

**HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL
THE HASTINGS PLANNING STRATEGY
PROPOSED SUBMISSION VERSION
25 MAY – 17 AUGUST 2012**

**INSPECTOR'S MATTERS, ISSUES & QUESTIONS FOR
EXAMINATION AT THE HEARINGS**

Tuesday 5 February 2013 at 10 am

The Council's Opening Statement

Matter 1: Requirements, Vision, Strategy, Objectives and Sustainability

Issue 1: Has the Council complied with all the legal requirements, and in particular the duty to co-operate, and are the Local Plan's proposals for sustainable growth deliverable, clear, sufficiently justified, effective and consistent with all relevant national policy?

- 1.1 What measures has the Council taken to comply with the duty to co-operate, with whom has that co-operation taken place and what has been the outcome of that co-operation?
- 1.2 Does the Local Plan adequately set out the main characteristics of the Borough, its main assets, problems (including various aspects of deprivation), its attractions, challenges and opportunities? Is St Leonards given the attention which it deserves, particularly Burtons' St Leonards?
- 1.3 Is the vision for the Borough and the 7 Strategic Objectives realistic and achievable? Is the plan period 2011-2028 appropriate and is it consistently adopted throughout the Local Plan? Will the implementation of the policies in the Local Plan realise the vision?
- 1.4 In general terms, and subject to later discussions, does the Local Plan adequately take account of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework)? Has the timescale for the preparation of the Local Plan through its various stages allowed sufficient regard to be had to the Framework and, if not, what are the likely consequences?
- 1.5 Has the Local Plan been positively prepared and does it fully meet the objectively assessed development needs of the area? And does it do so with sufficient flexibility to adapt to change? And what might be the consequences of any insufficient flexibility?
- 1.6 What are the environmental constraints to development in the Borough?
- 1.7 Have any reasonable alternative options been assessed to achieve the economic, social and environmental objectives in a sustainable way? Has

the correct balance been achieved between these 3 dimensions? Does the Local Plan set out the most appropriate strategy against reasonable alternatives?

- 1.8 How relevant to the Local Plan is survey material which informed the Regional Strategy? Is the Local Plan in general conformity with this Strategy?
- 1.9 Does the Local Plan seek to meet any unmet requirements of neighbouring authorities and to what extent do neighbouring authorities meet the Borough's unmet needs, particularly in terms of housing?
- 1.10 Should the model policy concerning sustainable development be incorporated into the Local Plan? If not, why not?
- 1.11 Is there a clear vision for the future pattern of development with particular regard to housing, employment and transport proposals? Does the pattern of development promote the use of sustainable modes of transport? To what extent can the Council implement the various transport proposals and expectations?
- 1.12 Are the Local Plan's proposals to deliver sustainable growth clearly articulated and adequately justified? Does it adequately set out how much development is intended to happen where, when and by what means it will be delivered?
- 1.13 Is there enough emphasis on good design, bearing in mind that it is indivisible from good planning. Are the references to design sufficient to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness and integrate new development into the natural, built and historic environment?
- 1.14 Are the proposed measures to tackle climate change justified, effective and adequately in line with the policy in the Framework of meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change? In particular:
 - a) Does the Local Plan set enough and sufficiently specific targets, for example in respect of sustainable building requirements?
 - b) Are its climate change measures clear, effective and adequately justified?
- 1.15 Does the Local Plan provide a basis for the delivery of a sustainable future that balances economic, social and environmental interests (including a radical reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change) and does it support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (Framework paras 6, 8, 17 & 93)?

Participants: - *Mr Ingleton (169), Mr Wilson (309), Mrs Gallini (90), Rother District Council (467), Mr Lyons (299)-agent Savills & Healthwatch/Link (340)*

Wednesday 6 February 2013 at 10 am

Matter 2: Infrastructure and Monitoring

Issue 2: Does the Local Plan provide satisfactorily for the delivery of development, particularly its required infrastructure for public transport and other services, and convincingly demonstrate adequate monitoring of its provision and measures designed to rectify any shortcomings?

