

PLANNING POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE

15 October 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Mrs Yeates (Chairman), Jones (Vice-Chair), Bower, Chapman (substituting for Councillor Elkins), Dixon, Huntley, Lury, Mrs Pendleton, Ms Thurston and Mrs Worne

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Daniells, Elkins, Northeast and Oppler.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

11. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2019 were approved by the Subcommittee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12. PLANNING POLICY & CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

At the meeting of Full Council on 17 July 2019, the following Motion was agreed which the Planning Policy Subcommittee was requested to consider:-

“This Council supports the principle of developing supplementary planning guidance to improve the level of sustainability of all developments in comparison to the current position.

Officers are asked to prepare a report for the consideration of the Planning Policy Sub Committee on how this might be achieved including reference to the following, and the likely costs and benefits thereof.

- 1) Guidance on renewable energy (both passive & active) for individual homes.
- 2) Improved standards for insulation, heat recovery and water usage.
- 3) Guidance for community renewable energy schemes.
- 4) Guidance on designs for waste/recycling storage facilities.
- 5) Guidance on the planting of woodland which can be both a mitigating and resilience action in terms of carbon sequestration and reducing the rate of surface water run - off and thereby reducing the flooding impact of severe rainfall.
- 6) Improved and more rigorous standards for the prevention of flooding.

The Sub Committee is also asked to make recommendations as to whether Arun DC should look at declaring a Climate Change Emergency and the implications of creating a framework for moving towards a Carbon Neutral District and whether the Council should consider engaging the services of an energy agency to provide community retrofit advice and support and explore the potential retrofitting of solar panels on all appropriate Council assets.”

In presenting the report, the Planning Policy Team Leader advised that the Director of Services would also be presenting a complementary report to the Environment & Leisure Working Group at its meeting on 7 November 2019 which would

- Scope out the feasibility of, and make recommendation on, setting an appropriate zero-carbon target for Arun District by 2030; and
- Identify the corporate service and other joint stakeholder initiatives and actions needed outside of but complementary to the planning system supported by a consultancy budget.

The Subcommittee participated in a comprehensive debate on the matter which, in summary, encompassed the following issues: -

- Policy E CC SP2 Energy and Climate Change Mitigation – a question was asked with regard to what was decentralised energy and a response was given by the Planning Policy Team Leader that it was, in essence, stand alone schemes, e.g. a factory powered independently of the national electricity grid or could be powered by private wire from a biomass scheme generating energy. It was suggested that other options to be looked at could be combined heat and power plants and centralised energy. In addition, energy sources near to where people lived should not be overlooked.
- The Planning Policy Team Leader advised that through the Future Homes Standards, the Government had already launched a better energy performance target and the building regulations regime was being changed. The building industry needed to be pushed forward collectively. However, the downside of Government intervention was that it would restrict the ability of local authorities to set their own standards.
- Concern was expressed that the construction industry’s reaction to the changes in standards could have a negative and detrimental impact on the District’s housing targets which had been set and must be delivered. A Member response was made that it was important to work with developers as it was felt that they were keen to do the right thing as everyone wanted to get climate change under control.
- It was acknowledged that there were ethical developers working within the industry who were working on greater resilience housing and that, in due course, would become the norm. It was suggested and agreed by Members that a good start could be with the Council taking the lead when building up their own stock of new Council houses in the future (Members were reminded that that was in fact outside the purview of the Subcommittee).
- Comment was made around the viability of development in the future to ensure it was environmentally friendly as it was recognised that there was a fine balance

Planning Policy Sub-Committee - 15.10.19

because houses were needed in the District. In addition, developments had to be viable to ensure that infrastructure could be provided.

In the course of the debate it was acknowledged that this was a good report, but a concern was expressed that a number of other authorities were doing the same work and so a strategic approach should be taken to undertake studies and research to share costs. It was suggested that the Coastal West Sussex Strategic Planning Board should be involved as, in the past, that had provided cost effective and better quality responses to issues at a sub-regional level.

