

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 JUNE 2016

There were a number of specific requests made by the Committee for parts of the Draft Plan to be amended or the wording of paragraphs to be reviewed, and these relate to the following areas:-

1. Policy AHN3: Housing Types and Size - to include a definition of older people;
2. Policy TD1: Townscape and Design - to check the phrasing of paragraph 3 relating to town and village design statements and neighbourhood plans to ensure that it clearly demonstrates the Council's support for both the preparation of the plans and their delivery;
3. Ensure that the comments on page 9 relating to the Dunsfold Aerodrome site and the need for appropriate transport mitigation are consistent within Section 18;
4. Section 18: Strategic Sites – officers to check the calculation of numbers of homes that would be forthcoming from the sites in this section.
5. Paragraph 6.15: Check the reference to the amount of housing that can potentially be delivered between 2016 and 2021.
6. Review the Housing Trajectory (Appendix C), particularly in terms of the development likely to come forward early in the Plan period.

More generally, the Committee raised the following points which it was agreed would merit consideration by the Executive:-

1. to include a paragraph in the Spatial Strategy relating to the Housing Market Assessment that explains why it is not possible to match the distribution of homes across the Borough with the housing need, especially in terms of affordable housing;
2. concern about the air quality in certain traffic hot spots in the Borough and members requested that the Plan is consistent with the most up to date evidence, including the 2014 report produced by Public Health England;
3. the request for an up-to-date Infrastructure Delivery Plan to be provided because most of the concerns raised at the meeting related to infrastructure and mitigation measures. Officers were in the process of pulling together an updated schedule of responses from Infrastructure Providers which would be shared with members. Members also requested that specific contact be made with those providers who are not currently able to meet their targets, or where there are concerns about capacity, such as Thames Water and the South East Ambulance Services; Members also asked for a review of the information on broadband provision and the comments from the rail operators about their infrastructure requirements;
4. the need to find infill sites in rural areas to provide a limited number of affordable homes, especially when it is only possible to deliver smaller developments in these areas which would be below the threshold where affordable housing is normally required;

5. the plan to expand on some of the more strategic infrastructure measures that are outside of the Borough/cross-boundary but which are likely to impact on the feasibility of our mitigation measures and ability to deliver developments;
6. inclusion of a reference to highway safety implications in the Plan especially with regard to the cumulative impact of safety issues to be addressed, in addition to those considered individually in the planning application process. Officers undertook to discuss this further with colleagues at Surrey County Council;
7. ensure that the Plan makes appropriate references to the NPPF requirement to deliver good design;
8. add a reference to the need for development proposals at Dunsfold Aerodrome to take account of the potential impact on Cranleigh; and
9. the need for a more specific reference to the outstanding issues regarding the A3 and the implications of improvements not coming forward.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS FROM THE RECONVENED JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4 JULY 2016

The Committee received a brief summary introduction to the Strategic Highways Assessment from William Bryans of Surrey County Council, and to the Stage 3 and Stage 4 Mott MacDonald reports from Sean Finney.

Members acknowledged that the reports were very comprehensive but recognised that the strategic model was borough-wide and did not analyse to the level of detail necessary to recognise the potential for traffic conditions to worsen at specific key junctions. Some of this more detailed work has been picked up by Mott MacDonald. Councillors were also reassured that developers and their consultants would have a responsibility to consider the impacts of developments on adjacent transport routes and key junctions as part of their detailed planning application submissions, and if there was shown to be a likely impact, proposals to address the impact would need to be included. Members also noted that the mitigation measures were aimed at helping the cross-flow of traffic, particularly inter-borough traffic issues around Guildford and the A3, and did not focus enough on localised areas of concern.

Concern was expressed about paragraph 18.16 in the Draft Plan and the statement that 'with appropriate mitigation, 2,600 homes could be substantially delivered sustainably at Dunsfold Aerodrome within the plan period up to 2032'. Members did not consider that there was currently sufficient evidence in the reports to support this statement. It was suggested that the Plan needs to recognise that the acceptability of development at Dunsfold Aerodrome was subject to resolving outstanding issues regarding mitigation, particularly highways,

The point was raised again that infrastructure improvements needed to be in place before the commencement of house-building. For those developments where planning permission had already been granted, officers reassured members that, where necessary, Section 106 contributions have been sought to address impacts of development on the local road network.

Members agreed that a strategic view was needed for areas such as Cranleigh where there was a potential cumulative impact from a number of developments coming forward so that mitigation measures could be informed. It was suggested by a member that it was an inevitable consequence of growth that roads would get more congested without highway improvements and mitigation measures in place, and that only the provision of alternative transport methods or reduced dependence on the car would reduce the impact of this.

There was a comment about the impact of traffic on rural roads not currently being picked up as part of the mitigation measures. Members also raised the issue of HGV movements, especially in the proximity of Dunsfold because of the proposed industrial use on the site, and sought assurances that the full impact of HGVs on local roads would be taken into account. Again, this was cited by officers as one of the considerations being asked of from the developer at detailed planning stage to identify how trips would be routed in the locality.

There was a comment about the impact of the re-routing of longer trips when the Hindhead Tunnel is closed.

There was a comment that in Farnham, the mitigation currently identified is focused on the A31 and does not cover surrounding roads.

Some of the specific locations Members identified as needing particular recognition in the plan include:-

- i. improved signal sequencing at Nanhurst Crossroads, Cranleigh;
- ii. single track canal bridge at Elmbridge Road, Cranleigh;
- iii. improvements at the mini-roundabout on the A281 at Bramley;
- iv. implications of major developments in adjoining districts, including the impact of the Eco-Town at Whitehill/Bordon, along with other developments in Hart and Rushmoor, on Wrecclesham and Farnham;
- v. promotion of the Wrecclesham Relief Road, in conjunction with Hampshire County Council, currently omitted;
- vi. Upper Hale Road, Farnham and the lack of mitigation measures to deal with traffic pressures from the M3.