



Sandyhurst Lane Residents Association



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SLRA response to Ashford Borough Council Local Plan Consultation

Introduction

Sandyhurst Lane Residents' Association (SLRA) has been active for over thirty years representing the collective interests of the residents of Sandyhurst Lane and all adjacent roads which constitute its neighbourhood of 340 dwellings.

The mission statement of the Association is

“Protecting the rural character of Sandyhurst Lane and the adjoining area”.

With this priority in mind we welcome the opportunity to contribute to Ashford Borough Council’s consultation on the draft Local Plan 2014 - 2030 and have responses on three parts of the draft Plan:

- Policy S20, Eureka Park, which impacts directly or indirectly on our constituent members.
- Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces
- Policy TRA9 - Planning for HGV movement

The SLRA has proactively encouraged its members to make their personal views on the Plan known to the Council through the published consultation process.

Policy S20 - Eureka Park

Overview

After revoking **CS4** which had previously defined urban Ashford, it is acknowledged in the draft Plan that the proposed new development at Eureka Park clearly redefines that urban boundary originally set in the Greater Ashford Development Framework (GADF) and acknowledged in subsequent iterations of strategic housing plans, and moves it north west towards the rear of Sandyhurst Lane properties.

The impact of this boundary movement on the rural character of the Sandyhurst Lane area, its residents and its ecology cannot be overstated.

The SLRA welcomes the Council’s acknowledgment of this in Paras. b), f), and k) of Policy S20 but believes that Policy S20 is unsound for the reasons stated. The proposals below seek to help redress this.

In preparing these proposals the SLRA recognises the precedence of Site Policies as stated in Para 4.3.

SLRA Representation on Policy S20

a) Site Design

The SLRA considers that Policy S20 is unsound as there is no explicit recognition that this mixed use site is the largest development in the draft Local Plan neighbouring the Kent Downs AONB.

We propose an amended clause to Policy S20:

S20 (k) Laid out and orientated so that the impact of the site on the neighbouring Kent Downs AONB is minimised and the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers is preserved. (Policies ENV3 and ENV5)

Design standards for both employment and residential properties are required to mitigate the visual, landscape, environmental and light pollution impacts of the development on neighbouring occupiers. (Policies ENV4 and ENV5)

The SLRA also considers that Policy S20 is unsound since the composition of the proposed S20 master planning group is undefined. We propose an additional clause to Policy S20

S20 (m) The proposed master planning group shall include representation from local parish and urban councils and representatives of affected Resident and Community groups. (Policies ENV3, ENV4 and ENV5)

b) Site boundary

The SLRA considers that Policy S20 is unsound since the scope and scale of the proposed “generous landscaping buffer” is undefined. We propose Policy S20(b) is amended to:

S20 (b) A generous landscaped buffer to residential properties along Sandyhurst Lane shall preserve the tree line and foliage behind Nos: 86 to 154 (inclusive) and 250 to 300 (inclusive) Sandyhurst Lane. (Policies ENV4 and ENV5)

The landscaping buffer between any S20 development and the nearest boundary to any existing premises in Sandyhurst Lane shall be not less in width than the width of the existing “green maintenance strip” plus the width of the tree line parallel to this strip behind Nos: 86 to 154 Sandyhurst Lane. (Policies ENV3 and ENV5)

c) Accessibility

The SLRA welcomes the Plan’s commitment to restrict vehicular access to S20 and any future development of the Golf Club to be only from Trinity Road. It is, however, concerned that no consideration has been given to the likelihood that increases in traffic in Trinity Road will generate additional rat-run traffic using Sandyhurst Lane with consequential increases in road safety risks to its residents and road users and that Policy S20 is therefore unsound.

The SLRA also supports the Plan’s proposals to encourage walking and cycling routes to and from Sandyhurst Lane. But the SLRA considers that the impact of the resulting increases in pedestrian and cyclist traffic, and any resulting vehicle parking in and along Sandyhurst Lane, on road safety risks on this already busy “rat run” secondary rural road has not been considered and that Policy S20 is therefore unsound.

We propose an additional clause to Policy S20:

S20 (n) A proportionate financial contribution to traffic calming and parking management measures in Sandyhurst Lane to accommodate the increase in vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist use from S20. (Policies TRA5, TRA6 and TRA7)

SLRA Representation on Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces

Para 5.441 refers to the site in Sandyhurst Lane already offering social, community and sports provision. We take this to be Sandyacres. Para 5.441 also includes “New provision is proposed which could include improved sports pitches, informal and natural green space and potentially allotment space.”

The SLRA considers that Policy COM2 is unsound because it fails to require that any new provision results in no anti-social effects such as increased noise, light pollution, traffic and parking problems. Any social functions should be located well away from neighbouring dwellings and be subject to the same hours restrictions as at present.

SLRA Representation on Policy TRA9 - Planning for HGV movement

Under “The approach to Heavy Goods Vehicles”, para 5.282 includes “this Local Plan allocates provision for a doubling in size of the existing overnight lorry park at Waterbrook (policy S15) to around 600 spaces.”

This is welcomed; however the SLRA considers that Policy TRA9 is unsound because it does not require that commensurate measures are taken to prohibit and enforce prohibition of nuisance HGV parking throughout the borough, including on the A20 at and near Potters Corner.