

LOCAL PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

9 March 2017 at 6.00 p.m.

Present : Councillors Charles (Chairman), Bower (Vice-Chairman), Ambler, Mrs Bence, Bicknell, Brooks, Chapman, Cooper, Elkins, Gammon (substituting for Councillor Mrs Maconachie), Mrs Hall, Oppler, Mrs Stainton and Wensley (substituting for Councillor Mrs Brown).

[Note: Councillor Bicknell was absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to in Minutes 39 and 40.]

Councillors Bence, Oliver-Redgate and Warren were also present at the meeting.

39. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Brown and Mrs Maconachie.

40. Declarations of Interest

The Monitoring Officer has advised Members of interim arrangements to follow when making declarations of interest. They have been advised that for the reasons explained below, they should make their declarations on the same basis as the former Code of Conduct using the descriptions of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Reasons

- The Council has adopted the government's example for a new local code of conduct, but new policies and procedures relating to the new local code are yet to be considered and adopted.
- Members have not yet been trained on the provisions of the new local code of conduct.
- The definition of Pecuniary Interests is narrower than the definition of Prejudicial Interests so, by declaring a matter as a Prejudicial Interest, that will cover the requirement to declare a Pecuniary Interest in the same matter.

Councillor Oppler declared a personal interest as follows:-

“I wish to make the Local Plan Subcommittee aware that I have made various public statements, including in my recent political campaign material, that I am opposed to some of the strategic development sites in the Arun District Council Draft Local Plan, including those at Pagham and Bersted. These were my views that I held at that time. However, I am at this meeting tonight to consider all the information before me at this time and reach a decision with an open mind.

Whilst I have reservations about some of the sites, I have an open mind regarding this item and I will listen and consider all the relevant issues and interests presented to this Subcommittee tonight and I confirm that I will reach my decision on merit and not bias.

For the record, I ask that this declaration be recorded in the Minutes of this meeting, together with the following statement:-

I accept and understand

- Since Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011 came into force, predetermination on its own is not to be taken as having a closed mind.
- Public bodies should make decisions dispassionately according to the law and the materials before them.
- If a Councillor campaigns for one outcome or another and that Councillor then participates in the decision making process and that Councillor is shown to have been biased and/or as having a closed mind, that interest in the matter puts the Council’s decision making process at risk of legal challenge.
- Where a Councillor does indicate their view on a matter prior to a decision on the same matter, then the onus is on that Councillor to demonstrate very clearly at all meetings when a decision is taken on that matter, that they do not have a closed mind and they are clearly considering all the relevant issues and interests and they have reached their decision on merit and not bias.

I confirm that I understand these responsibilities and I will carry out my duties with an open mind for the Arun District Council Draft Local Plan and all other matters.

Councillor Elkins also declared a personal interest as a member of the Littlehampton Harbour Board in the event of any discussion taking place on any matter relating to the Harbour Board.

(Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillor Bicknell declared a personal interest as an employee of Southern Water.)

41. Arun Local Plan – Publication of Proposed Modifications following Suspension of the Examination in Public

Prior to presenting this item, the Head of Planning Policy & Strategic Development reminded the meeting that, following the meeting held on 6

March 2017, Members would only be considering Chapters 5 (Key Diagram), 12 (Housing Delivery), 15 (Transport) and 22 (Infrastructure Delivery), together with the Housing Implementation Strategy and recommendations (3) to (7) as detailed in the report and which dealt with progressing the modified Plan, consultation and submission of the Plan for examination. (Recommendations (1) and (2) had been dealt with in part on 6 March 2017.)

The Head of Planning Policy & Strategic Development then gave a detailed presentation, as summarised below:-

CHAPTER 12 – HOUSING & HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The modifications required were due to the significant increase in housing required for the District, resulting in the re-writing of this chapter. A new over-arching Strategic Housing Development Policy (H SP2) had been developed to illustrate how the allocation as a whole would be delivered; all sites would contribute to secondary school provision through this policy. Strategic sites would need to contribute over 50% of the total housing supply for 2011-2032, with completions and commitments contributing 35% of the total supply. There was, therefore, a shortfall of some 1,250 dwellings which would have to come from non-strategic sites.

