

REGULATION AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Regulation and Planning Policy Committee of South Norfolk Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton, on Friday, 10 January 2020 at 10.00 am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: B Duffin (Chairman for the meeting), J Halls, W Kemp, S Nuri, T Spruce and V Thomson

Apologies: Councillors: F Ellis, P Hardy and J Savage

Substitute Members: Councillor R Savage for F Ellis

Cabinet Members in Attendance: Councillor: J Fuller and L Neal

Other Members in Attendance Councillor T Laidlaw

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Place (P Courtier), the Assistant Director of Planning (H Mellors), the Place Shaping Team Manager (J Walchester), and the Principal Infrastructure and Planning Officer (S Marjoram)

Also in Attendance Two members of the public

60 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

61 GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN (GNLP) REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION

The Place Shaping Team Manager presented the Cabinet report to members, which proposed a Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Regulation 18 draft, for consultation, for the period between Wednesday 29 January and Monday 16 March 2020.

Members' attention was drawn to each of the three appendices; the Greater Norwich Development Partnership report on the Regulation 18 Consultation, which set out the reasoning and content of the proposed documents for consultation, the proposed Communications Plan, and the revised timetable for the remaining stages of the GNLP production.

The portfolio holder, Cllr J Fuller explained that the draft plan's strategy provided for approximately 44,500 new homes from 2018-2038, stressing that 36,000 of these homes were already accounted for. Referring to the site selection process, he

explained that there was a need to recognise the level of previous commitment for homes in the main towns and key service centres and he was therefore now keen to support growth in the villages, which in turn would support their social sustainability. Members noted that residential allocations for “village clusters” in South Norfolk had therefore not been included in the GNLP, and that it was proposed that these were addressed through a separate local plan specifically for these, which would be produced in tandem with the GNLP.

During discussion regarding the proposed approach to “village clusters”, Cllr Fuller advised the Committee that legal advice had been sought and this had confirmed that South Norfolk Council was entitled to take this separate approach, to ensure that it adopted an appropriate strategy for its area. Cllr Fuller suggested that this approach was necessary and appropriate, due to the number of rural parishes, and the complexity of the housing market in South Norfolk, adding that it would provide opportunities for small, local builders, whilst also supporting social sustainability in rural areas. Cllr Fuller also explained that he believed that the current consultation document required amendment, to include the reasoning behind this separate approach by South Norfolk Council, and this was supported by the Committee.

The Assistant Director of Planning explained that it would be the role of the Committee to develop the criteria to be used when assessing sites in the village clusters, and she confirmed that it was the role of officers to apply that criteria when considering sites. During discussion, one member stressed the importance of green infrastructure forming part of any new criteria. Some concerns were expressed regarding developer claims concerning the viability for affordable housing on smaller developments, and Cllr Fuller explained that necessary criteria could be built in to the new plan.

In response to queries regarding proposed new settlements at Silfield and Hethel, officers explained that these were potential locations only, and would only progress further should a future review of the GNLP identify the long term need for a new settlement. Officers also confirmed that although Wymondham had been identified as a contingency location for 1000 new homes, the draft GNLP planned for approximately 100 new homes in the town (in addition to those already permitted).

It was then unanimously **RESOLVED:**

TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET:

- (a) the proposed contents of the draft GNLP for public consultation with finalisation of the draft including any minor factual or typographical changes delegated to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holders, subject to an agreed form of words with partner members, regarding the approach to the South Norfolk village clusters.
- (b) the proposed engagement process for the consultation; and
- (c) the revised timetable for the production of the Local Plan and consequent amendments to the Council’s Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The meeting concluded at 11.07 am.

Chairman