

Community Action Team Meeting (CAT) Brookfield Community School, Monday 27 January

Local Plan Supplement Public Meeting Monday 27 January from 6-7.30pm

Who was there?

Speakers:

- Cllr Seán Woodward, Executive Leader of the Council
- Gayle Wootton, Planning Strategy Manager
- Cllr Mike Ford, Meeting Chairman

Present: Cllr Bayford, Cllr Evans, Cllr Cartwright, Cllr Bastable, Cllr Martin, Cllr Butts,

Residents: Approximately 40 residents in attendance, all attended the exhibition.

What was talked about

Introduction by Cllr Woodward

Cllr Woodward gave an introduction setting out the background of changes to the Government requirements for housing in Fareham that have led to us needing to make further changes to the Draft Local Plan. We are consulting on a Supplement to the 2017 Draft Local Plan and this is one of five meetings and 6 exhibitions that are taking place this winter. He encouraged residents to ask questions at the end of the presentations.

If we do not have a Local Plan the Planning Inspector takes control of our planning decisions and to meet the Government housing requirements may well agree proposals that locally we would object to. This has happened in neighbouring authorities and we do not want that here. He highlighted the phrase “an obligation to help other areas”, in practice this means we are expected to absorb unmet housing need of neighbouring authorities. As a result, we must look for further development area and this is where the proposals for strategic growth areas come in.

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Main Presentation by Gayle Wootton, Planning Strategy Manager (presentation lasted appx. 30 minutes)

Gayle advised residents how we started this Local Plan process in 2015 and it was then part 2 of the Local Plan was adopted. From 2015 onwards work started on the draft Local Plan and the first regulation 18 consultation on the Draft Local Plan that took place in 2017 received 2500 responses.

In 2018 the Government introduced a new method of calculating housing need which resulted in the 2017 Draft Local Plan being revised.

From the Issues and Options consultation last summer, Fareham Borough Council found residents were more in favour for Brownfield sites as opposed to Greenfield sites, and in support for higher density housing where there is good public transport. There was widespread support to preserve green spaces and areas of landscape value, such as the coast.

In the Issues and Options consultation, we asked about Good Growth., We define this as encouraging quality of life, maintaining our distinct communities, minimising environmental impact, promoting green and active travel and meeting our housing need whilst making sure the necessary infrastructure is in place (see slide). Central Government made three changes to The National Planning Policy Framework in 2018. The impact of these were:

- Higher housing need, from 420 dwellings to 520 dwellings per annum.
- Diversity in housing sites, with at least 10% as smaller sites.
- We need to plan for the unmet housing need of neighbouring authorities for which we have a 'duty to cooperate'. Our own requirement is 520 houses and we must add a buffer in addition to sites that have already come forward, we estimate these at an additional 10-15%.

The total housing need for the Borough up to 2036 we estimate to be between 9152 to 9568 dwellings (see housing supply slide). We also expect windfall sites, these have averaged 70 sites per year, these are additional sites that we were previously unaware of but have been put forward from developers. Draft Local Plan sites from the 2017 consultation will continue to be counted against the target figure as are the planned development at Welborne which will be

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over 4000 within the time of the Local Plan (6000 in total). This brings the total figure to around 9500 so we have added a few additional sites in the Supplementary document to meet the requirement.

Ongoing work will remain to secure a five year rolling Housing Land Supply so Fareham Borough Council can meet our year on year requirement. or again, the Planning Inspector is able to intervene and make approvals outside of our Plan, this is a further reason why the buffer is so important. Before the Publication Plan later this year we will merge the 2017 Draft Local Plan with the Supplement consultation outcomes and set out our full proposals. (see Revised Development Strategy slide).

We are proposing to re-instate Areas of Special Landscape Quality (see landscape quality slide). We propose to designate these as areas where development would be deemed inappropriate unless the proposals can maintain landscape character.

We have four new Proposed Allocations (see slide). Rookery Farm is currently an aggregates recycling site and the owners have promoted the land to us for development. 1-2 The Avenue, close to train station in Fareham. There is a site in Botley Road of 5 houses and a sheltered housing scheme at Cams Alders.

There are two Strategic Gaps at present, one in the Meon Valley and the second between Stubbington and Fareham. We have a commitment to continue to provide a gap between the settlement areas (see strategic gap slide). The focus of these areas is to maintain settlement identity and prevent coalescence.

There are two Strategic Growth Areas (see slide). These are proposed as areas to undergo a process of Council-led masterplanning. Being led by the Council has the advantage of the Council taking control of the planning process and only allowing development in specific areas,

where infrastructure allows or could be enhanced, and that fits in with existing settlements.

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Without this we are subject to speculative proposals from developers that the Council must defend through the planning process. This is a way of the Council having more control over these development areas, as well as residents and businesses having certainty about where growth is planned beyond the scope of this current plan and well into the future.

- SGA Downend (slide):

One of 8 areas consulted on last year, it would have distinct neighbourhoods well related to existing settlements. They would be close to transport links and would provide new infrastructure and interconnected green space with protected bio-diversity. Also, we could save large parts of Portsdown Hill from development.

