

Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

Notes of a Meeting of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group held on the **19th July 2018**.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman).
Cllr. Clokie (Vice-Chairman).

Cllrs. Burgess, Galpin, Heyes, Hicks, Michael.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii), Cllr. Hicks attended as Substitute Member for Cllr. White.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, White.

Development Partnership Manager.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Mrs Blanford, Dehnel.

Head of Planning and Development; Head of Planning Policy; Principal Policy Planner; Planning Lawyer; Member Services and Ombudsman Complaints Officer.

1 Notes of the Meeting held on 27th April 2018

- 1.1 The Notes of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group Meeting held on 27th April 2018 were approved.

2 Local Plan to 2030 – Inspectors’ post-hearings Advice Note

- 2.1 The Chairman said he would like to place on record the Task Group’s thanks and congratulations to Officers for their contribution towards the Public Examination. He considered this had been a lengthy procedure, with a good outcome for the Council.
- 2.2 The Head of Planning Policy introduced the report. He said this Advice Note provided the Inspectors’ thoughts on the main changes they wished to see in order to ensure a sound Local Plan to 2030 for the Council. He ran through the main issues contained in the report as follows:

Housing Need

- 2.3 The Head of Planning Policy explained that the Inspectors proposed a modest increase in the overall housing figure over the planned period, which would

include the allowance for London outmigration. The effect of this would be to increase the housing requirement to 2030 to 16,872 dwellings.

Housing Land Supply

- 2.4 In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Planning Policy confirmed that the above figure included market signals uplift as well as a 20% buffer. He said that if the Council was able to meet the annual housing requirements on a consistent basis, over 2 or 3 years, the buffer figure would fall to 5%. Members agreed that this was often outside the Council's gift as the rate of housing was decided to a large extent by developers, and they discussed possible solutions to this position. The Chairman said ideally he would like to see a 7 or 8-year land supply to offset this problem.

Site Policy Deletions and Residential Capacity Reductions

- 2.5 The Head of Planning Policy advised that 5 site policies were to be deleted from the Plan, and several other site allocations were to be reduced. This position could be revisited in future Local Plans, especially with regard to sites on the A20 corridor. A Member asked whether site viability would be affected by reduction in housing numbers. The Head of Planning Policy responded that this was debateable. Where land values were relatively high for residential development, such as in the rural areas, the landowner may still be willing to sell at a reduced price in order to achieve an allocation. Viability would also be affected beneficially by lower S.106 contributions as a consequence of reduced site capacities.
- 2.6 The Head of Planning Policy explained that the Task Group would be meeting again on 30th July to consider the draft schedule of proposed modifications to the Plan, and Members would have the opportunity to discuss individual sites in more detail then. He said that the Inspectors had not provided any detailed steer towards what they would consider more acceptable.
- 2.7 A Member asked what had led to reductions required by the Inspectors. The Head of Planning Policy said that a variety of different issues had led to this result, and this varied from site to site.

Site Policy Amendments

- 2.8 In response to a question, the Head of Planning Policy clarified that the policy for Bombardier Works was intended to lead to the release of the safeguarding of the site for rail uses in certain conditions. He agreed with the Inspectors' conclusions that the site should not necessarily be safeguarded across the whole Plan period, and that there should be a cut off period for any decision by Network Rail and the railway operators.

Windfall Housing Policies

- 2.9 The Head of Planning Policy explained that the Inspectors had requested the Council undertake a review of those settlements listed in policy HOU3a, through a systematic process which justified why settlements had or had not been selected. They had also suggested that some of the settlements listed in HOU3a as suitable for infilling may not also be suitable for expansion on the edges under policy

HOU5 and therefore the list of settlements may be different for each policy. The Head of Planning Policy advised that he was waiting to hear back from the Inspectors regarding further clarification on the criteria they wished to see included under HOU5. A Member noted that there was a danger in continually refusing growth in small villages, as this might be detrimental to their future sustainability. The Head of Planning Policy responded that this was the rationale for drafting HOU5 and it was proposed to remove only a small number of settlements from both policies.

