Hampshire Urban Area

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the County Council had now agreed there was justification for a Botley by-pass and it was likely to be deliverable and, on this basis, the route was proposed for safeguarding within a new Policy.

### Appendix K – Chapter 7 – Implementation and Monitoring

### Appendix L – Habitat Regulations Assessment Scoping Report Summary

The Committee noted the contents of Appendices K and L.

The Committee noted that during the meeting, a number of changes to the Appendices had been requested as detailed above and summarised below:

- Policy CC1 (Appendix C) – insertion of requirement for a master plan;
- Policy WC4 (Appendix F) – change to clarify require open space and infrastructure on each site;
- Policy WK1 (Appendix G) – reword to reflect concerns regarding preventing development until flooding issues had been addressed and to refer to a multi-agency strategy throughout
- Policy WK2 (Appendix G) – amend to include requirements for sports provision and the requirement for a master plan.

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

#### RESOLVED:

1. That the responses to the representations, as set out in the attached papers, together with the outcome of the further evidence studies, be noted and taken into account in considering the Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management and Site Allocations.

2. That subject to changes detailed above, the content of the Pre-Submission Local Plan, as recommended in Appendices A to L of this report, be approved for submission to full Council.

3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment, to update the appendices to the Local Plan and make minor amendments to the Plan and accompanying documents prior to presentation to the Council and publication, in order to correct errors and format text without altering the meaning of the Plan.

4. That it be noted that at the next meeting of the Committee, it will be asked to consider the following recommendations to full Council:

**“To Council:**

5. That the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management and Site Allocations be approved for Publication (Pre-submission) and subsequent Submission to the Secretary of State, together with supporting documents including the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment, in accordance with the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.

6. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment, be authorised to submit the Plan and accompanying documents to the Secretary of State following the publication period, in accordance with the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.

7. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment, be authorised to make editorial amendments to the Local Plan and accompanying documents prior to submission to the Secretary of State, to correct errors and format text without altering the meaning of the Plan.

8. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Built Environment /Leader, be authorised to make proposed changes to the Plan before, during and after the public examination process, in order to respond to matters raised through the consultation and examination process.

9. That approval be given to appoint a Programme Officer and undertake other work as necessary to prepare for and undertake the public examination (including agreeing to meet the Planning Inspectorate’s fees), provided this is within the allocated Local Plan budget/Reserve.”

The meeting commenced at 9.30am, adjourned for lunch between 11.55am and 2.00pm and concluded at 4.15pm.

Chairman