

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 2 September 2013

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Portfolio: | Strategic Planning and Environment |
| Subject: | Development Sites and Policies Plan: Fareham College and other new site allocations: Consultation |
| Report of: | Director of Planning and Environment |
| Strategy/Policy: | Fareham Borough Local Plan |
| Corporate Objective: | Protect and enhance the environment Safe and healthy place to live and work Balanced housing market Strong and inclusive communities |

Purpose:

To propose additional development sites including a new policy for the redevelopment of the Fareham College (Bishopsfield Road) campus, for inclusion in the Development Sites and Policies Plan, and set out the arrangements for public consultation.

Executive summary:

Following consultation on the Draft Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies in October to November 2012, officers have been updating and finalising the Plan to take account of the comments made and to ensure a sound and legally compliant Plan that can be submitted to the Secretary of State and taken forward to Examination. Regular reporting to the relevant Member Working Group continues to take place.

Some new sites have come forward within the existing built up area that are worthy of inclusion in the Plan. These are:

- Fareham College's (Bishopsfield Road site)
- Kites Croft
- Midpoint 27, Cartwright Avenue
- The Walled Garden, Cams Hall

In order to provide organisations, businesses and individuals with the opportunity to make comments on the inclusion of new sites it is proposed to carry out public consultation on these additions to the Plan.

Recommendation:

That authorisation be given to undertake a four-week consultation on the following documents:

- A new policy and supporting explanatory text setting out the Council's approach to the redevelopment of Fareham College's Bishopsfield Road site;
- Development Site Briefs for three new employment allocations at:

- Kites Croft
- Midpoint 27, Cartwright Avenue
- The Walled Garden, Cams Hall; and
- A Technical Note comprising a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment High Level Assessment of the proposed development sites, and a Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening for Likely Significant Effects of the new policy and proposed site allocations.

Reason:

To undertake consultation as part of the preparation of the Development Sites and Policies Plan as required, and in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. To demonstrate that the Council is seeking to identify sufficient development sites to meet the Borough's development requirements.

Cost of proposals:

The cost of undertaking publication and consultation are covered within the existing budgets.

Appendices: A: Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies - Draft Policy and Supporting Text for Fareham College and Development Site Briefs for Three Employment Sites

Background papers:

Technical Note: SA/SEA and HRA for the Fareham Development Sites and Policies Plan - High Level Assessment and Screening of Proposed New Allocations for Employment and Residential Development

File of correspondence*

* Exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 - contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Authority

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date: 2 September 2013

Subject: Development Sites and Policies Plan: Fareham College Policy and Other
New Site Allocations: Consultation

Briefing by: Director of Planning and Environment

Portfolio: Strategic Planning and Environment

INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Report seeks endorsement and approval of a new policy and supporting text for the Fareham College (Bishopsfield Road) campus site for inclusion within the Development Sites and Policies Plan. It also includes development site briefs for three employment sites that have been identified as having development potential. It is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) of the four proposed new site allocations, and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Statement assessing the four proposed site allocations' Likely Significant Effects on environmental designations of European importance.
2. The Executive report seeks authorisation to undertake a four-week consultation to enable businesses, organisations and residents to have an opportunity to make comments on the proposed policy and site allocations.
3. Public consultation¹ was carried out on the Draft Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies during October and November 2012. Officers have since been updating and finalising the Plan to take account of the comments received and to ensure a sound plan that can be submitted to the Secretary of State and taken forward to Examination, with reports being regularly reported to the relevant Member Working Group. Other consultations have taken place on a new policy for the Solent Breezes Holiday Park, and a new policy and site allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
4. It is now proposed to include some additional sites that have come forward as suitable development sites within existing urban areas following the consultation on the Draft Development Sites and Policies Plan.
5. In order to provide organisations, businesses and individuals with the opportunity to make comments on these new sites, it is proposed to carry out a final consultation on these new sites, prior to the Publication Stage² when the Plan is

¹ Under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

² Under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

published for formal representations on its soundness³.

