

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 10 February 2014

Portfolio:	Strategic Planning and Environment
Subject:	Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies - Publication Plan
Report of:	Director of Planning and Environment
Strategy/Policy:	Fareham Local Plan
Corporate Objectives:	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment Maintaining and Extending Prosperity A Safe and Healthy place to Live and Work Leisure for Health and for Fun A Balanced Housing Market Strong and Inclusive communities A Dynamic, Prudent, Progressive, Best Practice Council

Purpose:

To seek endorsement and a recommendation to Council to approve the Development Sites and Policies Plan for "Publication" for representations and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State for independent Examination.

Executive summary:

The Development Sites and Policies Plan is the second of three documents that comprise the Fareham Local Plan. It sets out the Council's approach to managing and delivering development identified in the Core Strategy (together with the additional requirements set out in the South Hampshire Strategy) for the Borough to 2026, except for the area covered by the Welborne Plan.

The Development Sites and Policies Plan (Publication Plan) identifies sites for various types of uses such as housing, employment, retail, community facilities, open spaces etc. It also provides up-to-date policies for managing development across the Borough (excluding Welborne).

Once adopted, the policies and proposals contained within the Development Sites and Policies Plan will form part of Fareham's statutory development plan. The Plan will be a key document in the future planning of the area, and in the determination of planning applications.

Recommendation:

That the following be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval:

- (a) That the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies - Publication Plan, as set out in Appendix A, be published for a six-week representation period commencing at 1700hrs on Friday 28 February until 1700hrs on Friday 11 April 2014, together with supporting documents including the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment.
- (b) That the Director of Planning and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Environment, be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments to the Plan, prior to publication, provided that these do not change the overall direction, shape or emphasis of the document, and do not raise any significant new issues.
- (c) That the Director of Planning and Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Environment, be authorised, following the completion of the representation period, to submit the Plan to the Secretary of State (together with any necessary minor modifications that are required to ensure legal compliance and/or 'soundness').
- (d) That the Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies - Publication Plan, be endorsed as interim guidance to be afforded due weight in the determination of planning applications.

Reason:

To publish the Development Sites and Policies Plan as required under regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 in order to maintain and ensure an up-to-date Local Plan for the Borough for the period to 2026.

Cost of proposals:

The cost involved in undertaking publication of the Development Sites and Policies Plan is covered within existing budgets.

Appendices A: Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies - Publication Plan

B: Sustainability Appraisal

C: Habitats Regulations Assessment

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date: 10 February 2014

Subject: Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites and Policies - Publication Plan

Briefing by: Director of Planning and Environment

Portfolio: Strategic Planning and Environment

INTRODUCTION

1. The Development Sites and Policies Plan is the second of three documents within the Fareham Local Plan. The Local Plan also includes the Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1), which was adopted in August 2011, and the Welborne Plan (Local Plan Part 3), which is also being presented to the Executive as a separate agenda item.
2. The Development Sites and Policies Plan sets out the Council's approach to managing and delivering development identified in the Core Strategy, together with the additional requirements set out in the South Hampshire Strategy (October 2012) for the Borough to 2026, except for the area covered by the Welborne Plan. It will help meet the Vision and Strategic Objectives for Fareham set out in the Core Strategy.
3. Once adopted, the policies and proposals contained within the Development Sites and Policies Plan will form part of Fareham's statutory development plan. It will be a key document in the future planning of the area, and in the determination of planning applications. It will replace all remaining saved policies in the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review (June 2000).
4. The Development Sites and Policies Plan identifies sites for various types of uses such as housing, employment, retail, community facilities, open spaces etc. It also provides up-to-date policies for managing development across the Borough (excluding Welborne).

PLAN PREPARATION PROCESS INCLUDING CONSULTATION

5. The Development Sites and Policies Plan has evolved over a period of time with the work overseen by a Member Working Group.