HOU9 (Standalone Annexes)

- 2.10 The Head of Planning Policy advised that the Inspectors had directed that the requirement for evidence of family need for an annexe to be permitted be deleted from the policy. He said this may open the door to annexes as stand alone dwellings, but this would have to be managed through other planning means such as planning obligations. Members discussed methods of enforcement and it was agreed that further discussion on this was required at a different date.

Modifications agreed during Examination

- 2.11 The Head of Planning Policy explained that a range of other modifications had been proposed throughout the Examination process, although these had not been specified in detail in the Advice Note. The modifications were intended to strengthen the policies and make the plan clearer and easier to implement. In response to a question on Neighbourhood Plans, he confirmed that he was seeking clarification on this, as well as a number of other proposed modifications.

Conclusions

- 2.12 The Head of Planning Policy advised he was of the opinion that any policies not specifically mentioned by the Inspectors were fundamentally sound. He drew Members' attention to the fact that the Inspectors had indicated support for a number of issues including:
- the Council's broad strategy for the location and scale of residential development across the Borough.
 - the Separation of Settlements policy.
 - the internal residential space standards.
 - the approach to fibre provision to new premises and dwellings.
 - parking standards.
 - the set of environmental policies.

Next Steps

- 2.13 The Head of Planning Policy advised that the Task Group would meet again on 30th July, at which time he would present the draft proposed modifications to the

Task Group for discussion. The final version of the Modifications would then be submitted to the Inspectors for consideration. Following the Inspectors' response, there would be a 6 week period of public consultation on all the Modifications. Any representations on the Main Modifications would be communicated back to the Inspectors, who would issue a final report 6 – 8 weeks later. On this timescale, it was hoped that the final version of the Plan would be submitted to Cabinet and Full Council for adoption early in 2019.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

3 Formal Review of the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan

3.1 The Head of Planning Policy introduced this item. He explained the purpose of the report, background and content. He advised that the review exercise undertaken showed that there was no need to update or revise the Action Plan.

Resolved

That the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group

- i) Supports the broad approach outlined in the report concerning the review of the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan and its consistency with the revised NPPF.**
- ii) Agrees with the interim conclusion that no formal revisions to any part of the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan are necessary at this point.**

Councillor Clarkson
Chairman – Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

Notes of a Meeting of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group held on the 30th July 2018.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman).
Cllr. Clokie (Vice-Chairman).

Cllrs. Burgess, Galpin, Hicks.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii) Cllr. Hicks attended as Substitute Member for Cllr. White.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Mrs Dyer, Michael, Smith, White.

Development Partnership Manager.

Also Present:

Cllr. Dehnel.

Head of Planning Policy; Principal Policy Planner (IG); Principal Policy Planner (DC); Policy Planner; Graduate Planner (Policy); Senior Solicitor (Strategic Development); Member Services and Ombudsman Complaints Officer.

1 Notes of the Meeting held on 19th July 2018

- 1.1 The Notes of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group Meeting held on 19th July 2018 were approved and confirmed as a correct record.

2 Schedule of draft Modifications to the Local Plan

- 2.1 The Chairman opened up this item by thanking Officers for their hard work in addressing the modifications required and producing them in time for discussion at the meeting.
- 2.2 The Head of Planning Policy gave a presentation which covered the main issues and the proposed changes/modifications, as follows:

Introduction

- 2.3 The proposed modifications were derived from four main sources, and included both the main modifications and additional modifications. The Task Group had previously agreed that all proposed modifications would be the subject of public consultation.

Policy SP2 and Land Supply

- 2.4 The Head of Planning Policy drew Members attention to the percentages for urban/rural split for new allocations, which were now 82:18. Members agreed that a Leader's Briefing Note should be circulated to Members and Parishes to draw attention to these statistics. A new Land Supply section would be added to the policy to define more clearly how the five-year housing supply figures would be calculated. The Head of Planning Policy said these were still highly challenging targets, which were largely out of the Council's control.

Site Policy Changes

- 2.5 The Head of Planning Policy reminded Members that the Inspectors had requested 5 sites be deleted. However, it was proposed to delete 6 sites in total, as the requested reduction of the small S53 Brook site would make it too small to be allocated in its own right. He suggested that this site might now come forward as a windfall site through the revised HOU policies instead. There were four sites to be reduced, which would result in an overall reduction from 85 to 51 dwellings. The Head of Planning Policy drew Members' attention to the comments he had received from one of the Saxon Shore Ward Members in response to the proposals for the S51 and S52 Aldington sites. The Ward Member for Isle of Oxney said that in his opinion 14 houses would be a far more suitable number for the S61 Wittersham site than the reduced number of 25. It was noted that comments on the proposed modifications had also been received from the Ward Member for Boughton Aluph & Eastwell as he could not be present at the meeting.

