

23 JULY 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

J Punchard (Vice-Chairman) in the Chair

Ms V Gay
Mrs A Green
N Pearce

Ms M Prior
R Reynolds
Mrs V Uprichard

Observers:

Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds
B Smith

Officers

Mr M Ashwell – Planning Policy Manager
Mr C Young – Conservation, Design & Landscape Team Leader

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Arnold, Mrs S Bütikofer, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Mrs P Grove-Jones and S Shaw.

21. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

22. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25. UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Planning Policy Manager reported that the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was expected to be published by the end of the week.

26. THE GLAVEN PORTS CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS & MANAGEMENT PLANS 2018

The Conservation, Design & Landscape Team Leader presented the draft Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for Blakeney, Cley, Morston and Wiveton. He outlined the background to the review, policy context and the benefits and structure of the review, which had been undertaken by consultants acting on behalf of the Council. He outlined the proposed boundary changes and recommendations for local listing for each of the Conservation Areas.

Councillor R Reynolds referred to the deletion of the marshland area from the Blakeney Conservation Area. He considered that the marshes should be retained within the Conservation Area boundary, and that protection of the marshes should be extended from Wells to Salthouse as the view from the coastal path into the Conservation Area was important and was an issue often referred to when considering planning applications.

Councillor Ms V Gay proposed that the recommendations contained in the report to approve the draft appraisals for public consultation, and that following consultation the amended appraisals be brought back to the Working Party for consideration. She was pleased to see the inclusion of the Blakeney War Memorial within the Conservation Area boundary. She hoped that there would be a rolling programme for Conservation Area appraisals and that they would be used in decision making. She requested further information about the consultants.

The Conservation, Design & Landscape Team Leader explained that it was hoped that there would be a rolling programme of appraisals but they took time and resources. In the past, appraisals had been focused on areas which were particularly susceptible to development pressure. Appraisals were in place for the towns and major villages. It was hoped to continue the programme along the Glaven Valley. He explained that Purcell were national consultants with a broad portfolio and a great deal of experience. Officers had worked with them to produce interactive documents which were more dynamic and easier to use than previous appraisals.

Councillor R Reynolds supported the recommendation and asked for an appraisal of the marshland area if possible.

The Conservation, Design & Landscape Team Leader explained that the Conservation Areas were primarily related to the built environment and he had concerns regarding the inclusion of the marshland along the coast as it was constantly changing and difficult to draw a boundary. It was easier in conservation terms to define a conservation area around the built environment.

The Planning Policy Manager suggested including text describing the importance of the setting of the Conservation Area and making it clear that the marshes were important to the setting.

Councillor Ms V Gay considered that marshland was already subject to statutory protection, whereas buildings had less protection. She supported the suggested wording.

The Planning Policy Manager confirmed that Conservation Areas served a particular purpose of protecting the built rather than the natural environment. There were other tools to protect the marshes and he considered that it would be sufficient to reference the importance of the marshes and the view from them.

It was proposed by Councillor Ms V Gay, seconded by Councillor R Reynolds and

RESOLVED

1. **That the draft Conservation Area appraisals and Management Plans for Blakeney, Cley, Morston and Wiveton be approved for public consultation.**
2. **That following consultation, the amended appraisals be brought back to Working Party for consideration and subsequent recommendation for adoption by Cabinet.**

27. COASTAL PLANNING – STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

The Planning Policy Manager presented a report which explained the meaning and purpose of Statements of Common Ground (SOCG) in the plan making process, and a draft Coastal Zone Planning SOCG which set out an agreed set of high level principles in relation to coastal planning which would provide the framework for more detailed policy development at a local level in each of the partner Authorities' Local Plans. He recommended that the Working Party recommend to Cabinet that the SOCG be signed on behalf of the Authority.

The Planning Policy Manager reported that Councillor Mrs H Cox, the Portfolio Holder for Coastal Planning, was fully supportive of the recommendation. He also reported that Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, who was unable to attend the meeting, had expressed her total support for the recommendation and had stressed that planning members were fully aware of the policies and would apply them in future.

It was proposed by Councillor R Reynolds, seconded by Councillor N Pearce and

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet

That the Coastal Zone Planning Statement of Common Ground be signed on behalf of North Norfolk District Council.