6. The Draft Development Sites and Policies Plan was presented to the Executive in October 2012. The Draft Plan set out the Council's preferred approach and provided an opportunity for businesses, organisations and local residents to influence and provide comments on the draft policies and proposals. Via a series of consultation events and the Council's website from 15 October to 26 November 2012.
7. Since then, discussions have taken place with consultees to resolve outstanding issues as far as possible. In addition, further consultations have taken place on specific aspects of the Plan, where significant additions or alterations to policies and site allocations have been proposed.
8. In particular, consultations have taken place on proposed new policies on the Solent Breezes Holiday Park, on sites for Gypsies and Travellers, and on the redevelopment of the Fareham College site as a mixed use development opportunity area including educational facilities, residential development and new publicly accessible open space (together with some additional employment sites elsewhere in the Borough).
9. The Development Sites and Policies Plan (see Appendix A to this report):
 - Has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
 - Has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (The Sustainability Appraisal is set out in Appendix B to this report);
 - Is in conformity with the Core Strategy (except where the NPPF has a contrary position);
 - Has been subject to Assessment under the Habitats Regulations (The Habitats Regulations Assessment is set out in Appendix C to this report);
 - Been subject to consultation in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (January 2011);
 - Has been prepared according to an approved timetable (the Local Development Scheme).
 - Is consistent with the South Hampshire Strategy agreed by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) in October 2012, and therefore accords with Duty to Co-operate.

FORMAT & STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

10. The Development Sites and Policies Plan's structure has altered significantly since the Draft Version was published in October 2012. It is now structured as follows.
11. Chapter 1: Introduction provides the overall context to the Plan as one of three documents that comprise the Fareham Local Plan. It sets out how it is required to be in accordance with national planning policy. It also demonstrates how it relates to the Core Strategy and the South Hampshire Strategy. The NPPF states a preference for a plan to have a time horizon 15 years from the date of adoption. However as this Plan is intended to complete the Local Plan that was started through the Core Strategy, the end date of 2026 is consistent with both the Core Strategy and the South Hampshire Strategy. and is therefore considered to be an appropriate time scale.

12. Chapter 2: Sustainable Development, reinforces the NPPF's requirement for the "presumption in favour of sustainable development", to be seen as a "golden thread" running through both plan-making and decision taking.
13. Chapter 3: The Existing Settlements refers to the existing settlements and stresses the importance of protecting their separation by prevent coalescence and urban sprawl. It also focuses on the protection and enhancement of the existing built environment and heritage assets.
14. Chapter 4: The Natural Environment recognises the importance of the Borough's natural areas in contributing to the quality of life of residents, workers, and visitors, and supporting its biodiversity and wildlife. The policies within this chapter establish a balance between planning for growth and protecting the Borough's natural environment, the countryside and coast outside the defined urban area boundaries.
15. Chapter 5: Planning for Growth recognises that it is important for Fareham's economy to grow and meet its full potential. It considers economic development issues and identifies specific locations where new jobs will be located. It also sets out a vision for Fareham Town Centre, including identifying redevelopment opportunity areas. Finally it sets a policy approach to delivering new homes to meet the Borough's housing requirements set out in the Core Strategy, as amended and increased by the South Hampshire Strategy (October 2012). Table 4 in the Plan sets out the housing requirements for the Plan period to 2026. Taking account of houses built up to 31 March 2013 (completions) 1,687 houses remain to be provided as at 1 April 2013. The Plan identifies various sources of supply including planning permissions, the Core Strategy allocation at Coldeast, allocations carried forward from the Local Plan Review (June 2000), new allocations including Fareham town centre opportunity areas and projected windfall developments. These sources of supply add up to 1,823, providing a surplus of provision against the South Hampshire Strategy target of 136 dwellings. It should be noted that following studies concerning the viability and deliverability of sites that were included in the Draft Plan (October 2012), some of these sites have been omitted from the current version of the Plan or have been included in the Plan but their housing numbers discounted from the housing supply table. In particular provision is concentrated in the short term to ensure that a 5 year supply, as required by the NPPF, can be met.
16. Chapter 6: Facilities and Infrastructure, recognises that in order to achieve the levels of growth required in a sustainable way, it is vital that supporting infrastructure and facilities are provided to meet the needs of existing and future residents. This chapter focuses on meeting the demands that arise from growth, identifying existing gaps in provision, and seeking to deliver new facilities.
17. Chapter 7: Development Site Briefs, set out briefs for housing, employment, gypsy/traveller sites, town centre development opportunity areas, and mixed use development opportunity areas in the Borough. The briefs set out development constraints, indicative uses, key design issues, and other relevant information that may be required as part of any future planning application on these sites.