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL SITES

6. A large strategic site has come forward since the previous draft version of the Plan. This site at Fareham College's Bishopsfield Road Campus has the potential to deliver a combination of improved educational facilities, new residential development, while at the same time opening up to the wider community the open space that is not currently publicly accessible. This open space would offer much-needed provision in an area that currently has an identified under-supply. In addition, it is envisaged that the redevelopment of the College's educational facilities will bring additional community benefits. Fareham College wish to make a range of new and enhanced facilities available to the community, including the new drama hall, café/restaurant, recording and media studios, fitness suite, sports hall and other sport facilities.
7. It should be noted that the Council's independent viability consultant has concluded that the housing proposals for the Fareham College site are marginal in terms of development viability, i.e. prevailing market expectations of development returns. However, any development value achieved through the residential development by the College, as landowner, would clearly complement the recently awarded Skills Funding Agency grant of £14m for further education and skills secured by the College, in providing an overall development funding package for both the additional new educational facilities, and the refurbishment of existing educational facilities.
8. Fareham College recently received planning permission⁴ for the construction of a new purpose-built engineering training facility, comprising a single storey building including engineering workshop, classrooms and other supporting facilities including car parking at Daedalus within the Solent Enterprise Zone. It is anticipated that this training facility, the Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Advanced Skills Training (CEMAST) will be completed to enable students to commence from September 2014 onwards. This will involve the relocation of approximately 30% of Fareham College's existing students and will result in a number of existing buildings on the Bishopsfield Road Campus becoming surplus to the College's educational requirements. The age and layout of the College's existing buildings is no longer ideally suited to contemporary educational requirements, is not cost effective to maintain and would benefit from modernisation to ensure a more efficient and effective utilisation of the site. In addition, Fareham College's proposed new building will be required to achieve a BREEAM 'excellent' rating to comply with the grant funding conditions. The refurbished buildings would also be improved to ensure that they meet BREEAM 'very good' rating.
9. The redevelopment of the College's educational facilities is anticipated to take place on the northern part of its existing footprint and could involve replacement or additional buildings and/or improvements/enhancements to existing buildings (such as recladding). The consolidation of the College's operations, together with the transfer of some operations to CEMAST at Daedalus, would result in a number of buildings on the southern footprint of the existing facility, no longer being required for educational purposes. That part of the site, which could come

³ Whether the Plan meets the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework

⁴ FBC Ref: P13/0201/FP

forward for residential development at an early point in the Development Sites and Policies Plan period, is expected to yield between 100-120 dwellings. It is also proposed that the existing open space would be opened up to the local community, together with a series of improved footpaths and cycleways increasing access and permeability of the site.

10. Accordingly, a proposed new policy and supporting text for the Fareham College (Bishopsfield Road) campus for inclusion within the Development Sites and Policies Plan is set out in Appendix A.
11. Appendix A also includes development site briefs for three sites that have been identified as having potential for employment development. The development site briefs set out the general design principles that should be considered in each circumstance. The sites, identified through an update to the Employment Land Review (part of evidence base of the Plan) are:
 - Kites Croft - a remaining parcel of land (0.97ha) within a previously larger allocation from the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review 2000;
 - Midpoint 27, Cartwright Avenue - a remaining parcel of land (0.84ha) within a previously larger allocation from the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review 2000; and
 - The Walled Garden, Cams Hall - a site of 1.66ha with planning consent for use class B1 business floorspace.
12. It is anticipated that the Fareham College (Bishopsfield Road) campus and the additional employment sites listed above will help towards meeting some of the requirements originally set out in the Core Strategy and subsequently increased in the South Hampshire Strategy⁵.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

13. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is being undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the Development Sites and Policies Plan. The draft version of the Plan was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal Site Options Assessment, which presented *“an appraisal of the latest shortlist of borough-wide sites proposed for allocation and development management policies”*.
14. The new proposed site allocation at Fareham College and the three employment site allocations have undergone an SA/SEA High Level Assessment, the findings of which are contained within a Technical Note.
15. The Technical Note confirms that all⁶ the proposed allocations have mainly positive or neutral impacts on the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives. It does, however, conclude that there are some negative or uncertain effects predicted in relation to the following sites:
 - Midpoint 27, Cartwright Avenue; and

⁵ The South Hampshire Strategy: A framework to guide sustainable development and change to 2026 was published in October 2012.

