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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP**

**Held on Friday, 17 March 2017 at 1.30 pm in  
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Mr S.G. Bambridge (Chairman)      Mr M. S. Robinson  
Mr S H Chapman-Allen                Mrs A M Webb

**Also Present**

Mr K. Martin                              Mr A.P. Joel  
Mr W.P. Borrett                         Mr P.D. Claussen  
Mr P.J. Duigan

**In Attendance**

James Mann	- Planning Policy Officer
Stephen Ottewell	- Director Capita Planning & Building Control
Sarah Robertson	- Senior Planning Policy Officer*
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer
Phil Mileham	- Strategic Planning Manager
Tim Mills	- Executive Manager Growth
Jemma March	- Principal Planning Policy Officer*

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**24/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

None.

**25/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

None.

**26/17 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None.

**27/17 NON MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA  
ITEM 4)**

Councillors Borrett, Claussen, Duigan, Joel and Martin.

**28/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

The Chairman advised that following a number of concerns in relation to the figures contained within Table 1 of the report which had been discussed at the previous meeting a revised version would be circulated accordingly to all who were in attendance.

**29/17 LOCAL PLAN AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

Stephen Ottewell, the Director of Planning & Building Control (Capita) presented the report. Members were being asked to accept the Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment as evidence for the Local Plan and to

endorse Option 1 – to recommend the Local Plan be progressed with an affordable housing requirement of 25%.

A presentation was provided.

The Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment had been presented to the Local Plan Working Group on 3 February 2017; however, since that time, minor modifications had been made to address matters raised at that meeting although the general content and findings of the Assessment remained unchanged. The areas that had been amended were at Chapter 10 of the Appendix onwards (attached as a supplementary agenda).

The Director of Planning & Building Control (Capita) then provided Members with a detailed overview of the local context including:

- the need for infrastructure
- the need for affordable housing
- affordable housing/S106 achieved between 2015/17
- the modelling of different rates of affordable housing and S106 financial contributions in the Assessment
- consideration of the findings of the Assessment in relation to the recommendations on CIL and the affordable housing threshold.

In summary the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) had identified a significant affordable housing need, which the Council was required to address as part of providing for its objectively assessed housing need.

The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) had identified that it was critical that an allowance was made for S106 contributions to ensure the provision of essential infrastructure as part of the allocations.

The Study had identified that a level of affordable housing of up to 25% still allowed for a level of developer contributions without undermining viability. As a consequence, setting the policy at 25% would maximise the level of affordable housing required, whilst ensuring contributions to infrastructure could be made. In doing so, it was accepted that for certain sites, in certain locations, a site specific viability assessment would be required and a lower level of contributions or affordable would be sought. However, such an approach would maximise the amount of affordable housing delivered overall.

There was an opportunity to review the affordable housing threshold as a single policy review without having to review or amend the entire Local Plan should further evidence support changes to the adopted policy.

Margaret Holmes from Watton Town Council asked if there were any figures available that provided an analysis of the types of affordable housing being built. The Chairman explained that affordable housing was mostly rental properties but could also form part of a shared ownership scheme. He asked Mrs Holmes to send the question in an

email to him so that the figure could be checked and the types of affordable homes it represented. Mr Atterwill, the Chairman of Swanton Morley Parish Council stated that affordable housing was normally split 65/35 in terms of rental and starter homes. He felt that Breckland Council should promote and encourage more shared ownership schemes and had been surprised that these schemes as well as starter homes had not been addressed in this document. Councillor Joel pointed out that there was a clear difference between starter homes and shared ownership schemes. The definition of both was explained.

Referring to the presentation slide under the heading "The Need for Affordable Housing", Councillor Claussen challenged the numbers in relation to the identified need of 882 affordable homes a year for the remainder of the plan period to meet currently unmet need for affordable housing. He queried the volume and wanted to know what the needs of Breckland were and whether this figure was what Breckland genuinely had to target. Members were informed that this figure had been based on primary survey work carried out from information on people who could not afford to purchase their own home. This 882 figure was Breckland's proportion split from central Norfolk. In terms of starter homes, the Planning Policy Team would ensure that there was a policy provision for such dwellings. In terms of meanings/definitions Members were informed that starter homes fell within national parameters. Currently, there was not a definition for affordable housing. Attention was drawn to page 22 of the appendix that gave a full explanation on starter homes.