18. Chapter 8: Delivery and Monitoring sets out a framework for monitoring the implementation of key policies in the Plan.
19. Glossary of Terms: this section contains pages explaining the planning terms and phrases that are used throughout the Plan.
20. Appendices: a series of appendices provide key supporting information.
21. Policies Map: illustrates the policies and allocations by showing where they apply on an Ordnance Survey Map base. The Schedule of Changes booklet consists of a table and colour maps showing all the additions and deletions to the current Proposals Map that are made by the Development Sites and Policies Plan. The Policies Map Booklet has colour maps showing how the Policies Map will look – incorporating all the changes - once the Plan is adopted.

NEXT STEPS

22. Following approval by the Council, the document will be published for a six week representation period from 28 February to 11 April 2014. The representation period will provide an opportunity for the public and other interested parties to make further comments on the Plan. However any representations made should focus on whether or not the Plan meets the “soundness” criteria set out in paragraph 182 of the NPPF. These require that the Plan is positively planned, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy. It is also an opportunity for respondents to consider whether or not the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, the legal and procedural requirements.
23. Once all the representations received have been summarised, the Plan and its supporting documents, together with the representations and a summary of the main issues raised in the representations, will be submitted to the Secretary of State who will appoint an independent inspector to examine the Plan. This should be before the end of May 2014, after which the timetable is determined by the Planning Inspectorate. (NB the timetable is set out in the Local Development Scheme, which is also being presented to Executive as separate agenda item.) If approved by the Council, the intention is to simultaneously publish the Welborne Plan and to submit both plans together to the Secretary of State.
24. An independent Inspector will conduct the Public Examination and report to the Council. The Public Examination is currently expected to take place later in 2014. If the Inspector finds the plan sound, he/she will issue their report with recommendations for changes. The timing of this depends on whether the Inspector decides to hold a pre-hearing meeting, to explain the procedure for the hearing, and whether the Development Sites and Policies Plan is examined before or after the Welborne Plan.
25. Once the Inspector’s report is received, if the Plan is found sound, any necessary changes will be made to the Plan before it is adopted by the Council.

26. After that the performance of the Plan and its policies will be monitored; then the Plan will be reviewed. It is understood that the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) has an intention to soon undertake a review and update of the South Hampshire Strategy, to take account of the most up-to-date background evidence, including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). A report to the PUSH Joint Committee on 28 January concerning the publication of the SHMA also makes recommendations asking the Joint Committee to authorise preparation of a specification, budget and timetable for the roll forward of the South Hampshire Strategy to 2036, with work to commence in April 2014 through to March 2015. The review of the Local Development Scheme, including the Local Plan timetables, reported as another item to this meeting, acknowledges the need for an early review of the Local Plan Parts 1 and 2 to extend the time horizon beyond 2026, in line with the Welborne Plan to 2036. The review of the South Hampshire Strategy will help form the parameters and strategic framework for an early review of Fareham's Local Plan to 2036, and ensure that the Duty to Cooperate is met.

RISK ASSESSMENT

27. There are inevitably some risks associated with the approach being recommended. Some Local Plans have been found unsound because they have failed to meet the NPPF requirements, failed to meet the Duty to Cooperate and/or been unable to demonstrate that the objectively assessed housing needs have been met. PUSH commissioned a SHMA for the South Hampshire area which will inform a refresh of the South Hampshire Strategy. The updated South Hampshire Strategy will distribute development throughout the PUSH area, taking into account the evidence set out in the SHMA, together with other factors, issues and constraints. It would be premature for the Development Sites and Policies Plan to plan for the requirements of the SHMA until these have been appropriately distributed through the South Hampshire Strategy. Similarly any shortfall in housing provision at Welborne should be handled by PUSH through the roll-forward of the South Hampshire Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

28. The costs involved in undertaking publication and examination of the Development Sites and Policies Plan and any other related costs are covered within existing budgets.

CONCLUSION

29. The Plan has evolved through the consideration of issues and options, alternative approaches to policy development, and preferred options. The document at Appendix A, represents the plan that the Council should wish to adopt.

Background and Reference Papers:

Evidence Studies and other plans & strategies comprising the evidence base for the Plan are referenced in footnotes throughout the Plan

Responses to Consultations