A number of sites had already been allocated and identified in the submitted Local Plan and officers had been testing the cumulative impact of a long list of sites to deliver up to 1,000 dwellings per annum. Sites already approved by Full Council were:

- Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate - being proposed for 2,300 (3,000)
- West Bank 1,000
- Angmering 250
- Ford 1,500
- Fontwell 400

New allocations as main modifications sites were being proposed at:

- West Bersted 2,500
- Angmering (N) 800
- Pagham (S) 800
- Pagham (N) 400
- Yapton 400
- Climping 300

The Head of Planning Policy & Strategic Development then went through each site and highlighted the issues that had to be taken into consideration for each of them.

He then turned to the need for small scale sites to provide housing and he advised on the discussions that were being held with Town and Parish

Councils and the Neighbourhood Plan Groups as to where and how they could be provided. In the event that adequate numbers were not forthcoming, there was a commitment within the submitted Plan to prepare a DPD (Development Plan Document) and that work would commence when it was clear to what extent new and modified Neighbourhood Plans would be able to contribute to the requirements.

Members were advised that the Council had to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply (HSL) at the time of adoption and, against a requirement of 919, this presently stood at 1.92 years as a policy off position. As at 31 March 2016, there was a shortfall of 1,548 dwelling with completions averaging 609 over the past 5 years and projected completions for the 5 years 2016-2021 accounting for 5,622 dwellings, of which only 50% were from strategic allocations. The Council had to catch up with its under delivery of housing in the District in order to demonstrate that the Plan was sound.

The Duty to Cooperate (DTC) also impacted on the housing requirement and officers had tested housing numbers that resulted in a contribution of 1,600 dwellings over the Plan period for unmet needs of other authorities.

CHAPTER 15 – TRANSPORT

The modifications relating to Transport made a new reference to Ford Railway Crossing (T SP3); reference to a new junction if the Arundel By Pass proceeded; and reference to support for railway crossings.

CHAPTER 22 – INFRASTRUCTURE

The modifications relating to Infrastructure made reference to a new secondary school; a new policy was required; and cross reference made to highways requirements in Chapter 12.

In opening up the debate, the Chairman welcomed Mr Parfitt to the meeting as a representative of County Highways, who was in attendance to answer any questions Members might have with regard to transport issues.

A number of questions were asked, summarised as follows:-

- Health care facilities – officers had engaged with the NHS over several months and the likely population increase had been identified, resulting in the need for new health facilities on 3 sites which the NHS would then have to equip and staff.
- Localised impact of development on the transport network – the Transport Assessment which accompanied the Plan looked at the strategic highway network and the mitigation required. However, it was not a full and comprehensive list of the only requirements and, for example, a Pagham Joint Transport Assessment with the County Council would provide a more

refined level of detail and additional requirements for the local network could be identified through that work.

- A guarantee was sought that additional health care facilities and schools would be provided rather than just extending present facilities, particularly in the case of schools. However, that guarantee could not be given as need might well be different in 5 years' time.
- It was asked whether the Council had a robust case for a stepped housing target and a response given that both legal advice and advice from the Planning Advisory Service had been sought and it was felt that it was as robust as it could be.
- Due to the complexity of the delivery of the housing and infrastructure required, a concern was raised as to how disruption could be minimised. A response was given that all of the service providers had been identified, together with requirements prior to any developments taking place and it was felt that none were so significant as to cause major issues. The detail would be negotiated at the planning application stage.
- Neighbourhood Plans - with regard to non-strategic sites and the NP process, a number of meetings had already been held with the NP groups, with another scheduled in April, and all parties were aware of the need to find additional numbers for housing. Preparation of a DPD was required and it was hoped that the Town and Parish Councils would take part in the process.
- Neighbourhood Plans - a question was asked relating to the mechanism for Towns and Parishes to put forward new sites and advice given that the Government was setting out legislation that NPs could be modified so amendments could be dealt with. A further query was raised with regard to additional funding for the work that would now be required to identify the extra housing in the NPs and the Director of Place advised that there was a recognition of the significant resource implications. The Government had been written to on a number of occasions and a response was awaited to the most recent representation made. The Neighbourhood Plan Bill was going through at the moment and there might be additional funding made available – the Council would be at the forefront of asking for a share of that.
- Consultation had been undertaken with all the utility providers and none had come back with any issues in relation to the scale of the development required. It was highlighted that Southern Water was a separate case as it had to develop an overall strategy rather than deal with matters on a site by site basis; that strategy had now been discussed with officers and would, hopefully, be published by the end of the month.
- Affordable Housing - comment was made that it was pleasing to see that there was a relatively high provision of affordable housing within the Plan and it was asked if there was scope to adjust the ratio of 75% for rent and 25% market housing to assist people to get on the housing ladder, particularly due to