Ian Martin, NP4 Yaxham, referred to table 9.1 of the report and asked for clarification as the distribution of potential development sites included 5 parishes categorised under PD05A. In response, it was noted that for those 5 parishes that were no longer classed as Local Service Centres (LSCs) this information was no longer relevant.

Members were asked if they were content at this time to go ahead with the preferred recommendations. Members were reminded that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would be considered but that it was not relevant to this Local Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment be accepted as evidence for the Local Plan.

**RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that the Local Plan be progressed with an affordable housing requirement of 25%.

**30/17 REVISIONS TO RURAL AREAS POLICY PD05 (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

Sarah Robertson, the Senior Planning Policy Officer (Capita) presented the report that asked Members to note the revisions to Policy PD05 Rural Areas for inclusion within the pre-submission publication Local Plan.

The revised Policy had been included on page 15 of the agenda pack and the key changes that had been made were highlighted (see paragraph 1.3 of the report). For those that were not mindful of the differences between PD05A and PD05B it was explained that PD05A

related to those rural settlements that retained a settlement boundary whilst PD05B referred to those smaller villages and hamlets that did not have a settlement boundary. PD05A would also allow for 5% growth against the number of dwellings inside the settlement boundaries from the point of adoption; this was similar to the approach within the Local Service Centres where 10% growth was proposed.

Councillor Borrett was satisfied with the maximum totals against the 5% growth listed in the table at paragraph 1.4 of the report and was pleased that Policies PD05A and PD05B had finally been confirmed. For the fact that the latter reinforced the requirement for local support to be included as a criteria for the determination of planning applications and for the fact that PD05A would allow some small scale developments in rural settlements. He thought that this was a huge step forward and wholeheartedly supported the revisions to the Rural Area Policy PD05 and thanked the Local Plan Working Group Members and the Planning Policy Team.

Mr Chris Garrod, the Chairman of Great Hockham Parish Council had concerns with PD05A. He explained that his village would like some growth and would like to see the settlement boundary shifted to take up the percentage that was allowed. He pointed out that Hockham used to have two shops, a Doctors surgery and a Public House and if growth did not happen further services would be lost.

Councillor Claussen alluded to paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which would be completely at odds with Breckland's Policy PD05 which could cause a conflict. The Chairman assured Members that the Officers were already aware of this matter. Officers were also aware of the emails that he had received from Hockham Parish Council, Kenninghall Parish Council, Beachamwell Parish Council and from a parishioner from Old Buckenham – all comments received would be taken into account. In terms of the NPPF, the Director of Planning & Building Control (Capita) did not perceive there to be any conflict given that the provisions of para 55 referred to related to isolated homes in the countryside and PD05B related to cluster homes. However, he would be having discussions on PD05 with the Planning Inspectorate..

Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen thanked all colleagues for all their time and dedication working on PD05A and PD05B. He understood Great Hockham's concerns and he asked Officers if the parish's hope for extra growth could come via their Neighbourhood Plan. Tim Mills, the Executive Manager for Growth & Prosperity advised that Great Hockham could certainly go beyond the number of 12 dwellings highlighted in the table. With that response, Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen encouraged all parishes/communities to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. It was highlighted that ten Neighbourhood Plans had already been confirmed and there were grants available.

**RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that the revisions to Policy PD05 Rural Areas be included within the pre-submission publication Local Plan.

**31/17 WATER CYCLE STUDY UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

Jemma March, Principal Planning Policy Officer (Capita) presented the

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Water Cycle Study (WCS) update report as evidence to support the Local Plan and publish the WCS on the Council's website.

A detailed overview was provided and the key findings of the WCS were highlighted.

