

**Planning and Development Policy Development Advisory Group**  
**1 AUGUST 2017**

Present: Councillors: Claire Vickers (Chairman), Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Paul Clarke, Paul Marshall, Godfrey Newman, Brian O'Connell and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Liz Kitchen, Christian Mitchell and Michael Willett

Also Present: Councillor Nigel Jupp

10 **LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The Cabinet Member sought the advice of members of the PDAG on the review of rural policies, in particular the return of a barn conversion policy, the potential designation of secondary settlements and a review of the Built-Up Area Boundaries (BUABs) within the district. These will be included in an early consultation Local Plan Review document to be presented to Cabinet in October 2017 for agreement to publish for public consultation in the autumn.

The Head of Strategic Planning & Sustainability advised Members that there was no specific policy relating to the conversion of agricultural buildings within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) as it had been considered the issue could be dealt with through other planning policies. Members have raised concerns that a specific policy is needed and therefore the reintroduction of a similar policy to that which existed prior to the HDPF, should be included in the Local Plan Review. The previous policy, included within the 2007 Development Plan, would need to be amended and updated to reflect other policies in the HDPF and give more flexibility.

The policy needed to protect the countryside against the development of isolated dwellings in unsustainable locations, but it was acknowledged that a prescriptive approach could be too limiting. Matters raised by the group regarding the policy included:

- Buildings would need to be of traditional construction and of some architectural merit.
- Each case should be judged on its own merits to allow some flexibility with regards to location and proximity to infrastructure and community facilities.
- Rural Building Conversion Policy would be a more suitable policy name than Barn Conversion.

- It was not appropriate to require a building to have been unused for 10 years; it would be sufficient to require that the building was no longer in use and was redundant.
- Need a definition for 'isolated'

Members requested that the policy considerations with regard to the building of annexes should be examined at a future stage of the Local Plan Review. Members' comments regarding the policy regarding Rural Workers Accommodation were also noted.

Within the HDPF all areas outside the BUAB are designated as being within the countryside, including hamlets and small villages (secondary settlements). Members of the PDAG were advised that the introduction of settlement boundaries for some secondary settlements would allow for limited small scale development of up to a total of five dwellings within a settlement area, in street-facing locations; the policy would not enable 'backland' development.

Members debated the issues relating to the potential designation of secondary settlements. These are villages and hamlets that have a distinctive sense of place with some facilities or are very close to a larger settlement with a Built-Up Area Boundary, where allowing some small-scale development could ensure the continuation or enhancement of a sustainable community and benefit the local economy. It was noted that a number of Parish Councils had expressed support for this type of approach, which would help them in delivering an appropriate level of development in their Neighbourhood Plans.

A review of Built-Up Area Boundaries will also form part of this stage of the Local Plan Review. The boundaries need to be brought up to date to take into account development that has commenced on the edges of settlements and sites that have been allocated in 'made' Neighbourhood Plans and to amend any previous irregularities. The review would be landscape led, guarding against settlement coalescence.

Comments from members of the PDAG would inform the consultation draft Local Plan Review to be considered by Cabinet on 12 October. Members were advised that the proposed boundaries for secondary settlements would be shared with Parish Councils immediately prior to the public consultation.

*The meeting closed at 10.52 am having commenced at 9.30 am*

CHAIRMAN