

21 MAY 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)
J Punchard (Vice-Chairman)

Mrs S Bütikofer
Mrs A Fitch-Tillett
Mrs A Green
Mrs P Grove-Jones

Ms M Prior
R Reynolds
S Shaw
Mrs V Uprichard

Observer:

J Rest

Four members of the public were present

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms V Gay and N Pearce.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman suggested that meetings of the Working Party commence at 9.30 am instead of 10.00 am on a temporary basis given the Working Party's increasing workload over the coming months.

RESOLVED

That meetings of the Working Party commence at 9.30 am on a temporary basis.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett declared that she knew the landowner of Cromer C07/2 and C22/1 and would not comment or vote on them.

7. UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the consultation on the revised NPPF had now closed and he would forward the Council's response to Members. He considered that it was unlikely that significant changes would be made to the NPPF as a result of the consultation.

8. LOCAL PLAN – IDENTIFICATION OF PROVISIONAL HOUSING SITES IN CROMER, HOLT, SHERINGHAM AND WELLS FOR INCLUSION WITHIN THE EMERGING FIRST DRAFT LOCAL PLAN. (CONSULTATION VERSION)

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the promoter of a site in Sheringham wished to speak in respect of a site in Sheringham. He advised the Working Party not to make a decision on the promoter's site at this meeting but there would be an opportunity to revisit some of the sites later in the process. He stated that the proposals being put forward at this stage 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.

The Planning Policy Team Leader explained the process, methodology and criteria for selection of the provisional preferred sites for consultation.

The Working Party discussed the Officers' recommendations.

Cromer

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

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the number of dwellings which could be accommodated on the recommended provisional preferred sites for Cromer fell short of the requirement in the overarching strategy. Whilst the towns should eventually deliver significant growth, there were difficult choices to make between housing and landscape. Officers were presenting preferred sites; however Members would need to consider if this balance had been appropriately struck or whether additional sites should be considered. He suggested that any sites which the Working Party considered might be suitable for allocation be brought back for reconsideration later in the process when all of the provisional preferred sites had been considered for all uses. If sufficient numbers could not be identified than it was likely that the agreed settlement hierarchy would need to be revisited.

The Chairman referred to the cricket ground site C26/1 which was not recommended and asked if the cricket ground was likely to close.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that lease on the land would shortly expire and the site had been put forward for housing. However, this was an important green space and it was not proposed to allocate the site for housing.

The Chairman considered that it would be sensible to build a primary school on site C30/1 if it became available in the future so that all school provision could be in one location, rather than on the western side of the town as suggested.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the suggested primary school would be in addition to the existing school and not a replacement. The Education Authority preferred to locate the school on C10/1 as there was no current provision on the western side of the town.

In answer to Members' questions regarding access and highway improvements in association with site C22/1, the Planning Policy Manager explained that it was necessary to ensure that access to the site did not prevent future development. The majority of the roundabout which would be required would be accommodated within the site, with major road realignment work which could act as a traffic calming measure. However, it was not clear if the landowner owned all the land which would be needed to deliver the road improvements.

Councillor Mrs S Bütikofer stated that C10/1 would be controversial as it would have a visual impact and was part of the coastal entrance to the town. The land was used for informal recreation. It fell within the parish of East Runton and was considered to be important in separating the village from Cromer. She asked if the sewage works had been taken into account.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that designations were a starting position and it was necessary to pay special regard to the AONB. The AONB was an important landscape consideration but it was a judgement. The entrance to Cromer was not particularly attractive at that point, with existing development giving a hard edge to the town. The development of the site would give an opportunity to soften the hard edge and make a more attractive entrance to the town. Anglian Water had been consulted with regard to the sewage works and there was sufficient land to avoid any impact. The informal recreation use would be respected in the allocation and existing routes retained where possible.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones, seconded by Councillor Ms M Prior and

RESOLVED

That sites C07/2, C10/1 and C22/1 be identified as provisional preferred sites for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan.

Holt

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

Councillor Ms M Prior, a local Member, thanked the Officers for the work they had done. She stated that there was much concern locally regarding the provision of a new primary school, with many people in favour of siting the new school on H04 with a view to adopting the Forest School principle.

It was proposed by Councillor J Punchard, seconded by Councillor Ms M Prior and

RESOLVED unanimously

That sites H04, H17, H19/1 and H20/1 be identified as the provisional preferred site for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan.

Sheringham

Public Speakers

James Alflatt (Bidwells)

Anne Smith (Sheringham Town Council)

The Planning Officer (JR) presented the provisional preferred and non-preferred sites in Sheringham.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the number of dwellings which were being recommended fell short of the settlement hierarchy numbers. Site SH04 was within the AONB but was, in his opinion, within the town. Whilst SH07, which was being promoted by Bidwells, was outside the AONB. Landscape impact was an important consideration and whilst the point would be made that allocations should not be made within the AONB, there were sites within it which would be suitable for development. He referred to the setting of Sheringham Park, which had been designed to take advantage of the landscape. Sheringham had crept progressively towards the park over the years and some of the development was now visible from it. Green space would be incorporated into the Butts Lane allocation (SH18/1) to help protect the landscape.