Mr Atterwill, Chairman of Swanton Morley Parish Council mentioned the capacity issues for waste water in Dereham and had noticed from the report that Anglian Water was going to take a number of years to rectify the current problems being experienced by the town and asked if this would have an effect on the 5 year land supply. He felt that confidence was needed to ensure that this pipeline was going to be installed as soon as possible. Mrs Oechsle, NP4Yaxham referred to page 31 of the agenda pack that highlighted a table of taken from the Water Cycle Study report that provided a red, amber, green (RAG) assessment of the waste water treatment works (WwTWs) within the Breckland study area and raised concerns as Dereham contained a great deal of red areas and asked how these flooding issues were going to be managed. Mrs Bunning from Watton Town Council wanted assurance from Officers that when any major developments came forward a suitable water cycle studies would be included. The Chairman advised that these matters were not within the remit of the Local Plan Working Group. Councillor Martin mentioned the issues in Attleborough in relation to the sewage works for the town and felt that all the development proposed would come to a standstill if not taken on board. Councillor Claussen reminded Members of the recent planning application that was approved subject to a Grampian Condition (a planning condition attached to a decision notice that prevents the start of a development until off-site works have been completed on land not controlled by the applicant). He also mentioned his concerns in relation to the previous Local Development Framework process where it had stated that the new pipeline for Mattishall would be installed and yet it was still awaited. These empty promises he felt were of a real concern for everyone.

In terms of Attleborough, the Strategic Planning Manager explained that during the previous Core Strategy there was an agreed solution with Anglian Water which was a technically deliverable solution. Further solutions could be delivered and would come forward in the latter years of the Plan period. In response to Mrs Oechsle, the Principal Planning Policy Officer (Capita) advised that the Water Cycle Study was an evidence base study that was quite vast and any particular flood risk questions would be dealt with accordingly. As far as the question on development was concerned, Members were informed that evidence from the Water Cycle Study would be included in future planning policies.

Councillor Webb still had concerns about the delivery of this infrastructure in the timescale which could be a risk to the Local Plan.

Referring to the map of Mattishall on page 70 of the appendix to the report, Councillor Borrett had observed that a farm in question that he knew of had not been included in the flood risk area. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Capita) advised that flood risk was surface water flooding and this had been taken into account in the sequential test. Flood zones and surface water flooding were two very different

matters.

Councillor Claussen mentioned the Gladman site. The Chairman stated that it was not appropriate to discuss this matter now and he mentioned a number of forthcoming meetings where this could be discussed.

**RESOLVED** that the Water Cycle Study (WCS) update be noted as evidence to support the Local Plan and be published on the Council's website.

### **32/17 HISTORIC CHARACTERISATION STUDY (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

Sarah Robertson, the Senior Planning Policy officer presented the report which informed Members of the Historic Characterisation Study and agree for its inclusion as part of the Local Plan's evidence base.

The Study had been undertaken due to the Breckland area having a very important historic environment. It included over 1500 listed buildings, 51 conservation areas, 127 scheduled monuments and 9 registered parks and gardens.

Meetings had been had with Historic England and with the Council's Historic Building Officer, Andrew Gayton. The methodology had been agreed prior to work being undertaken on site assessments. The methodology had been developed to take into account three stages:

- Stage 1 – Desktop assessment of sites
- Stage 2 – Site survey of every site
- Stage 3 – Evaluating impact

For the purpose of the desktop assessment a 500m buffer around the site extending from the site boundary had been used to initially identify whether any designated heritage assets are in close proximity to the site. Each site had been given a RAG rating of green, amber and red (see pages 8 and 9 of the appendix to this report); the areas with 'red' ratings would be removed from the Local Plan. Seven of the sites have been given a 'red' rating which had been considered for removal from the Local Plan (see section 1.6 of the report). A proforma was available for each site (see pages 10 onwards of the appendix to this report).

The Chairman highlighted further comments received from Mr Jaggard, a parishioner from Old Buckenham who supported the recommendation to remove site LP(074)006 from the consultation document based on the findings of this Historic Characteristics report. The Chairman also highlighted the email received from Councillor Marion Chapman-Allen on behalf of Mr Gordon, the Chairman of Kenninghall Parish Council whose Parish Council meeting had voted by a clear majority in favour to support the recommendations of the Historic Characterisation Study for Kenninghall. Councillor Joel said that he had spoken Mr Jaggard about the removal of this piece of land from the Local Plan and had suggested that the those dwellings originally for that site could come along as natural growth over the next 10 years.

