

The Welborne Plan

Statement on Issues and Questions

Issue 2 - The Vision, Objectives and Development Principles for Welborne (WEL1 and WEL2)

September 2014

CD-09

2.1 *In broad terms do the policies of LP3 include sufficient detail to enable a decision maker to react appropriately to a development proposal? (NPPF para 154)?*

- 2.1.1 The Welborne Plan (LP3) is required to address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change, which in Welborne's case will occur over at least twenty years. This means that the policies in the LP3 will need to tread a fine line between being clear as to what is expected of future decision makers, while at the same time being sufficiently flexible to respond to the inevitable changes in circumstances. This is why the policies are deliberately drafted to make it clear to both the prospective developers and decision makers, what is required in order to meet the policy without being overly prescriptive.
- 2.1.2 It has also been necessary to ensure that the level of detail provided at this 'the plan' stage is appropriate, but, that sufficient policy guidance is given as to exactly what is expected at 'the project' stage when a planning application is submitted for determination.
- 2.1.3 The corollary of this is that the policies in the Welborne Plan are supported by an up-to date evidence base, which demonstrates that the Plan is deliverable. In this respect the Council has been mindful of the requirement in paragraph 158 of the NPPF that the supporting evidence base for the Welborne Plan should be proportionate. Nevertheless the Plan is also clear on what additional evidence will be required to support future planning applications. This is particularly important where the full impact of the proposals can only be determined with the benefit of a detailed scheme. This is further supported by the Council's response to question 3.5.
- 2.1.4 The policies in the Welborne Plan are therefore sufficiently clear on what evidence will be required to support the applications to enable a considered decision, and the requirements and criteria by which they will be judged. For example policy WEL39 requests that a site wide SuDS Strategy is submitted alongside the initial planning application and also provides a detailed list of the criteria which the SuDS Strategy must include. This list would then be used by a decision maker to make an assessment of the suitability of the Strategy submitted against the policy requirements.

2.2 *Does policy WEL2 display an appropriate balance between aspiration and realism?*

- 2.2.1 Policy WEL 2 with the exception of the amendments set out in paragraph 2.15 reiterates the High Level Development Principles for Welborne as set out in policy CS13 in the adopted Core Strategy, and as such was the starting point for preparing the Welborne Plan.
- 2.2.2 The NPPF requires Local Plans to be aspirational but realistic (para 154). The Welborne Plan has directly drawn its vision from the local community and key stakeholders. The vision can be summarised as creating '*a distinct*

new community set apart but connected to Fareham, whose spirit, character and form are inspired by its landscape setting (paragraph 2.4, LP3). Further aspects of the vision seek to create a diverse well integrated new community. The vision establishes the principle that self-containment within Welborne should be defined, as primarily meeting ‘a significant proportion of its inhabitants’ life needs’. An integrated movement system, a linked network of open spaces, and respect for the natural features both on and off of the site all form part of the vision.

- 2.2.3 The policies in the Plan have been directly informed by this vision, and set out how Welborne will have its own unique identity, but which nonetheless has strong physical and perceptual links to Fareham. Delivering the vision is cross-cutting and to some extent is delivered through each policy in the Plan, but policy WEL2 in particular sets the high level development principles which will help to deliver the vision.
- 2.2.4 The detailed applications of these principles is however provided through the other policies in LP3; for example the requirement in WEL2 that *‘The development will provide a range of highly accessible employment opportunities, including dedicated employment floorspace, to reduce the need for commuting and contribute towards self-containment;’* can be seen to be implemented through policy WEL9 which requires that *‘Employment development should be principally focused immediately to the north of the M27 motorway, to the east and west of the Junction 10 and the A32....and offices should be developed in close proximity to the District Centre and fronting onto the A32.’*
- 2.2.5 Furthermore, the unique character to which Welborne aspires stems directly from its close relationship to the landscape. Policy WEL2 requires the layout to provide a connected network of strategic green infrastructure which respects and enhances the landscape qualities of the area. This is further expanded in Chapter 8 on Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity, and Landscape. Paragraph 8.2 of the supporting text sets out the aspiration to bring everyone living in Welborne closer to the natural environment, by ensuring that ‘as far practical every household is within 200m of the primary open space network’.
- 2.2.6 Therefore whilst policy WEL2 is understandably visionary and aspirational in nature, it needs to be, as it sets the high level framework for the subsequent policies that follow on in the Plan which provide the practical and realistic application of that vision and detail how those aspirations will be delivered. Furthermore it is maintained that the principles in policy WEL2 are realistic as they were established through the development and examination of the Fareham Core Strategy (LP1), which was subsequently found sound, and following this, through development and consultation on the Welborne Plan (LP3).

