

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 1 DECEMBER 2015

Title:

WAVERLEY BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN – EMERGING SPATIAL STRATEGY

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Brian Adams]

[Wards Affected: All]

Summary and purpose:

This report sets out an emerging spatial strategy for the new Local Plan Part 1.

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

The Waverley Borough Local Plan and its policies will have an important role in supporting and delivering Corporate Priorities, including protecting the environment and delivering affordable housing.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this progress report. Adequate budget is available to support any costs associated with preparation of the Plan.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal issues arising specifically from this report. When the revised local plan is submitted for examination it will be necessary to ensure that it meets the legal tests of soundness, including the 'Duty to Co-operate'.

The Council has already consulted on potential housing scenarios under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012. It is intended that the next step would be to publish a full proposed submission version of the plan under Regulation 19 for formal representations to be made on the plan by the local community and other interests. The Council cannot completely discount the need for further Regulation 18 consultation, for example were the final spatial strategy to be significantly different to any of the scenarios consulted on last year.

1. Background

- 1.1 On 3 March 2015, the Executive received an update report on progress with the local plan. This included feedback on the outcome from the consultation on housing scenarios. This revealed a high level of support for a mixed use development at the Dunsfold Aerodrome site. However, it was also recognised that more work was needed, particularly in relation to transport matters, before a final decision could be made on the overall strategy and whether this includes housing at Dunsfold Aerodrome.

- 1.2 Since March officers have been working to complete the evidence necessary to support the preparation of the Local Plan. In September, the Executive received a further progress report and agreed a provisional timetable for the Local Plan. The timetable is for the draft Plan ready for formal Publication in April 2016 and Submission for examination in July 2016. Part of the work leading to completion of the plan was for the Council to agree the preferred spatial strategy and strategic allocations in November 2015 and to follow this with further testing of the Plan and completion of the evidence base.

2. The emerging spatial strategy

- 2.1 The focus of the strategy set out in Annexe 1 is the housing requirement and the approach to the distribution of new homes. It identifies the overall need of 519 homes per annum set out in the recently published SHMA. It also provides the latest position on potential housing supply from the current work to update the Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 2.2 Over the whole plan period from 2013 to 2032 it identifies a shortfall of around 6,000 homes between what can be achieved from commitments (planning permissions etc.) as well as new sites likely to come forward within settlements, and the overall housing requirement. Based on emerging evidence, it re-enforces the Executive's current view that that some development at Dunsfold Aerodrome may offer the best prospect of meeting needs. At this stage the draft strategy indicates provision of 1,800 homes at Dunsfold Aerodrome, but stresses that the final decision on whether to include Dunsfold Aerodrome in the plan is still subject to the outcome of the transport assessment and the sustainability appraisal.
- 2.3 The accompanying report also acknowledges in principle the outcome of the Green Belt review with the proviso that further discussions with the affected Parish and Town Councils take place in respect of the detail of the boundaries.
- 2.4 Given current uncertainties around development in the latter part of the plan period (post 10 years), discussions are taking place with representatives from the Department of Communities and Local Government to identify how best this should be addressed, including the potential for a shorter timescale of 10 years.

3. Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.1 The Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee received this report at its meeting on 16 November, to which all members of the Council were invited to attend. The Committee recognised the difficulties and constraints imposed on the Council drawing up the Local Plan and a summary of its observations to the Executive are below:
- Further evidence is needed to ensure a robust strategy to justify specific figures for certain settlements. If the evidence is not sufficient the strategy needs to change;

- Priority should be given to direct development away from mitigation areas and thus avoid the need for mitigation at all;
- The majority of consultee support was for Dunsfold in the southeast of the borough but housing need is greater in Farnham, Godalming and other areas of the borough. Focus needs to be given to match future housing with regional demand within the borough;
- Any development at Dunsfold needs to be large enough to sustain a self-contained village;
- Account should be taken of the ability to identify infrastructure needs including schools, sewerage etc required to support housing delivery
- Concern about the ability to deliver SANGS in the planned period
- A block is needed on green site developments. Greater attention should be given to developing the largest brownfield site in the borough – Dunsfold, and thus preserving the distinctive character of the borough’s settlements;
- Detailed transport assessments are needed throughout the borough;
- More consideration needs to be given to the impact on the larger town/village of Farnham and Cranleigh. Air Quality is an issue in Farnham and the development of Dunsfold would significantly impact on Cranleigh and both need to be assessed further;
- The single most important issue for future housing in Waverley is affordable housing and this is not addressed sufficiently in the draft strategy;
- Further account should be taken of the previous Inspector’s comments and issues raised in his pre-examination note;
- It would be more realistic to bring the Plan back to 10 years instead of 20 years and proceed with 591 houses over this period;
- There is a real need to get on with the Local Plan as Neighbourhood Plans cannot be completed until it is in place.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive receives any observations and suggestions to shape the emerging spatial strategy from the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee and gives approval to the strategy at Annexe 1.

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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