⁶ With the exception of the Walled Garden, Cams Hall (which is described as having “many positive or neutral impacts”).

- The Walled Garden, Cams Hall.
16. While Fareham College has mainly positive effects on the SA Objectives, it includes “*areas of BAP [Biodiversity Action Plan] deciduous woodland habitat, and a site of uncertain importance for wading birds*”. Ecological surveys will be required “*to establish which if any protected species may be using the site...*”.

HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

17. The Development Sites and Policies Plan (and consequently the additional sites being proposed for allocation therein) is also required to undergo a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This will need to focus on the likely significant effects of the Plan on the nature conservation interests of European-protected areas within the Borough, and seek to establish whether or not there will be any adverse effects (as a result of proposals within the Plan) on the ecological integrity of these European sites.
18. The HRA Screening demonstrates that no likely significant effects are predicted as a result of the following allocations at:
- Kites Croft; and
 - Midpoint 27, Cartwright Drive.
19. It does, however, state that “*Employment site E5, the Walled Garden, Cams Hall, is adjacent to an important site for Brent geese and a site of uncertain importance for waders as listed in the Solent waders and Brent Goose Strategy*”. It also states that “*The proposed Fareham College allocation has an uncertain wader site within its boundary, together with two other uncertain wader sites nearby to the south and west*”. It confirms that “*It will be necessary to ensure that activities within these sites do not lead to increased levels of disturbance which could reduce the quality of habitats used by birds associated with SPA/Ramsar sites in the area. The risk of likely significant effects on the European sites cannot therefore be ruled out...*”

CONSULTATION

20. Public participation is a key element of plan preparation. It involves inviting organisations, businesses and individuals in the area to make comments. The methods of consultation and engagement to which the Council seeks to adhere, are set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (January 2011).
21. In order to provide organisations, businesses and individuals with the opportunity to make comments on the new sites, to be included within the Development Sites and Policies Plan it is proposed to carry out a further consultation for a four week period commencing when the “call-in” period ends.
22. This consultation will be promoted using the normal channels including a press release, the Council's website and social media accounts. Everybody on the Local Plan consultee and community groups' database and the e-Panel will be contacted. The consultation will be highlighted at the forthcoming Community Action Team meetings (where these are held before the close of the consultation period) and letters will be posted to those in the immediate vicinity of the Fareham College (Bishopsfield Road) campus.

23. The Council's website will host a 'comments section' and paper copies will also be available at the Civic Offices and libraries in the Borough.
24. In addition to the formal consultation being undertaken by the Council, Fareham College will be holding an exhibition providing more detailed plans and descriptions of the proposed redevelopment of its Bishopsfield Road Campus. This will be used to inform any forthcoming applications in relation to the site.

NEXT STEPS

25. Following the consultation, officers will consider the representations and where necessary amend the Plan accordingly, with appropriate reporting to the Member Working Group. Any comments made on the SA/SEA High Level Assessment or the HRA Screening set out in the Technical Note will also be considered prior to the "Publication" version of the Development Sites and Policies Plan being brought to the Executive in the autumn.

RISK ASSESSMENT

26. The principal risk arises from the unknown volume and nature of the consultation comments received, how long these will take to process and whether or not the issues raised will generate the need for further research and evidence or discussions and negotiations to resolve them.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

27. The costs in undertaking this consultation are included within existing budgets.

CONCLUSION

28. Authorisation is sought from the Executive to agree to a four-week consultation period on the following documents:
 - A new policy and supporting explanatory text setting out the Council's approach to the redevelopment of the Fareham College site;
 - New development site briefs for three employment sites; and
 - A Technical Note comprising Sustainability appraisal of the proposed new policy and site allocations and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Statement on the proposed new policy and site allocations.

Reference Papers:

National Planning Policy Framework

Draft Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies (October 2012)

SA/SEA Scoping Report (May 2012)

SA/SEA Options Assessment Report (October 2012)

HRA Screening Report (October 2012)