

Compton PC Local Plan Sub-committee report - Sept, 2017

New proposals for calculating housing need figures

The Government has launched a consultation which sets out a number of proposals to reform the planning system to increase the supply of new homes. The proposals include a standard method for calculating local authorities' housing need. In Guildford this would increase the proposed base number significantly (from an already inflated 558 to 789 units per annum). The current base number of 558 pa has been found by professional consultants, such as Neil MacDonald, to be overestimated (because, for example, it does not account for the effect of a university correctly).

The new 789 pa figure does not take into account any additional employment need so Guildford could be looking at even higher levels of housing provision.

At this stage this is only a proposal for consultation – a white paper – but Cllr Spooner states that the steer from senior Ministers is that they expect this to be successfully implemented.

Council Leader Paul Spooner has written to all councillors stating that it is expected that there would be a move to a principle of development based on Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment rather than on Local Plan site allocations. That has not made it into this latest part of the white paper, but if this proposal goes through then any strategic planning by a local authority would seem pointless and planning function would be reduced to ensure that what was built then met certain criteria.

For further details on the white paper see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>

The key paragraphs are 21 and 22.

Air quality consultation

An FOI request to Surrey County Council has indicated that the northern section of The Street in Compton is likely to be made a Air Quality Management Area (AQMA); and Ken Miller (Chairman of Compton PC's Traffic Committee) has learned that the PC and affected residents will be consulted on how to address the problem of emissions.

In a letter to Surrey County Council officers, Gary Durant, Team Leader for Health and Community Care Services at GBC, states that "it is fairly conclusive that an Air Quality Management Area will need to be declared".

This seems contrary to statement in the *The Air Quality Review* (which formed part of the evidence base accompanying the latest draft Local Plan) that The Street in Compton "was

not declared as an AQMA as the assessment noted that emissions from traffic were expected to decrease into the future” (4.1).

The Local Plan Sub-Committee has written to Anne Milton MP asking her to determine why the recommendation to declare an AQMA in Compton (which is reiterated in the *Air Quality Monitoring Update, July 11, 2017*) was omitted from the last Local Plan Consultation documentation (meaning that information presented was misleading and prevented the public from commenting on this in a meaningful way). Anne has agreed to seek clarity from GBC on this issue.

The Sub-Committee has also written to Green Balance seeking advice on steps that can be taken (within the context of the Local Plan) to reduce emissions. The Green Balance response is attached in Annex A.

The Local Plan Sub-committee recommends that the PC agrees to allow the Traffic Sub-committee to prepare a response to the air quality consultation for approval by the PC. This would be based on the Green Balance advice and on local knowledge of the road network and its constraints.

Land for sale on Hog's Back

243 acres of agricultural land is for sale at Wanborough on the north side of the Hog's Back to the west of Blackwell Farm in the Area of Great Landscape Value. Although this land is outside the Local Plan and still within the green belt, the lower fields are being parcelled up and sold to property investors in lots by Vantage Land Ltd.

The University made a similar investment in the mid 1980s at Blackwell Farm (west of the land gifted to it in the 1960s at Manor Farm to provide sports facilities for the University) and is now seeking to move the green belt boundary again to gain the financial returns on its investment through the Local Plan. The sale of potential development land further west demonstrates that the proposed new green belt boundary on the west side of Guildford (once Blackwell Farm is taken out of green belt) is perceived to be temporary by investors and this represents a potential threat to the historic landscape of the Hog's Back and diminishing views out of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Surrey Hills AONB has been made aware of the sale of this land, but there is little that can be done as land sale is wholly separate to planning.

Wisley Airfield appeal

The Appeal against Guildford Borough Council's rejection of the Wisley Airfield Planning application begins on Tuesday, 19th September at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford at 10am and is anticipated to last up to four weeks. Highways England is supporting the Wisley Airfield campaigners as a fellow Rule 6 party following a dispute over certain aspects of the Junction 10 expansion plans and a change of position by the developer to fund part of the works.

Blackwell Farm access

Further information has been obtained from a resident at Down Place about the access road cutting through the AONB to the proposed Blackwell Farm development. Green Balance, which is advising Compton PC on the Local Plan, recommends that the impact of these access arrangements on the Surrey Hills AONB is considered and that a landscape architect should be commissioned to assess this impact. This will allow Compton PC to understand the impact on its parish north of the Hog's Back and on the ridge. The Local Plan Sub-Committee will obtain a quotation for this work from Land Management Services (LMS) and report back. (LMS is the company which prepared an earlier report on the quality of the landscape around Blackwell Farm.)

Response to latest consultation on updated draft Local Plan

Guildford Borough Council received 9,500 comments from 3,300 individuals and organisations in the recent consultation on the updates to the new Local Plan. The Council is still reviewing the responses and is optimistic that it is on target to submit the Plan to the Planning Inspector in December. Alongside the plan, GBC will also submit all of last year's consultation comments and the responses about the changes from this summer's consultation. More than 6,000 residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders made 32,174 comments during last year's regulation 19 pre-submission public consultation in June and July 2016. It is anticipated that the Plan will be ready for adoption by the end of 2018.

Waverley Local Plan

Waverley BC is currently consulting on the 'main modifications' to its Local Plan and these include a proposal to raise the housing target from 9,861 to 11,210 (including uplift for unmet need in Woking and for affordability). The modifications also include a technical change in response to an item the Inspector noted at the Examination – that the land in Binscombe should be removed from the green belt if the site is allocated for development. Comments can be made by viewing the document at www.waverley.gov.uk/consult. The consultation period ends on October 20.