28. PROGRESS ON RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATION

The Planning Policy Manager updated Members on the current position in relation to provisional residential land allocations, reminding Members that consideration still needed to be given to other land uses, smaller sites and the approach to other policy areas such as self-build housing.

He advised that the provisional sites identified to date were of sufficient size to accommodate around 3,300 dwellings and once an appropriate allowance had been made for built development, sites already with planning permission and future windfall development, it would be sufficient to address the previously agreed preferred approach to deliver around 9,000 dwellings in total. This figure may be subject to some variation following publication of the new NPPF later in the year.

He explained that there were nevertheless some risks around delivery of the strategy, that the resulting distribution of development was not as identified in the draft settlement hierarchy and that some further opportunities might need to be identified particularly in the more constrained settlements where site identification

had been more challenging. The addition of some smaller sites was also likely to be desirable.

Councillor Ms M Prior raised concerns which had been expressed by Holt Town Council that there had been an expectation that 700 houses would be allocated for the town. There was also concern that Holt would no longer be designated as a primary settlement. The town was geared up for more housing and wanted to keep its current status.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that there remained a commitment to deliver housing growth. Development which had been completed and sites with planning permission during the current plan period amounted to 700 dwellings, most of which had not yet been built and the figure given in the document was additional to this. He explained that Holt did not have the same order of retail facilities or services as Cromer, Fakenham etc. Designation as a principal town would bring the risk of significantly greater development.

Councillor R Reynolds asked if there had been an assessment of the likelihood of windfall sites coming forward. He stated that issues of sustainability were often raised regarding windfall sites.

The Planning Policy Manager considered that there was virtue in including windfall growth without making specific allocations. It was necessary to assume that there would be a diminishing supply of windfall sites but there was confidence that some would come forward.

Councillor Ms V Gay supported a target of 9,000 dwellings. She considered that there were grounds to defend the windfall allowance as significant changes would be made to the policy for conversion of rural buildings, and the Council had a good record of delivering exception schemes with an aspiration to build more. She suggested that sites could be available for self-build dwellings.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that there would be a policy to support self-build but sites should be sustainable and there was no reason to depart from the settlement hierarchy.

Councillor Mrs V Uprichard asked if specialist accommodation would be included in the windfall allowance.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that certain types of elderly or specialist accommodation could be counted as part of the allocation and could be on either planned sites or windfall. Three bedspaces of specialist residential care equated to one dwelling.

In answer to a question by Councillor N Pearce as to whether the new NPPF was likely to affect a target of 9,000, the Planning Policy Manager explained it was possible that it could include a higher target and tighter delivery requirements.

Councillor R Reynolds considered that more in-depth discussion was required around additional allocations and a decision should not be made at this meeting.

The Planning Policy Manager suggested that a workshop session for all Members be arranged, followed by discussion at the Working Party.

Councillor Reynolds considered that any discussion should be within the confines of the Working Party.

Councillor Ms V Gay considered that a decision could be made at this meeting to indicate support for 9,000 dwellings. She stated that the site visits which had been undertaken by the Working Party clearly showed that there were opportunities for small sites. In North Walsham, however, the support for a large number of dwellings was conditional on very significant infrastructure support for the town and she considered that there would be little sympathy from residents for a strategy for small sites. She considered that it was important to weigh the risks and for Members to be clear in their own minds as developers were likely to challenge any approach.

Councillor Mrs V Uprichard expressed concern that the outcome of the Greens Road appeal could have an impact on allocations in North Walsham as the site was a key part of the strategy to achieve a bypass.

Councillor N Pearce asked whether a failure to deliver the large allocation at Fakenham could be used to support the provision on smaller sites and impact on the target of 9000 dwellings.

The Planning Policy Manager reiterated that the NPPF was highly likely to retain provisions relating to small site allocations and this area might need to be reconsidered. There was a concern that small sites in villages had actually proved to be difficult to deliver.

It was proposed by Councillor R Reynolds, seconded by Councillor Ms M Prior and

RESOLVED

That discussion on site allocations be deferred until the next Working Party meeting, to which all Members will be invited.

It was proposed by Councillor Ms M Prior, seconded by Councillor Ms V Gay and

RESOLVED

That a target of 9000 dwellings is agreed as the preferred option for consultation and that an allowance for windfall of approximately 2000 dwellings is included within that figure.

The meeting closed at 11.15 am.

CHAIRMAN