the many schemes that were around. A response was given that as planning applications were dealt with, local circumstances would be taken account of and dealt with through negotiation on specific local issues.

In the course of some general discussion, comment was made with regard to the need for additional health service provision and concern was expressed that adequate space should be allocated in the Plan for new and/or expanding services. The Director of Place advised that officers would be trying to negotiate much more multi-functional facilities as there were much broader aspects to health care and other providers would need to be catered for.

The Head of Planning Policy & Strategic Development undertook to provide Members of the Subcommittee with an update of further modifications following this meeting and the special meeting of Full Council on 22 March 2017.

It was highlighted that Members had attended many briefings over a period of time to acquaint themselves with all the information that had to be taken account of in their consideration of the Local Plan and these were listed in the Statement of Consultation that had been published on the web site.

A member view was expressed that, whilst recognising the need to have a robust Local Plan in place, a number of opportunities had been lost in the past to have a much lower housing number. Consequently, Chalcraft Lane in Bognor Regis faced a development of 2,500 houses and Pagham 1,200, which would have a severe impact on the residents who already lived in the area. As such he stated that he was finding it difficult to support the draft Local Plan.

In concluding the debate, the Chairman thanked the Local Plan team for their hard work under difficult circumstances and felt they were owed a debt of gratitude for all they had done.

In turning to the recommendations, Members were advised that recommendation (2) had been amended to take account of a specific policy relating to secondary school provision in chapter 22 and completion of the Monitoring Framework in chapter 26. The Subcommittee then

RESOLVED

That the Evidence Base report and Background Document, Housing Implementation Strategy, be noted; and

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL – That

(1) the proposed modifications to the Arun Local Plan, which are provided as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report be approved in so far as they relate to Chapters 5 (Key

Diagram), 12 (Housing Delivery), 15 (Transport) and 22 (Infrastructure Delivery);

(2) the Director of Place, in consultation with the Chairman of the Local Plan Subcommittee and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, be given delegated authority to make any further non-material amendments to the proposed modifications arising from this meeting or as required prior to publication. This will include the insertion of a specific policy to relate to secondary school provision in chapter 22 and completion of the Monitoring Framework in chapter 26;

(3) should recommendation (1) be accepted, the Director of Place be authorised to publish the modified Arun Local Plan;

(4) the Director of Place be authorised to complete a detailed schedule(s) of modifications and necessary documentation for publication and a six week representation period in accordance with the requirements of the appointed Planning Inspector and relevant procedural guidance;

(5) following the 6 week representation period, the representations to these proposed modifications be submitted to the Planning Inspector as part of his Examination of the Arun Local Plan; and

(6) the Director of Place be authorised to produce and submit any supplementary information and documentation to the Planning Inspector to assist the Examination-in-Public, as required.

A request had been received that the voting be recorded. Those voting for the recommendations were Councillors Ambler, Mrs Bence, Bicknell, Bower, Brooks, Chapman, Charles, Cooper, Elkins, Gammon, Mrs Hall, Mrs Stainton and Wensley (13). Councillor Oppler voted against (1) and there were no abstentions.

42. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Principal Conservation Officer advised by way of this report that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) identified which Local Development Documents the Council intended to produce during a rolling three year period, including the emerging Local Plan. Whilst the initial key milestones of publishing the emerging Local Plan had been met, the suspension period had necessitated the revision of the LDS.

The revised LDS, as appended to the report, reflected the implications of the suspension period and, also, incorporated a review of the other documents that the Council would be preparing, such as a Gypsy and Traveller Sites Development Plan Document (DPD).

Following consideration, the Subcommittee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL

That the Local Development Scheme 2017-2020 be approved.

(The meeting concluded at 7.15 pm)