There was a general view from Members that time was of the essence and that there was a need to act urgently so, yes, a climate emergency should be declared.

The Group Head of Planning cautioned Members that what was before them was, at this stage, a scoping report and a route would have to be followed to implement changes.

Following debate, the Subcommittee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL ON 13 NOVEMBER 2019 – That

- (1) A climate emergency be agreed by the Environment & Leisure Working Group and declared by the Council;
- (2) Should a climate emergency be declared, officers to investigate the scope of evidence necessary to test the feasibility and viability of achieving higher standards of sustainable design and adopting a zero-carbon target by 2030 where achievable; and
- (3) Following consideration of this evidence and testing, officers to prepare a review of the development management policies in the Local Plan or a Supplementary Planning Document.

13. PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION SUITABLE FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Planning Policy Team Leader presented this report which considered the representations made following a four week consultation on the Council's proposed draft guidance for the provision of Accommodation for Older People and People with Disability. Recommendations were proposed to enable adoption of the guidance as a material consideration for Development Management purposes and an amended recommendation was circulated at the meeting to recommend to Full Council for approval at its meeting on 13 November 2019.

The Subcommittee was directed to Section 1 of the report which summarised and addressed the issues raised by Barton Wilmore and the Home Builders Federation. A clear need for this guidance had been included in the Local Plan evidence base and

there was also a recognition that there had been a policy change at national level – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had changed and that was a material consideration. The proposed guidance should clarify its status as guidance but not a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It would be used as a starting point to negotiate with developers, subject to viability, the types of housing and accessibility levels (based on the Optional Technical Standards) that should be considered to meet the needs of the elderly population, just as the mix and tenure of housing (e.g. adopted Policy H DM1 Housing Mix) would be negotiated on a case by case basis at application stage, taking into account viability.

Members supported the need for the guidance, and it was suggested that it be included in the Local Plan review in the future for consideration as a Supplementary Planning Document (SDP).

In the course of general discussion on the matter, Members supported the principle of the guidance and saw it as a starting point and, whilst mindful of the viability and feasibility issues, felt that there should be built in better design standards for wheelchair accessibility. There needed to be liaison on the Design Guide to ensure that best practice for provision for wheelchair use was addressed for smaller schemes (below 11 units). It was suggested that putting electrical sockets at wheelchair accessible height could actually save costs and dovetail with measures to increase flood resilience. This was just one example of good practice which could actually assist with viability. Comment was also made that bungalows should be supported for larger schemes.

Members were advised that the Design Guide would be considered in detail at a future meeting of the Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL ON 13 NOVEMBER 2019 – That

- (1) The proposed guidance for the provision of Accommodation Suitable for Older Persons and People with Disabilities is treated as a guide (i.e. not as Supplementary Planning Document) to provide a material consideration in respect of the determination of all relevant planning applications: and
- (2) The proposed guidance is clearly set out as a starting point to inform development management negotiations, does not impose rigid requirements and is subject to viability.

#### 14. OPEN SPACE PLAYING PITCHES AND BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES SPD

The Subcommittee received a report from the Planning Policy Team Leader which informed Members of representations made and proposed responses following a four week consultation on a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Open Space, Playing Pitches and Built Sports Facilities. A recommendation to Full Council

Planning Policy Sub-Committee - 15.10.19

on 15 January 2020 sought adoption of the SPD as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.

In presenting the report, the Planning Policy Team Leader highlighted paragraph 1.10 and confirmed that it was proposed that the SPD should be adopted but that clarification would need to be added regarding the Fields In Trust (FIT) standard quanta and ancillary facilities within the Sport England calculator which would be maintained as a material consideration but, subject to viability and feasibility. This was due to the untested additional cost implication which had not been specifically viability tested or examined through the Local Plan.

Following Member comment relating to the Butlins LDO (Local Development Order) and S106 contributions, the Subcommittee

#### RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL ON 15 JANUARY 2020

That, following publication of the Supplementary Planning Document for 4 weeks, together with the statement of representations and Arun's proposed response, and subject to the proposed changes detailed in the report and any further minor changes made by the Group Head of Planning in consultation with the Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Open Space, Playing Pitches and Built Sports Facilities SPD be adopted.