Referring to the Study, Councillor Duigan felt that it seemed to be historic heavy rather than landscape and mentioned the proposed retention of the Dereham hospital site as a non-designated asset. He could not see the sense in this type of designation as it offered no protection and gave an example of one very similar that had been demolished in 2000 and redeveloped.

A Watton Town Councillor highlighted Wayland Wood on the outskirts of the town. She was not certain if it was already listed as a historic site and raised concerns about the developments creeping ever closer. The Chairman pointed out that such matters/concerns should be included in their Neighbourhood Plan. The Senior Planning Policy officer (Capita) explained that Wayland Wood was ancient woodland and she believed it was a SSSI but would check. In response to Councillor Duigan's concerns, Members were informed that the Landscape Character Assessment from the LDF was still current. The Strategic Planning Manager added that a non-designated heritage asset would carry some weight and would be reflected in the policies as well as any future planning applications.

Councillor Borrett supported the proposal to remove the site in Mattishall. He asked for clarification that if a site was removed and an alternative could not be found to fulfil the Local Plan would a criteria be applied; and was there any reason why this could not happen in Mattishall in line with PD05A. The Director of Planning & Building Control (Capita) confirmed that in situations where the Local Plan did not provide sufficient housing allocations to achieve housing growth targets then a criteria based policy similar to PD05A would be included in the Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted and the Historic Characterisation Study be included as part of the Local Plan's evidence base and published on the Council's website.

### **33/17 INDOOR AND BUILT SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES STUDY - FINAL (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

James Mann, Planning Policy Officer (Capita) presented the report which asked Members to consider and agree the Indoor and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities Study to form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and to publish the document on the Council's website.

Members had already accepted the findings of Stage 1 of the Study subject to the addition of further wording around the value of the village hall sport offered within the District.

Stage 2 of the report sought to build a bigger picture of the provision within the District based around location, quality, quantity and management. The key findings and the implications for the Local Plan were highlighted.

Mrs Bunning, Watton Town Council, was disappointed as it looked as if Watton had fallen off the radar once more as far as sports facilities and a swimming pool was concerned notwithstanding that the current

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facilities in the town were in need of updating. The Planning Policy Officer (Capita) advised that there was not enough demand for a new sports centre but it the Study did include an upgrade to the existing facilities. Mrs Holmes, also from Watton Town Council asked if there was a firm commitment that the Astro turf would be replaced and paid for by Breckland Council as the town clearly needed assistance. The Director of Planning & Building Control (Capita) pointed out that artificial grass pitches needed to be considered in the wider pitch provision. In response, Mrs Holmes felt that this did not provide the town with a commitment and Watton was the only market town that was not being mentioned or helped. The Executive Manager for Growth & Prosperity advised that the Council was seeking discussions with all the market towns in the Breckland area about their aspirations outside of the Local Plan. He pointed out that this document was not in any way promising to deliver; all that was contained in the document were observations and reminded Members that in Stage 1 of the Study, Watton had definitely been included. Councillor Webb drew Members' attention to page 51 of the agenda pack, section 2.10 under the heading 'What Watton Wants' and read aloud this section which stated that Watton was completely restricted with its sports facilities due to the PFI arrangement. The Strategic Planning Manager explained that again this was not for the Local Plan. The Chairman reminded the meeting that there were three Breckland Councillors who represented Watton and these matters could be addressed through another forum. Councillor Robinson alluded to the Executive Manager's point in relation to the market towns initiative and urged the Town Councillors to lobby the three Breckland Ward Representatives.

Attention was drawn to section 9.16 of Appendix D of the report where again it stated that the options for Watton had been considered but it was decided not to model provision options in the town as the town was on the edge of the drive time catchment areas of Dereham, Swaffham and Thetford. In the opinion of the Watton Town Councillors, this information in relation to drive time was incorrect. The Planning Policy Officer (Capita) explained that Sports England facility modelling had been applied but further investigation would be had.

**RESOLVED** that the Indoor and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities Study be agreed to form part of the Council's evidence base for the Local Plan and published on the Council's website.

The meeting closed at 3.45 pm

CHAIRMAN