2.3 *In broad terms are the principles for development as set out in policy WEL2 justified and would the development contribute to the sustainable growth of the Borough?*

2.3.1 As stated above, in answer to Q2.2, the development principles set out in policy WEL2 were tested at the Core Strategy Examination. The adopted Core Strategy contains a number of Strategic Objectives, of which SO1 is to *'deliver the South Hampshire Strategy in a sustainable way, focusing development in Fareham, the Strategic Development Area north of Fareham (i.e. Welborne), and the Western Wards'*. This was translated into the high level development principle which requires the new development to create an inclusive and cohesive community, built upon the principles of sustainability.

2.3.2 The NPPF taken as a whole sets out the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system. In paragraph 7 it draws particular attention to the three dimensions to sustainable development;

- An economic role; by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation;
- A social role, by providing a supply of housing to meet the need of present and future generations, with accessible local services; and
- An environmental role which contributes towards protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and by helping to improve biodiversity, uses natural resources prudently, minimise waste, and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

2.3.3 As stated above in answer to question 2.2, policy WEL2 sets out the principles which will guide the future development of Welborne and replaces those principles set in CS13 of the Fareham Core Strategy. These include creating an inclusive and sustainable community, incorporating high standards of sustainable design and resource efficiency; providing a range of highly accessible employment opportunities; providing a range of housing types and tenures to meet the needs of the community; accessible local services; providing a connected and accessible community; and conserving and enhancing landscape and ecological features. These are all entirely consistent with the role the NPPF envisages the planning system playing in delivering sustainable development.

2.3.4 Furthermore, policy WEL2 has been reviewed as part of the High Level Assessment undertaken as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process (SD05 – Appendix H).

2.3.5 Although the above principles are principally aimed at making Welborne a cohesive and sustainable community, these are not exclusive to Welborne and will provide access and opportunity to the wider Fareham community

through the offer of a greater mix of housing provision, provision of employment opportunities and improved access to the natural environment. Therefore, based on an adopted Core Strategy (LP1), policy WEL2 in broad terms sets out justified principles of development and the role that Welborne will play in contributing to sustainable growth in the Borough.

2.4 *The sixth bullet point of policy WEL2 refers to a ‘revised Transport Strategy’. Should that reference be more explicit?*

2.4.1 The reference to a ‘revised Transport Strategy’ is referencing the work which culminated in the *Welborne Transport Strategy: Final Report*, which was prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff on behalf of Fareham Borough Council. While it is accepted that the reference may be more explicit, it is noted that the other bullet points in Policy WEL2 do not refer to other documents in the evidence base. Therefore on balance this reference seems an anomaly in this policy. The supporting text in paragraph 2.14 outlines the role that the evolution of the Plan and evidence base has played in the revisions to the high level development principles set out in policy WEL2.

2.4.2 Therefore, the Council considers that the current wording of Policy WEL 2 and its reference to a revised Transport Strategy to be superfluous as it is adequately covered in the supporting text. Minor modifications are proposed to address this as follows:

2.4.3 Amend the sixth bullet point of Policy WEL2 to read ~~**Based on the revised Transport Strategy, the**~~ **The following key principles apply in relation to transport:**