#### 15. PARKING STANDARDS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Subcommittee received a report from the Planning Policy Team Leader which informed Members of representations made and proposed responses following a four week consultation on a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Parking Standards. A recommendation to Full Council on 15 January 2020 sought adoption of the SPD as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.

In presenting the report, the Planning Policy Team Leader highlighted that this SPD was broadly consistent with West Sussex County Council's published "Guidance on Parking at New Developments 2019" but that it did make several departures to reflect the Arun position, local circumstances, e.g. incorporating electrical vehicle charging points in line with Arun's evidence based approach (i.e. Arun Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure Study November 2017), and to increase the usability of the document.

In discussing the matter, the Group Head of Planning gave advice on the definition of a parking space as a query was raised as to how a garage would only count at 0.5 of a space compared to 1.0 space for a car port or parking space. It was explained that that was meant to apply to larger schemes and to only count as 0.5 in such instances against the parking standard required by proposed overall dwelling numbers – that would ensure adequate provision was provided for parking, via either additional driveway or parking spaces or on street parking (and was necessary because of the tendency for garages to be used for storage/domestic purposes). For individual dwellings a common sense approach would be applied.

A further query was raised with regard to the operation of the escalator for electrical charging points and would it not be better to increase the percentage annually rather than every 5 years. The Group Head of Planning explained the 5 yearly increment would provide Development Management and developers with more certainty, which would make implementation easier.

Following further comment, the Subcommittee

#### RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL ON 15 JANUARY 2020

That, following publication of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for 4 weeks, together with the statement of representations and Arun's proposed response, and subject to the proposed changes detailed in the report and any further minor changes made by the Group Head of Planning, in consultation with the Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Parking Standards SPD be adopted.

#### 16. HOUSING DELIVERY TEST - ACTION PLAN

In February 2019 the Government published the November 2018 Housing Delivery Test (HDT) result for Arun which was 91%. This meant that the Council should prepare an Action Plan aimed at boosting housing delivery. By way of this report, the Planning Policy Team Leader presented a draft Action Plan for Members' consideration which, if approved, would be required to be published on the Council's website.

The Action Plan set out the HDT methodology and the context for Arun's performance at 91%, including some of the barriers to delivery and included perceived solutions. It also set out the risks arising from further under-delivery in terms of the 5 years housing land supply and the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out at paragraph 11.d of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

Whilst being broadly in favour of the Action Plan, Members concentrated much of their debate around paragraph 1.7 of the report which proposed investigation into whether the Council should invite applications from landowners/developers on 'deliverable' HELAA (Housing Employment Land Availability Assessment) sites in order to help boost housing delivery. Serious concerns were expressed that the sites that might come forward would be unsuitable e.g. outside the built-up area boundary and that the sustainability assessment had not yet been completed with regard to HELAA sites within climate change flood contours. The Group Head of Planning advised the Subcommittee that, although sites might come forward, they still had to go through the planning process and would not be automatically approved. Work was currently being undertaken to update the HELAA and it was due to be presented to the December meeting.

Further Member comments were made around sustainability; low carbon developments; impacts on the Local Plan; need to address the current 5-year shortfall; government housing requirements. The Group Head of Planning explained that there

Planning Policy Sub-Committee - 15.10.19

was already a shortfall on the 5 year housing supply which triggered the presumption in favour of development. There was concern about what infrastructure delays were hampering development – these appeared to be big schemes such as the A29 and, also, Southern Water applying for licensing restrictions. The impact of delays to the housing trajectory and developing HELAA sites to compensate would mean that some delayed schemes would be pushed beyond the current plan period and would then be a matter for the next plan review.

As it was proposed and duly seconded that the “question be now put” the Subcommittee

**RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL ON 13 NOVEMBER 2019**

That, subject to any further minor changes made by the Group Head of Planning, in consultation with the Chairman and the Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Action Plan be approved as a technical document for publication on the Council’s web site.

(The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm)