

## **New version of the Ashford Local Plan to 2030**

### **Summary of issues pertinent to the SLRA**

Whilst it has not yet been officially published, the proposed revisions to the draft Local Plan 2030, and the Council's responses to the comments made during last year's public consultation, have appeared as one of the papers to be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 15 June 2017.

The Cabinet paper contains much more information than the following summary of issues pertinent to the interests of the SLRA:

#### **1. Development Sites (amendments and new proposals)**

On page 20, proposed amendments to Policy **S20 – Eureka Park**, are as follows:

*The site at Eureka Park is proposed for a mix of commercial (around 20ha) and residential development (~~up to 300~~ in the region of 375 dwellings)*  
*f) Ecological mitigation and enhancement measures informed by a habitat survey with particular regard to The Warren Local Wildlife Site;*  
*l) A connection to the sewerage system at the nearest point of adequate capacity, as advised by Southern Water in collaboration with the service provider, and ensure future access to the existing sewerage system for maintenance and upsizing purposes.*

In Appendix 2, pages 12-14, one of the former omission sites (DW9, **Woodside, Westwell Lane**) is now proposed for inclusion as Policy S47:

#### **Policy S47 - Land East of Hothfield Mill, A20**

*The site to the east of Hothfield Mill, is proposed for residential development for an indicative capacity of 75 dwellings.*

*Development proposals for this site shall:*

- a) Be designed and laid out to take account of the residential amenity of the 'Woodside' property, and those that overlook the site in Westwell Lane. Particular attention needs to be given to the topography of the site, adjacent Listed buildings and the wider countryside and AONB settings. The development should be no more than 2 storeys in height;*
- b) Provide primary vehicular access from the A20 Ashford Road in the location indicated on the policies map, with the provision of a right turn lane on the A20, in accordance with Kent Highways recommendations;*
- c) Investigate the provision of a direct access to the property 'Woodside' from the A20, with closure of the current layby, in accordance with recommendations from Kent Highways, and in liaison with the property owners;*

- d) Provide appropriate landscaping on the eastern built boundary and retain and improve existing screening around the site boundaries;
- e) Provide a connection to the sewerage system at the nearest point of adequate capacity, as advised by Southern Water, and ensure future access to the existing sewerage system for maintenance and upsizing purposes;
- f) Provide an area of public open space and play provision in accordance with guidance contained within the SPD;
- g) Provide new pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the development with linkages into the wider network where possible, including Westwell Lane.

## **2. Council's responses to comments made in the consultation**

### **Eureka Park site (S20)**

Appendix 3, pages 147-158 contains the Council's response to comments received on the draft proposals for the Eureka Park site (S20). The SLRA and several residents had lobbied, *inter alia*, for better definition of the "generous landscaped buffer", representation on the "master planning group" and improved traffic management in Sandyhurst Lane (from which no access to the Eureka site would be permitted).

The Council's responses include:

*The detailed proposals for the buffer zone are a matter for masterplanning – no amendment necessary.*

*There is a requirement in the policy for a detailed masterplan to guide the detailed development of the site. A masterplan will be the appropriate way to deal with specific landscape concerns and the relationship with the AONB.*

*The preparation of a masterplan for the site will involve community engagement through appropriate workshops etc and this will involve representatives of the local community.*

*There is a requirement in the policy criterion b to provide a generous landscaped buffer to 151 residential properties along Sandyhurst Lane and criterion e specifies that access to the site shall be provided from Trinity Road only.*

*Participants in any community workshop to inform the preparation of a masterplan for the site will involve those from the local community and this is well established practice by the Borough Council - no amendment necessary.*

*There is no clear evidence that levels of traffic on Sandyhurst Lane will increase as a result of development on this site as there is no vehicular access from the site onto Sandyhurst Lane. In any event, there is already development identified to take place on this site in accordance with the adopted Core Strategy and the Urban Sites and Infrastructure Policy.*

### **Policy TRA9, Planning for HGV movement.**

Appendix 3, page 282 contains the Council's response to the comments made by SLRA on the draft proposals for Policy TRA9, Planning for HGV movement. Whilst the SLRA welcomed the proposal to double overnight parking at Waterbrook, we criticised the lack of a requirement for commensurate measures to prohibit and enforce prohibition of nuisance HGV parking throughout the borough, including on the A20 at and near Potters Corner.

The Council's response:

*Planning conditions are applied to make a development acceptable, and national guidance requires that they should be imposed only when they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise, and reasonable in all other respects (See NPPF paragraph 206). Local enforcement measures are outlined online at <http://www.ashford.gov.uk/heavy-goodsvehicles>, while more strategic solutions are dealt with by the Department for Transport.*

### **Policy COM2, Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces**

Appendix 3, page 306 contains the Council's response to the comments made by SLRA on the draft proposals for Policy COM2, Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces. SLRA believed that, in relation to Sandyacres, it should 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.

The Council's response:

*Sandyacres is currently a hub and fulfils a range of social, community and sports roles. The position in the Local Plan merely reflects the current position. Any expansion or additional facilities at Sandyacres will need to be explored with the community and parish Council in due course, and the issues set out above will be important considerations for the extent of any future role.*

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**The SLRA will be considering the amendments, proposals for new development sites and responses to previous comments made, in preparation for the consultation period which will follow publication of the revised draft Local Plan to 2030 (expected early July).**