The Chairman asked how green spaces were maintained.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that developers paid a commuted sum to the Council, which took on the maintenance of green spaces. However, in some cases the commuted sum had been offered to a third party, eg. Town Council, to take on the maintenance.

The Chairman invited James Alflatt of Bidwells to speak in support of SH07.

Mr Alflatt requested reconsideration of the site assessment in respect of SH07 and stated that there were factual errors in the report. He considered that the site was suitable for a mix of uses and the proposed allocated sites had greater constraints to delivery. SH07 was within the settlement boundary, would not extend into the countryside and no legitimate reasons had been put forward to justify why the site was not suitable for development. He disputed the rationale for selecting the preferred sites and rejecting SH07.

The Chairman invited Anne Smith of Sheringham Town Council to speak.

Mrs Smith stated that SH18/1 was in the parish of Upper Sheringham and therefore Sheringham Town Council was unlikely to take on the responsibility for maintenance. The Town Council had requested that all options for SH07 were retained and did not wish to be placed in a position where either commercial or housing development had been ruled out.

The Planning Policy Manager suggested that it would be appropriate to defer consideration of site SH07. It was necessary to consider Mr Alflatt's comments with regard to the process.

Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett asked if the shortfall in housing numbers could be accommodated elsewhere to avoid damage to the AONB.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the Working Party would need to consider what to do about any shortfall in numbers later in the process. Members would need to decide whether additional sites should be considered once all of the provisional preferred sites had been considered for all uses. An option could be to revisit the settlement hierarchy to increase numbers in towns such as Fakenham or consider allocations which were not currently in the settlement hierarchy eg. former airbases and villages. This decision could not be made until all of the site allocations had been considered and the final housing requirement was known.

Councillor R Reynolds supported Sheringham Town Council's view that options should be kept open.

Councillor Mrs A Green asked if it would be preferable to substitute part of Cromer C10/1 for SH07 to allow more land to be kept for informal recreation.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that this was a possibility but it would be best to wait until after the public consultation so the Working Party could be informed by the views of the public.

Councillor S Shaw considered that SH04 was a sensible site regardless of whether or not it was within the AONB. He considered that SH07 was slightly more detached from the residential parts of Sheringham.

It was proposed by Councillor J Punchard, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Arnold and

RESOLVED unanimously

That sites SH04 and SH18/1 be identified as the provisional preferred site for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan, and that all non-preferred sites be deferred for consideration at a later stage.

Public Question

Kerry Walker (member of the public)

At this point in the meeting, the Chairman accepted a request from Kerry Walker to ask a question of the Working Party.

Ms Walker referred to the possibility of additional growth in Hoveton if North Walsham was unable to meet its obligations.

The Planning Policy Manager indicated that he considered it unlikely that Hoveton would see large scale additional growth and that any shortfall in the coastal towns would best be addressed close to those locations where possible.

Wells-next-the-Sea

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

Councillor R Reynolds asked if site W01/1, which was formerly allocated for affordable housing, would now be allocated for affordable market housing.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that market housing was now routinely included in affordable housing schemes. Affordable housing and low cost market housing was increasingly likely to be subsidised by expensive market housing.

Councillor Reynolds expressed concern that Wells-next-the-Sea had a high proportion of second homes and asked if it was possible to prevent second homes on W01/1. He was concerned that homes should be provided that young people could afford to buy.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that it was possible to impose occupancy restrictions on new homes, but it was difficult to enforce and had to be supported by evidence. Members had previously considered a paper on second home restrictions but had decided not to proceed. However, the issue was becoming increasingly important and he offered to bring a further paper to the Working Party on this matter.

The Planning Policy Team Leader explained that a topic paper was currently being prepared to cover optional Technical Standards to inform the development of Development Management policies, however it was likely that in time this paper would be expanded to also support the development of other policy options around the required housing mix, and tenure.

Councillor Mrs S Bütikofer considered that W11 could be an acceptable site if scaled back.

The Planning Policy Manager advised against allocating W11 at this stage. It could come forward again following public consultation but the promoter would have to satisfy the Highway Authority that its objections could be overcome.

It was proposed by Councillor R Reynolds, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Bütikofer and

RESOLVED

That a paper be prepared for consideration covering the policy options in this area.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett and

RESOLVED unanimously

That sites W01/1 and W07 be identified as the provisional preferred site for inclusion in the first draft Local Plan.

9. LOCAL PLAN – STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT ADDENDUM

The Planning Policy Team Leader presented the Addendum to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment relating to Wells-next-the-Sea coastal modelling, which was the final part of the evidence on flood risk to support the emerging Local Plan.

The Working Party noted the report.

10. DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Working Party received a presentation by the Conservation and Design Officer in respect of the updating of the Design Guide.

The Conservation and Design Officer explained that the current Design Guide had last been updated in 2008 and parts were no longer fit for purpose. There had been many changes in national guidance and new materials, and the existing guide did not address place-making to guide large-scale developments. It was necessary to publish the guide in a searchable online format and make it more visual. The new guide would need to align with the revised Local Plan.

The Conservation and Design Officer outlined the next steps in the preparation of the Guide and timetable with a view to bringing the Guide into use in August 2019.

The Working Party welcomed the review of the Design Guide.

The meeting closed at 12.25 pm.

CHAIRMAN