

APPENDIX G

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 02/07/2013

Title:

GODALMING AND CRANLEIGH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA APPLICATIONS

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Bryn Morgan]

**[Wards Affected: Godalming Binscombe, Godalming Central & Ockford,
Godalming Charterhouse, Godalming Farncombe & Catteshall, Godalming
Holloway, Shamley Green and Cranleigh North, Cranleigh East, Cranleigh West
and Alfold, Cranleigh Rural and Ellens Green]**

Summary and purpose:

Godalming Town Council and Cranleigh Parish Council are respectively preparing neighbourhood development plans (known as neighbourhood plans). Under the neighbourhood planning legislation the first stage of the process is for each town/parish council to apply to Waverley for the Borough Council to agree the neighbourhood area that their neighbourhood plan should cover. This report considers the respective neighbourhood area applications.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The neighbourhood area applications do not have a direct relationship with the corporate priorities. However, neighbourhood plans must be in line with policies in the review of the Waverley's Local Plan. The review of the Local Plan will set out policies for development in accordance with all the corporate priorities.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial and resource implications arising from the neighbourhood area applications. If the neighbourhood areas are designated then Waverley Borough Council can claim for Government grant funding of £5,000 for each neighbourhood plan.

However, there will be financial and resource implications for the Council in meeting their other duties under the neighbourhood planning legislation. These are to advise and assist town and parish councils in preparing their neighbourhood plans, holding the examination and arranging a referendum. Both Farnham and Haslemere Town Councils have already had neighbourhood area applications for their respective neighbourhood plans designated. Therefore, with Godalming and Cranleigh starting work on their neighbourhood plans, neighbourhood plans will cover all the Borough four main settlements.

There will be a further opportunity for the Council to claim for funding to help meet the costs. £5,000 grant funding can be claimed when the Council publicises the neighbourhood plan prior to examination and then another £20,000 grant funding can be claimed once the examination is successfully completed and the examiner recommends that the neighbourhood plan can proceed to the referendum stage.

Legal Implications:

The Council is required to determine the neighbourhood area applications in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 One of the neighbourhood planning initiatives introduced by the Localism Act 2011 is for local communities to prepare a neighbourhood plan. This allows them to shape the future of their own communities by planning where and what type of new development will take place in their local areas and what it should look like. A neighbourhood plan can include allocations for development such as housing and employment as well as policies for managing specific types of development. Once it is approved and comes into force it will take precedence over the non strategic policies in the local plan for making decisions on planning applications for that neighbourhood.
- 1.2 Where an area is covered by a town or parish council, a neighbourhood plan for that area can only be prepared by that town or parish council.
- 1.3 Certain procedures and requirements have to be carried out when preparing neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood plans must be in line with Waverley's Local Plan. Therefore, a neighbourhood plan cannot plan for less development in an area than that proposed in the local plan and therefore must plan for an equal or greater level of growth.
- 1.4 However, it is up to the town or parish council to decide the scope of their neighbourhood plans. Where a neighbourhood plan does not make allocations or set out policies to manage specific development, then this responsibility will fall to the Borough local plan.
- 1.5 Under the legislation the first stage of preparing a neighbourhood plan is for the town or parish council to apply to Waverley Borough Council to designate the neighbourhood area that they propose their neighbourhood plan should cover. Once it has been agreed then the neighbourhood plan can be prepared.
- 1.6 Godalming Town Council and Cranleigh Parish Council have each resolved to prepare a neighbourhood plan for their individual communities and therefore have applied to Waverley for the Borough Council to agree the neighbourhood areas they wish their respective plans to cover. In both cases the intention is for the neighbourhood plan to cover the entire area that the respective parishes cover. The neighbourhood area applications from Godalming Town Council and Cranleigh Parish Council are attached as Annexes 1 and 2 respectively.

2.0 Consultation

2.1 Before Waverley Borough Council can determine the neighbourhood area applications it is required under the neighbourhood planning regulations to consult on the application proposals for 6 weeks to invite comments on the proposed areas and consider the responses made.

2.2 Therefore, for each neighbourhood area application the Council:

- advertised the area application on its website;
- publicised it in the Surrey Advertiser Newspaper Series (12th April for the Godalming area application and 26th April for the Cranleigh area application); and
- wrote to statutory consultees, local residents associations, chambers of commerce, and adjoining district and parish councils to inform them that they can comment on the area application proposals.

2.3 The dates of the public consultations on the neighbourhood area applications were:

- Godalming Area Application 12th April to 24th May 2013
- Cranleigh Area Application 26th April to 7th June 2013

3.0 Consideration of an Area Application

3.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 Waverley Borough Council can only consider whether the area for which the neighbourhood area application is made is appropriate for the purposes of preparing a neighbourhood development plan. The legislation states that when determining an area application the Council must have regard to:

- the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area; and
- the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.

3.2 The Council can also refuse to consider the application if another area application has already been made to designate the area and that application has yet to be decided.

4.0 Godalming Neighbourhood Area Application

4.1 As a result of the consultation two letters supporting the neighbourhood area application were received from Frith Hill Residents' Association and Witley Parish Council.

4.2 As a borough council adjoining Godalming, Guildford Borough Council has no comments to make on the area application. However, it has requested that it and the parish councils within Guildford Borough that adjoin Godalming Town are kept informed and engaged with the work on the neighbourhood plan, particularly on cross boundary issues.

- 4.3 Natural England has no comments to add in respect of the consultation as the application relates solely to the area the Godalming Neighbourhood Plan is to cover.
- 4.4 As the area application from Godalming Town Council meets the requirements of the legislation and there are no representations that demonstrate that the area applied for is not appropriate for the purposes of a neighbourhood plan for Godalming, it is recommended that Waverley Borough Council approves the area application.

5.0 Cranleigh Neighbourhood Area Application

- 5.1 As a result of the consultation there have been two representations on the neighbourhood area application as follows.
- 5.2 As a borough council adjoining Cranleigh, Guildford Borough Council has no comments to make on the area application. However, it has requested that it and the parish councils within Guildford Borough that adjoin Cranleigh parish are kept informed and engaged with the work on the neighbourhood plan, particularly on cross boundary issues, as it goes forward.
- 5.3 Natural England has offered some general advice which may be of use in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan. However, this advice includes advice about protected landscapes, protected species and opportunities for enhancing the natural environment. It does not comment on the area application itself.
- 5.4 As the area application from Cranleigh Parish Council meets the requirements of the legislation and there are no representations that demonstrate that the area applied for is not appropriate for the purposes of a neighbourhood plan, it is recommended that Waverley Borough Council approves the area application.

Recommendation

That the Executive recommends to the Council that:

1. the neighbourhood area application from Godalming Town Council for the purposes of the Godalming Neighbourhood Plan be approved; and
2. the neighbourhood area application from Cranleigh Parish Council for the purposes of the Cranleigh Neighbourhood Plan be approved.

Background Papers

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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