

Compton Parish Council Local Plan Sub-Committee Report - November 2017

Extraordinary Council Meeting - Nov 21

On Tuesday 21 November, an Extraordinary General Meeting will be held at which the full Council will be asked to decide whether the draft Local Plan and its associated documents can be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. If the councillors vote to approve the draft Plan, it will be submitted next month.

The proposed version of the Local Plan for submission is on the GBC website. You should be able to access it via the link below:

<http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/documents/g720/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Nov-2017%2019.00%20Council.pdf?T=10>

Only minor changes have been made, with all the major sites, including Blackwell Farm, being put forward for development.

The meeting will take place at 7pm in the Council Chamber (in Millmead House).

Landscape assessment of proposed “Western Link” route

Worplesdon, Wanborough and Artington parish councils have all agreed to contribute equally to the cost of the landscape assessment of the proposed “Western Link” from the A31 to Gill Avenue. This means that the cost of this study to Compton Parish Council would come down to £275.

The clerk of Worplesdon PC has written:

“I can confirm that Worplesdon Parish Council is strongly opposed to the proposed development at Blackwell Farm. As has been the case over the past few years, Worplesdon Parish Council’s ongoing desire is to stand shoulder to shoulder with Compton Parish Council and Save the Hogs Back. Worplesdon Parish Council fully concurs with the views of Compton Parish Council and Save the Hogs Back that there are no suitable new access routes into/out of Blackwell Farm that could accommodate a development of this size.”

Wanborough and Artington PCs are similarly opposed to the Blackwell Farm development and the Chairman of Artington PC has stated that it does not wish Compton PC to be “lone voice”.

Housing number

The report undertaken by Neil McDonald on behalf of Guildford Residents Association has been peer reviewed and agreed in various quarters. This report demonstrates that the population projections for Guildford made by the Council’s consultant (GL Hearn) are flawed and the demographic housing need has been inflated. The Planning Inspector presiding over

Waverley's Local Plan accepted Neil's demographic analysis as opposed to that of GL Hearn, which lends further weight to his Guildford analysis.

More land on the Hog's Back under threat

A large tract of farmland to the west of Blackwell Farm has been sold to a well known "land bank" dealer. It is now being parcelled up and sold in lots to overseas property investors. The attached brochure demonstrates that developers consider Blackwell Farm is a "done deal" and the rest of the northern slopes of the Hog's Back are therefore a good investment.

A member of the Normandy Action Group has written to Tracey Coleman, Director of Planning and Regeneration at GBC, asking for a Section 4 Direction in order to protect the land at Wanborough. He was advised to do this by the Planning Adviser to the Surrey Hills AONB Board. Sadly, Ms Coleman has declined to put this Direction in place on the grounds that the land is already protected by other designations, such as green belt and AGLV (Area of Great Landscape Value). Blackwell Farm is also protected by green belt and AGLV, as well as the higher designation of AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), but these designations do not appear to have not offered it much protection to date

Wisley Airfield and Solum appeals

The Wisley Airfield appeal against the decision not to build 2,000 houses on former Wisley Airfield was heard last month. The general consensus is that the Inspector will recommend to the Secretary of State that the appeal is dismissed. Wisley Airfield Group has argued that the continued inclusion of the site in the Local Plan will render the local plan unsound (this comes from its QC, Richard Harwood, who is the only QC on the government's Local Plan Expert Group).

The appeal against the Solum development (at Guildford Railway Station) is currently underway. It is expected to finish on Wednesday. Members of the GRA and Guilford Vision Group have spoken against the appeal on architectural grounds (height and bulk of the development), and on the grounds that the planning application is premature and would preclude future infrastructure developments, such as new east-west crossing over the River Wey.