

# **APPENDIX L**

## **WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE - 20TH MAY 2008**

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**Title:**

**HINDHEAD CONCEPT PLAN**

[Wards Affected: All]

[Portfolio Holder for Planning: Cllr B A Ellis]

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**Summary and purpose:**

The Hindhead Together Joint Advisory Committee has produced a Concept Plan for Hindhead. This report explains the need for a Concept Plan, how it has been produced, the proposals and its status.

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**Environmental implications:**

An important environmental implication of the Concept Plan is that it proposes new development, which may be within 400m of the Wealden Heaths II Special Protection Area (SPA)– the Devil's Punch Bowl. This means that Natural England will be seeking mitigation measures to compensate for the effect of additional population on the SPA.

**Social / community implications:**

The implementation of the Concept Plan could result in a major improvement of the appearance of Hindhead, and a regeneration of the area.

**E-Government implications:**

There are no e-government implications.

**Resource and legal implications:**

The Hindhead Together Joint Advisory Committee is made up of all the main agencies concerned with the future of Hindhead, and is a very significant organisation. The legal implications relate to the status of the document and to the Section 106 Agreements that are likely to arise, both of which are explained in the report.

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**The need for a Concept Plan**

1. The construction of the A3 Tunnel is bringing about pressure for change in Hindhead. There have already been proposals for new development. In response to this, the Borough Council produced an Interim Planning Statement in June 2007. The purpose of this Statement was to explain to

potential developers that applications with access onto the A3 would probably remain premature while it remained a trunk road, and would be likely to be premature until further guidance was published by the Borough Council.

2. There was a commitment to provide a further document because of the likely pressure for change. The preferred approach was to publish a Concept Statement. This was mainly because it would be very concise and only take about 4 months to produce, compared to a Supplementary Planning Document or an Area Action Plan, which could take about 18 months.
3. A Concept Statement was therefore commissioned by the Hindhead Together Joint Advisory Committee. The Committee comprises the main stakeholders concerned with the future of Hindhead namely:

Surrey County Council;  
The National Trust;  
Waverley Borough Council;  
Haslemere Town Council;  
Surrey Hills Partnership;  
SEEDA;  
Highway Agency;  
Haslemere Chamber of Trade and Commerce;  
Natural England;  
East Hampshire District Council.

### **What is a Concept Statement?**

4. Concept Statements were developed by the Countryside Agency and were defined as

“A simple clear expression of the kind of place that new development should create. It is a brief explanation of how development on that site should contribute to the local authority’s vision. Concept Statements explain how the policies and objectives of the.....Local Development Document should apply to each specific site, in order to deliver the best possible economic, social and environmental benefits.”

5. The first part of a Concept Statement deals with the assets of a site or area, (See the Hindhead Concept Statement Annexe 1.). Then there follows the principles for regeneration and ideas for how the area might be developed. There is usually a diagram which is an illustrative arrangement of buildings and spaces, and is not fixed as the details will change as more work is carried out.

### **The Hindhead Concept Statement**

6. The Hindhead Concept Statement focuses on the London Road and is set out in Annexe 1. Some points to note are that despite the rather outworn appearance of the area, the Concept Statement identifies a number of assets, especially the location between London and Portsmouth and the exceptional

countryside. The principles for regeneration proposes a policy and design guidelines such as mixed uses, a village High Street atmosphere, pedestrian dominance, and protection of the Special Protection Areas.

7. The development diagram provides a design for the layout of the London Road area. The key shows the elements of the design. This part of the Concept Statement is for illustrative purposes only, to give an idea of how the design of the area might be approached. For instance, London road could be remodelled and a new space could be created on the north side of London Road. The National Trust cafe could be expanded, the Punch Bowl Hotel and Barons would remain and Undershaw could be restored. These suggestions do not form part of the informative body of the Statement, which is comprised of the assets and principles.

### **The consultation on the Concept Statement**

8. The consultation began with a workshop at the Punch Bowl Hotel for the main stakeholders and landowners on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008. The task was to identify the assets of the area and the principles for regeneration. The workshop was well attended and the outcome formed the basis of the assets and principles included in the Concept Statement.
9. Once the draft Concept Statement was drawn up, further consultation was held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of March at the Punch Bowl Hotel by means of a manned exhibition. Over 350 people attended, and of these, 75% expressed their support for the Concept Statement. Some of the main points that came up in discussions were that the older buildings with character in the London Road area should be retained and that there should be a quality village feel to the design of new buildings, allowing a heart to develop in the village. Leisure activities and the natural beauty of the area were also important to people.
10. The exhibition was also displayed in Haslemere Town Hall and St Alban's Church Beacon Hill. There have also been three meetings with the landowners.

### **The status of the Concept Statement**

11. The Concept Statement will not have a statutory status, as it is not part of the proposed Local Development Framework. However, the document will become the policy of the Council if it is accepted and therefore will be a material consideration when planning applications are considered.

### **The next steps**

12. The implementation of the Concept Statement will depend on the initiative of developers and of the landowners in the London Road area in making planning applications. It will be necessary to give Natural England assurance that mitigation measures for access management and habitat management will be funded from Section 106 agreements. This is because it is likely that

there will be new housing which will bring additional population that will have a significant effect on rare and vulnerable heathland birds.

13. Longer term, there may be a need for an Area Action Plan or a Supplementary Planning Document to carry out the detailed design of the shaping of the London Road area.

### **Conclusion**

14. The Concept Statement has proved to be a successful tool for public participation; the document is concise and has been produced very quickly. It will meet the need for planning guidance by landowners and developers.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the assets and principles in the Concept Statement produced by the Hindhead Together Joint Advisory Committee, be adopted as the planning policy of the Council for the London Road area of Hindhead for the purposes of development control.

[For the avoidance of doubt, the diagram illustrating the arrangements of building and spaces is not included as part of the Council's policy.]

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### **Background Papers (CSP)**

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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