

**23 APRIL 2018**

Minutes of a meeting of the **PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer at 10.00 am when there were present:

Councillors

Mrs S Arnold (Chairman)

Mrs A Fitch-Tillett	N Pearce
Ms V Gay	Ms M Prior
Mrs A Green	S Shaw
Mrs P Grove-Jones	Mrs V Uprichard
Ms K Ward	

Observers:

N Dixon  
J Rest

Officers

Mr M Ashwell – Planning Policy Manager  
Mr I Withington – Planning Policy Team Leader  
Mr S Harrison – Planning Policy Officer  
Mrs J Rhymes – Planning Policy Officer

**73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Punchard and R Reynolds.

**74. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None.

**75. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2018 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment, and signed by the Chairman.

Minute 72

Fourth paragraph, second sentence of discussion under “Hoveton” to read “However, he considered that it would be a good idea to reserve land for the school ...” (delete “not”)

**76. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There was one item of urgent business relating to consultation on the Revised NPPF and Reform of Developer Contributions. This matter was urgent as the closing date for consultation responses was 10 May 2018, prior to the next meeting of the Working Party.

**77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**78. UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

All updates were contained in the reports.

**79. LOCAL PLAN – IDENTIFICATION OF PROVISIONAL HOUSING SITES IN BLAKENEY, BRISTON AND FAKENHAM FOR INCLUSION WITHIN THE EMERGING FIRST DRAFT LOCAL PLAN. (CONSULTATION VERSION)**

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the proposals put forward were provisional preferred options for residential development. However, this was an iterative process and these sites could come forward for other uses later in the process. He explained the process, methodology and criteria for selection of the provisional preferred sites for consultation.

The Working Party discussed the Officers' recommendations.

Blakeney

The Planning Policy Officer (SH) presented the provisional preferred and non-preferred sites in Blakeney.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Arnold, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett and

**RESOLVED**

**That site BLA04/A be identified as the provisional preferred site for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan.**

Briston

The Planning Policy Officer (SH) presented the provisional preferred and non-preferred sites in Briston. He explained that consideration would be given as to how development of the recommended sites BRI01 and BRI02 could accommodate the school parking issues. However, further work was required to ascertain availability and deliverability of these sites.

The Chairman questioned the number of dwellings which could be accommodated if both sites were taken forward.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that if both sites were considered suitable and they delivered more than 50 dwellings, it would give flexibility and relieve pressure elsewhere. He recommended that both sites were put forward for consultation.

Councillor Ms M Prior requested clarification of the school parking issue.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the policy wording in the existing allocation of BRI02 required agreement on measures to improve school parking.

In response to a question by Councillor Ms K Ward regarding the availability of BRI01 and BRI02, the Planning Policy Manager stated that absolute clarity was needed as to availability and deliverability before the sites went out for consultation.

Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett referred to the Highway Authority's concerns regarding sites on Norwich Road and asked if it had concerns regarding BRI02.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Highway Authority's concerns related to footway provision. Both BRI01 and BRI02 had good pedestrian and cycle facilities.

Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones expressed concern that the school land could be enclosed if BRI02/A were developed.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that a scheme which would land-lock the school was not being promoted. As the school was on one of the largest primary school sites in the District it was unlikely to require land beyond its existing boundaries.

Councillor Ms V Gay asked if the lack of a footway was an important criteria.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that in Officers' view it was important factor. In the case of the sites where the Highway Authority had objected, the carriageway was narrow and providing a footway to key services would be a major engineering issue. In addition, it would be necessary to cross a busy road to access the key services.

Councillor Gay asked why small self-build sites were not being allocated at this time.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that site size had been constrained early in the process. Hundreds of small sites had been put forward and those which would accommodate less than 10 dwellings had been ruled out as they would not deliver affordable housing. However, the Government was consulting on this issue as it was not helpful to small builders and self-builders. It would be reasonable for the Working Party to express its support for small sites.

Councillor Gay considered that small builders should be supported and self-building encouraged as it could promote good design in the District.

Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones asked if BRI03 could be considered.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that BRI03 would not deliver sufficient dwellings in the event that BRI01 and BRI02 were not available. However, it could be included if the Council agreed to identify small sites.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones, seconded by Councillor Mrs V Uprichard and

## **RESOLVED**

**That BRI01 and BRI02 be identified as the provisional preferred sites for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan, and that BRI03 be included if small sites are brought forward.**

## Fakenham

The Planning Officer (JR) presented the provisional preferred and non-preferred sites in Fakenham. She explained that further information was awaited on the availability of land to provide a roundabout and access to the preferred site and if not available, further discussions with the Highway Authority would be necessary as to means of access.

Councillor J Rest expressed concern that the proposal would result in a total of four roundabouts on a short stretch of road. He also questioned the access to site F10.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Highway Authority had provided drawings which demonstrated that highway access and a footpath could be accommodated to access F10. There was ongoing discussion on this matter, but the site would deliver a relatively modest number of dwellings and provide public open space to allow access to the river. Further evidence would be required to show that the landowner was able to provide access.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Arnold and

### **RESOLVED**

**That sites FO1/B, FO3 and F10 be identified as the provisional preferred sites for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan.**

## Hoveton

The Planning Officer (SH) updated the Working Party on discussions which had been held with the landowner of HV01 and HV06 following the previous meeting. He stated that the provisional preferred option remained HV01.

Councillor N Dixon considered that although there were no plans at present to relocate the primary school, it was in need of work to make it fit for the future and consideration should be given to the possibility of co-location.

Councillor Dixon considered that the density which would be required to deliver 130 homes on HV01 would be out of keeping with the character of the Persimmon development and that other sites should be considered. There were questions over the deliverability of HV01.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the density proposed for HV01 was broadly similar to that of the Persimmon site, when discounting the 2 hectares of open space provided on that site. The northern boundary of HV01 could be extended if necessary. Officers considered that there was sufficient certainty and merit to allocate HV01.