Affordable Housing

- 2.6 The Inspectors had confirmed to the Head of Planning Policy that the Affordable Housing threshold was to remain at 10 dwellings following publication of the revised NPPF.

Windfall Housing Policies

- 2.7 The Inspectors had expressed concerns about whether policies HOU3a and HOU5 were correctly pitched, and had asked the Council to reconsider whether they could be made clearer. A review had resulted in
- Removal of hamlet size settlements without services from both policies
 - Removal of smaller, less sustainable settlements with limited access to services from HOU5 only
 - Amendments to policy criterion in HOU5 relating to access/proximity to services.
- 2.8 Five small settlements had been removed from both windfall policies, due to unsuitability of size and a lack of available services. There was a list of settlements in which minor residential development and infilling would be acceptable under the revised HOU3a policy, and another list of settlements in a revised HOU5 policy where such appropriately-scaled residential development may also be acceptable on the edge of, or close to, the defined settlements.

- 2.9 The Chairman reminded Officers that there were only 9 months left until the deadline when all village confines must be clearly defined. He said that Cabinet had agreed this deadline several years previously, and Officers were expected to draw up the confines for all villages within the deadline.
- 2.10 A Member asked that Kingsnorth be defined as 'Historic' Kingsnorth to provide clarification over the village centre and the surrounding area.
- 2.11 Under the HOU5 policy criteria, there were proposed amendments to the policy and supporting text.

Gypsy and Traveller

- 2.12 There were minor amendments to HOU16 and HOU17. The Inspectors had reduced the S44 site to 1 pitch only. Members discussed the Inspectors' reduction from 5 pitches to 1 pitch, and asked Officers to approach the Inspectors and request an increase in the number of pitches to 3.

Private External Space

- 2.13 The Inspectors had asked for the policy to be less prescriptive and Officers had re-drafted the policy accordingly. The critical point to note was the provision of a useable garden area only should be counted against the requirements of the revised policy.

Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)

- 2.14 This policy would apply to all development within or adjoining Ashford. Within the rest of the Borough it would apply to schemes of 10 dwellings or more, or to employment uses which were B Use Class specific, or to schemes which provided 10 or more jobs. A new section had been added on implementation. There was now a requirement for a '*FTTP Statement*' showing that developers were in dialogue with the telecom operators to establish how the FTTP would be provided and engaged on first occupation. More detail would be provided subsequently through a SPD following adoption of the Plan. It was noted that this was the first policy of its type to be included in an adopted Local Plan in the country.

Pound Lane Link Road

- 2.15 This was retained in the Plan as an aspiration. Transport modelling needed to be undertaken in accordance with policy TRA8. The S3 Court Lodge Policy required contributions and connections to the link road and these were now 'subject to transport modelling outcome'. The supporting text statement for TRA1 – Strategic Transport had been updated. The Chairman noted that there may be some potential future scheme involving LEP funding, and that it was necessary to look at the road layout and strategy in the light of potential future funding arrangements.

Protecting Rural Features

- 2.16 Additional criteria had been added to cover exceptional features that had a particular importance to the local community but which did not fall under another category, but should still be protected. This would provide Parish Councils with

the opportunity to bring such features to the Council's attention for consideration in planning matters.

Enforcement

- 2.17 The Inspectors had advised that policy IMP3 should be deleted from the Plan. The Head of Planning Policy considered that the supporting text should be retained as a statement of intent.

Next Steps

- 2.18 The Head of Planning Policy explained the timetable for the feedback from the Inspectors, public consultation, issue of the Inspectors' final report and adoption of the Local Plan to 2030 by Cabinet and Council.
- 2.19 The Chairman thanked Members and Officers of the Task Group for their efforts to develop policies that would protect the Borough whilst also ensuring sound necessary development.

Councillor Clarkson
Chairman – Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

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