- Strategic Growth Area (SGA) Stubbington/Fareham gap:

Another of the 8 areas consulted on last year. The three main landowners and site promoters are willing to work with us to retain a significant proportion of the strategic gap whilst creating residential development with social infrastructure, leisure and parkland facilities and health provision. There are mitigation opportunities in the area - protection for Brent geese, nitrate offsetting, this would provide more green space for residents and wildlife.

We are also proposing new housing and environmental policies:

- National space standards, minimum size of rooms/homes to promote health and wellbeing and ensure homes are liveable
- Increasing the diversity of supply. Promoting small-scale development where there is access to rail /bus routes and shops
- Protecting our 5-year housing land supply, in order to control of our planning process
- New over-arching policy for climate change
- Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems
- We are proposing a new policy specifically on protecting trees and woodland
- A new policy on air quality including provision of electric vehicle charging points

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We want you to 'Have Your Say', the supplement and survey are available online and by request at the Civic Offices. You can also view it at libraries in Fareham. There are also supporting evidence documents to comment on. There will be another consultation in the summer on the Publication Plan before it is submitted to Government.

End of Presentation from Gayle Wootton, Planning Strategy Manager

Any Questions from the audience? (Cllr Woodward answered these)

Q1: I didn't receive the Special Edition of Fareham Today.

A1: We have posted 50,000 copies with Royal Mail we expect them to be delivered. There are copies here and, in the libraries, and Civic Offices and online.

Q2: I can't understand where the figures come from in the presentation?

A2: The 4000 houses that are built are within the Welborne development during the period of the Local Plan, plus the windfall sites, the proposed sites here and the sites that were previously consulted in in the 2017 Draft Local Plan. There were 18,000 sites proposed in all, but we cut this down to the numbers we need.

Q3: I have several questions:

Q3a: We didn't know about this consultation in Swanwick, how is the consultation being publicised?

A3a: The consultation has been publicised by Special Edition of Fareham Today is being delivered to every home across the borough. These meetings have been promoted widely in the press, online, in social media, with through posters and noticeboards and sent out invitations to all our E-Panel members. If you don't check any of these then it is possible to miss the information, but this is not a planning application, so we do not write to every household. You have an opportunity to comment on the site in principle now. If it does proceed it would still go through the normal planning processes and at that time individual households would be consulted in line with our planning duty.

Q3b: I would like to talk about Rookery Farm, why is there two roads a primary one on Botley Road and a secondary one on Swanwick Lane. It's busy already. We don't need 300 cars added on.

A3b: If this is your point of view, please write it on the consultation survey form, this is why we are having these meetings and running the survey.

Q3c: Close to Rookery Farm is a conservation area, how can you be sure this will be protected?

A3c: The countryside area is to be protected as part of the development plans;. The housing was be focussed on the site of current aggregates recycling activity..

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Q3d: So, the current orchard area is not planned to be built on? I don't think they will need the extra road out in Swanwick?

A3d: Please write your response to the consultation in the online survey form. We also have paper forms available.

Q4: The Stubbington allocation, what is that?

A4: This is not an allocation; it does not mean the whole area will be filled with houses. It is around the area of Newlands Farm, but we are talking to the three landowners they could develop a masterplan for the area should it be needed whilst also maintaining the distinct areas of Stubbington and Fareham.

Q5: My question is about Solent Airport and where houses will be built in the vicinity of the airport?

A5: There is a new requirement to consider accommodating unmet housing need, that is why we are even considering it. We own the airport so yes; we are very eager to protect it and ensure it works with any housing proposals. All urban airports impact on housing near them right across the UK, this would be true of the new ones near Solent airport. The airport also provides growth opportunities in employment and business, this is also covered by the Local Plan.

Q6: We haven't received our copy of Fareham Today, why haven't we? Can you put a show of hands if you have received it?

A6: Over 80% of people attending raised their hands.

Q7a: Rookery Farm 20 years ago was an Orchard. The Raymond Brown brothers purchased the land and the recycling area was granted by Fareham Borough Council.

A7a: Your statement is incorrect. 30 years ago, Rookery Farm was a landfill. It has passed through a number of hands since and Raymond Brown then bought it about 9 years ago and Hampshire County Council approved it as a recycling centre. I believe this was renewed by Hampshire not long ago.

Q7b: Okay, I stand corrected. It was a rock recycling area. It has a material change of use. The Raymond Brown brothers are apparently currently in financial difficulty. If you want to have 150 houses there, then there will be 2 cars per house. That would be an extra 300 cars entering Botley Road. Botley Road is already backed up with cars. Also, what is being called affordable in the area. It will only be money in the pocket of the developer. Are there are no affordable houses planned in the area?

A7b: We expect a 1/3 of the houses to be 'affordable' across the Borough. These include 'affordable rents' and council houses. For the first time in very many years we are building our own new council houses, these are going up in Sarisbury as we speak and we have plans for more. These are absolutely set at rents that are affordable for anybody. I do want to stress this

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extra housing is needed for our own people. This is not for people moving in, or immigrants, when you have children, parents and grandchildren wanting homes the housing requirement goes up. People are living longer. Even if no one else moved in we have to build this many homes for our own Fareham people, that was why in 2017 numbers were 420, that is what we said we needed just for our own growth.

