

Planning and Development Policy Development Advisory Group
14 MARCH 2019

Present: Councillors: Claire Vickers (Chairman), Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Paul Clarke, Liz Kitchen, Paul Marshall, Godfrey Newman, Kate Rowbottom and Michael Willett

Apologies: Councillors: Christian Mitchell

Absent: Councillors: Brian O'Connell

Also Present: Councillors: Nigel Jupp and Lynn Lambert

24 **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting held on 16 January were received.

25 **REGULAR UPDATE OF KEY STRATEGIC SITES ALLOCATED IN THE HDPF 2015**

The Head of Development gave a presentation to update the Group on progress on the key strategic sites allocated in the Horsham District Planning Framework. The presentation outlined how the developments had progressed since January and included photos of the sites where construction was either complete or nearing completion.

Key updates included the purchase of land north of Horsham by Legal & General who had engaged highway consultants and were working towards establishing a timeframe for the phases of development. At Southwater the development was well underway and community facilities, including the sports pavilion, were almost completed. Development was progressing on one of the two smaller strategic sites south of Billingshurst. The Cabinet Member considered the Southwater and south of Billingshurst developments to be of good design and finish, which would contribute a community benefit.

Members were advised that several parcels of land on the site east of Billingshurst were under construction. Three developers were involved with this site and it was noted that the quality of design was not consistent.

The Group were also updated on Kilnwood Vale, where Stage One was complete and the new primary school was under construction, and Highwood on land west of Horsham, where the northern part of the site was largely completed. An application, which had been submitted for the Norvartis site, was currently being amended by the applicant before being considered by Planning Committee later in the year.

The Head of Development stated that this was the first time that HDC had dealt with such large sites and there were opportunities to learn from the experience.

In terms of securing a good quality of design, the Group were advised that there was a greater emphasis on design in the new NPPF and that guidance on design principles could be included in the Local Plan Review.

With regards to parking, the Cabinet Member stated that when West Sussex County Council's revised parking standards were published there would be a general uplift in parking provision. The last PDAG considered producing an HDC design document to run alongside WSCC new parking standards to facilitate the efficient and effective use of parking spaces. The Head of Development confirmed that she would share the revised standards as soon as WSCC had released them.

26 **HORSHAM LOCAL PLAN REVIEW UPDATE**

Local Plan Review Work Programme

Officers gave a presentation updating the Group on progress of key elements of the work programme since January. Consultants had been appointed for evidence based research on housing, employment, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs and strategic transport issues. Landscape Capacity work and an update of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan was being undertaken internally. An update of the strategic flood risk assessments also needed to be commissioned to take account of floodplain remodelling being undertaken by the Environment Agency.

The Group noted the updated timetable of items of business for forthcoming PDAGs, which included an update on likely housing requirements up to 2036 at the next PDAG on 25 April.

Duty to Co-operate Programme

Officers updated the Group on a number of duty to co-operate discussions that had taken place with officers from neighbouring local authorities regarding cross-boundary strategic planning issues, including planning for 'unmet housing needs'. The discussions indicated that there were a number of neighbouring authorities experiencing difficulty in providing for their full objectively assessed housing need within their own administrative area due to constraints, who will expect Horsham's Local Plan to consider the extent to which it might reasonably contribute towards those needs. The degree of pressure on HDC arises because some of its neighbours were constrained by the sea, the South Downs National Park or the green belt in Surrey.

Officers confirmed that duty to co-operate discussions were constructive and on-going. The Cabinet Member also stressed that HDC were obliged to seriously consider the unmet development needs of neighbouring authorities, but would only provide above its own need if it were reasonable to do so, taking account of local planning considerations.

Draft Site Assessment Criteria

The Director of Place advised that a new strategy for the allocation of potential sites would be developed and was currently programmed for public consultation in October 2019. All Members would be kept briefed on this process. There would be dialogue with key stakeholders, including parishes and neighbourhood councils during the plan preparation process.

Officers advised the Group that approximately 500 sites had been submitted for potential inclusion in the SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment), varying from a few units to several thousand. These sites would be assessed using four filters of criteria:

1. Suitability: largely derived from key NPPF principles, which ensure the site is suitably located to deliver sustainable development, balancing environmental, social and economic considerations.
2. Deliverability: at what stage would the site become available for development, how this relates to the five year housing land supply, and are there any ownership or infrastructure barriers to delivery.
3. Viability: is the site sufficiently commercially viable to provide for affordable housing and all associated infrastructure required as a result of development.
4. Quality: the importance of the quality of development is particularly emphasised in Chapter 12 of the NPPF. This criteria includes: quality of design, landscaping, integration with and benefits to existing communities, the provision of community facilities, health and wellbeing, the provision of affordable housing and housing mix, the availability of local employment, and the delivery of net gain for biodiversity.

The Interim Head of Strategic Planning asked the Group to contact him with any other criteria they would like specifically considered by the team as part of the site assessment criteria.

The Cabinet Member advised that the draft site assessment criteria would be made available to councillors and stakeholders for comments in due course. Once the final criteria were confirmed the sites would be assessed. The PDAG would be presented with the results of these assessments later in the year.

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HIGH WEALD AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

Officers gave a brief summary of the report that would be considered by Cabinet on 21 March. The High Weald AONB straddles a number of local authorities and the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee have produced a revised Management Plan 2019-24 in consultation with HDC and the other local authorities and the general public. Once adopted as Council policy, the

management plan would be a material consideration for any planning applications.

The Cabinet Member reminded Members that it was a statutory duty to adopt a plan, and she fully supported the work undertaken by the Joint Advisory Committee. Members of the Group were supportive of the draft plan.

28 **FORWARD PLAN EXTRACT FOR THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO**

The extract of the Forward Plan was noted.

The meeting closed at 11.38 am having commenced at 10.00 am

CHAIRMAN