Councillor Dixon considered that HV01 would be capable of accommodating land for a playing field and the school. In addition to 130 dwellings, if the boundary could be moved northwards and requested that the proposed allocation be varied to take this into account.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Alan Presslee, agent for the promoters of HV05, addressed the Working Party on the merits of HV05. He referred to a letter he had sent to the Planning Policy Manager and Members dated 19 April. He disputed the

comment in the appraisal that the site was “remote” as it was within walking distance of all facilities and considered that the sustainability credentials had been understated. He suggested that there were issues with the deliverability of HV01.

In response the Planning Officer explained that the reference to the site being “remote” was a typographical error as it was not the case.

Councillor Ms V Gay asked if HV05 should be discussed at this stage.

Councillor Dixon considered that it was inappropriate under the Working Party’s Terms of Reference to allow representations which promoted one site over another at this stage. He requested that the Working Party discount Mr Presslee’s comments as such representations would be made further along in the process.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the representations made would be repeated at a later stage. The Working Party’s Terms of Reference allowed public speaking and it was acceptable to hear the arguments made.

Councillor Dixon stated that he was opposed to the identification of another site as it was clear that HV01 was expected to accommodate the number of dwellings required.

Councillor Ms M Prior considered there was no reason to dismiss HV05 at this stage and there was uncertainty as to whether or not the landowner of HV01 would be willing to extend his site.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that he had discussed the matter with the agent for HV01 and understood that an extension could be accommodated, but this was subject to confirmation by the landowner.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that there was a risk in identifying additional provisional sites as it could give the landowner a stronger case for arguing for their inclusion at inspection stage if it was subsequently resolved not to allocate them. He suggested that consideration of reserve sites take place once the Working Party had considered all of the towns. He recommended that HV01 be identified as a provisional preferred site subject to a possible increase in size.

Councillor Ms M Prior proposed that site HV01 be identified as a provisional preferred site subject to possible extension and that consideration be given to possible reserve sites later in the process.

Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones proposed that HV01 be identified as a provisional preferred site subject to possible extension. There was no seconder.

**RESOLVED** by 4 votes to 2

**That site HV01 be identified as a provisional preferred site subject to possible extension and that consideration be given to possible reserve sites later in the process.**

## **80. REVISED NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND REFORM OF DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS CONSULTATION 2018**

The Planning Policy Manager reported that the Government had issued a consultation document on the revision of the NPPF and reform of Developer Contributions. The consultation period would expire on 10 May 2018.

The Planning Policy Manager outlined the key changes, many of which had already been subject to previous consultations but were now brought together in a revised NPPF, including:

- Local Plans to be based on “an appropriate strategy”.
- Requirement to review Local Plans every five years to ensure they remained current.
- New methodology for calculating housing need.
- Housing delivery test based on ratio of local incomes to house prices to try to drive down house prices.
- 20% buffer to be applied if 85% of baseline target is not delivered, with increases in subsequent years.
- Affordable housing threshold
- 20% of allocations to be small sites
- Consideration of housing to meet differing types of need.
- Entry level exceptions sites – low cost/starter homes to buy.
- Support for 5G and fibre broadband.

The Planning Policy Manager expressed concern that the housing calculations would increase the Council’s baseline housing target by 25%. Representations had been made previously and it was unlikely that the Government would change its stance. The Authority was delivering above 85% of its target but it was unfair to be judged by the failure of other authorities to deliver. There was a danger that pressure to develop would result in poor design.

The Chairman considered that the Authority should be pushing for good design.

Councillor Ms K Ward expressed concern that house price inflation and static salaries would result in a moving target upwards.

The Planning Policy Manager added that developers would argue that the Authority was not meeting the target. There would be three potential buffers for under-delivery.

Councillor N Dixon stated that the market determined how many dwellings were built, where they were built and the capacity to build them. The methodology appeared to contradict it.

The Chairman stated that a local developer had asked for an extension of deadlines because it was difficult to find construction workers.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the requirement for 20% of allocations to be on small sites related to the percentage of allocated sites and not the number of dwellings. The Authority would probably only need to allocate 5-6 small sites.

The Chairman stated that most of the small sites which had been allocated in the current plan had not come forward.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that “small sites” would be for no more than 10 dwellings. Most of the current allocations were for 15-20 dwellings and therefore too large.

Councillor Ms M Prior considered that the Authority should press for provision for the elderly or adaptable homes within suitable sites. She stated that mixed developments, rather than those which were exclusively for a particular type of occupation, built communities.

Councillor Mrs A Green considered that there should be more leniency towards giving people who were living in large dwellings the opportunity to build a smaller dwelling on their land.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that there was an issue with regard to the proposed entry level exceptions sites as to pricing of the dwellings and reluctance of landowners to sell land for social rented housing if they could sell for low cost market housing. There was also nothing to stop people buying a dwelling at low cost and selling it on quickly at full market value.

The Planning Policy Manager recommended that a response be sent to the Government reiterating the Authority’s previous concerns regarding the upward spiralling of housing numbers and the Council’s ability to address these higher numbers in relation to capacity, the ability to maintain a five-year housing land supply and resulting impact on public confidence in the Council’s policies. Whilst it was unlikely that the Government would change its stance, he considered that the argument should be repeated as to say nothing could be problematic in the future.

## **RESOLVED**

**That a response be sent to the Government reiterating the Authority’s previous concerns regarding the upward spiralling of housing numbers and the Council’s ability to address these higher numbers in relation to capacity, the ability to maintain a five-year housing land supply and resulting impact on public confidence in the Council’s policies.**

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm.

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CHAIRMAN