Q8a: Gayle mentioned a Climate Change policy, how will we ensure that new housing is built sustainably?

A8a: We are putting in a far-reaching policy on Climate Change Policy. We have made a plan at the Council to be carbon neutral in the next 5-10 years and we will certainly be promoting eco-friendly homes. At Welborne we will have some 'passive homes' and we are also promoting self-build which can really work for building eco-homes.

Q8b: There are not enough solar panels on new housing – what are we doing?

A8b: We will have a climate change policy and where we can we will be trying to make houses more sustainable. We also require funding from Government to make the houses eco-friendly.

Q9a: I live in Swanwick Lane where the second entrance to Rookery Farm is supposed to be, is it a done deal now?

A9a: No, it isn't.

Q9b: My wife heard the Raymond Brown proprietor talking to landowners. He was talking about putting a roundabout in. We phoned the Council today about it. We didn't hear about this consultation until today.

A9b: There is no planning application currently, this is a consultation on an indicative proposal.

Q9c: What is the transport infrastructure going to do?

A9c: We don't know yet. We can't easily widen roads in this area, we would need to knock down houses to do it. Hampshire County Council will have to define a response to every proposal.

Q10: The thing is, what annoys me is, my back garden backs onto the A27 the traffic has got worse and worse. Now there is lorries delivering stuff to Tesco etc, and they hit a drain and the whole house shakes at 2.00 in the morning. They have the baskets in the back, they rattle by all night. We are just getting fed up with it. We live on Woodlands Road near the social club. They are using all the old infrastructure and not putting anything else in.

A10: When you are developing in an existing semi-urban area where are you going to build new roads? There is an issue, we need to build the houses and we also need to improve the roads. But we also can't widen roads or build new roads. The County Council Hampshire Highways may put in traffic calming measures, traffic lights and roundabouts to help the flow but there will not be new roads. Council tax won't pay for these developers will pay for them.

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Q11: Rookery Farm, you are also going to get 300 children. The schools in the area are on their limit. What school will they go to?

A11: It needs to be funded by the developers when they build more homes they have to pay for additional capacity. Without doubt our primary schools and secondary schools will have to be developed or extended. It happened in Whiteley. Whiteley didn't get a new school at first but they got new entry forms, Ultimately, there has to be whole new primary school and secondary schools when there are sufficient children. The County Council is statutory consultee and they will have to respond to this.

Q12a: Well done for having a plan, but isn't this the definition of madness? We play a game, and we play it very well. We are told we have to build but we all know the infrastructure in this area is not here. The sewage has collapsed in two areas here. There are years of Tory Government here, I don't want it to be political but why can't we challenge it more and fight it? We need houses for the young of this area – nurses, doctors etc. In this area they are retirement homes or homes for rich professionals, it is not for basic homes, we also need employment and infrastructure support for shops.

A12a: I have said that the messages we get from Government are contradictory, we need homes and employment for all our population.

Q12b: The Government are looking at Smart Motorways and the one is still being built. If they are stopped because the risks are too high, we will be in worse trouble here. It increases the capacity hugely and the road users need it, it might be up for review. How do we cope with this?

A12b: Yes, there is a review and there is a panorama on it tonight. There have been issues on roads that have intermittent hard shoulders and refuge areas, but so do A roads and they are also 70 miles per hour. Our motorway would be full use of the hard shoulder.

Q12c: The speeds aren't as high. The technology isn't there. It might not be the salvation around here everybody thinks. If it fails it could impact massively on this area. Every morning at the moment is a problem the roads are jammed, and it is not sustainable.

A12c: I agree

Q13: I understand we need the housing, but hands up if the infrastructure won't meet the housing growth?

A13: Cllr Woodward said every hand would go up. Whatever costs come out; it will be the developer who pays for the infrastructure. Section 106 payments are for infrastructure. We will be able to take the money from the developers.

Q14: How will the Infrastructure Plan work?

A14: By 2036 we will live in a different world. Work will not look the same and people won't have to travel on the roads all at the one time. At the moment, most journeys are made by one person in a car with 4 seats and almost empty buses. People will have more flexible hours and work from home. In the future you probably won't get on the local road expecting to do 30 miles an hour all the way. The world will change and will look different.

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Q15: The Housing development – Commercial developments are there any?

A15: There is a lot of employment spaces. Daedalus is the main employment site. Improved access on Stubbington Bypass to improve traffic between Gosport and Fareham will aid this. We are very strongly committed to creating employment locally.

Q16: Is Segensworth somewhere you are trying to get more employment spaces?

A16: Where employment sites are proposed, we will work with Hampshire County Council to ensure there are roads to get people to work.

Q17: What about health infrastructure? We can't see our GPs without a 2 week wait.

A17: GP's are private businesses contracted by the Clinical Commissioning Group to meet Primary Health Care. It is up to them to ensure that they have enough GP's for the population, but they can't make GP's open new premises or run longer hours. I would recommend asking the Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group.

With no more questions Cllr Woodward closed the meeting at 7.30pm

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