- 2.1 Has there been an adequate assessment of the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, water supply etc as required by the Framework paragraph 162? What is the status of the Bexhill to Hastings link road, when is it expected to be completed and how much land might it make available for residential and other development, to the benefit of the Borough?
- 2.2 Does the Local Plan plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the Borough to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the Framework? Is there a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure, including for sustainable transport, is deliverable in a timely fashion?
- 2.3 Should the Local Plan refer to the possibility of park and ride site(s)?
- 2.4 Does the evidence base convince that there is, or will be, sufficient energy resources, including gas, electricity and water, to support the scale and distribution of envisaged growth?
- 2.5 Does the Local Plan include sufficient provision for reducing the risk of flooding, and in this respect is it in accord with the Framework including its Technical Guidance?
- 2.6 Are the various indicators and targets sufficiently precise? Has the Local Plan got justified, effective monitoring systems in place? What mechanism is there to monitor the delivery of the strategy? What would be the composition and status of any group appointed for such monitoring and the making of any consequent recommendations? What provisions are in place if need be to get the strategy back on track?
- 2.7 Should the Local Plan include a Policy setting out how the proposed development, and the infrastructure upon which it relies, will be delivered? If so, should it include reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Section 106 Agreements and reference to the nature of such agreements as was expressed in Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations which referred to the negotiation of private agreements and the seeking of planning obligations?
- 2.8 Is the Council a "charging authority" with regard to the CIL? If not, is it likely to be so at some stage during the plan period, and what would be the implications for the provision of infrastructure?

- 2.9 In respect of infrastructure requirements, has an appropriate balance been struck between the amount of detail set out in the Local Plan and the supporting documents? What is the status of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)? Is it a “living document”, to which various bodies will contribute?
- 2.10 To what extent are the Local Plan policies and proposals aspirations rather than a deliverable, confidently funded plan of action? At a time of economic uncertainty, is the Local Plan and the IDP setting out false hopes? Should a greater note of caution be introduced in an early page?
- 2.11 How secure is the funding for the infrastructure needed for the various development proposals? To what extent are the funding bodies committed to the Local Plan policies and proposals? To what extent have they been involved in its preparation? Should they be invited to any Hearing, particularly this one?
- 2.12 Have the concerns of Southern Water been suitably taken into account?

Participants: -

Mr Wise (683),

Mr Ingleton (169),

Heathwatch/Link (340)

Mrs Brown (341)

Thursday 7 February 2013 at 10 am

Matter 3: Housing – General Needs, Deliverability, Density and Quality

Issue 3: Is the Local Plan effective in meeting local housing needs, including the provision of an appropriate mix of housing of suitable type and quality and at suitable densities?

- 3.1 Which population and household forecasts does the Local Plan rely upon, how relevant are they and how does it take account of their implications in assessing housing requirements for the Borough?
- 3.2 To what extent have landowners and developers been involved in the preparation of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), and to what extent do these Assessments meet the requirements of the Framework paragraph 159?
- 3.3 Can the proposed housing requirement of 3,400 dwellings during 2011-2028 be substantiated? Does it meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the Borough and as part of the housing market area, as the Framework requires? And which is that housing market area?
- 3.4 Can the annual provision of 200 dwellings, rather than the RS annual requirement of 210 dwellings be justified? Why is it that the trajectory at page 120 shows completions substantially above the annual requirement during 2014 - 2020 but generally below it for the latter part of the plan period. How robust is the evidence for this trajectory?
- 3.5 Does the Local Plan identify, and provide a mechanism for, an annual updating of a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years worth of housing against housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the housing market?
- 3.6 What has been the record of housing delivery against the requirements of various plans? Has any under-delivery of housing been so persistent that it calls for an increase in that buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land?
- 3.7 Does the Local Plan identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-17?
- 3.8 Does the identification and delivery of land for housing rely too much upon the adoption of the Development Management Plan and what is the proposed timing of this DPD? If necessary, should the Local Plan identify key sites considered critical to the delivery of the housing strategy during

the plan period, e.g strategic site allocations, broad locations or any other greenfield releases?

- 3.9 What importance does the Council, through its Local Plan, attach to the re-use of previously-developed (brownfield) land (pdl)? Is it sufficiently clear that any such redevelopment should be on "well-located" pdl? Should there be a "local brownfield target" and, if defined, is it likely to be achievable and what evidence is available at present to justify it? Is contamination likely to be a major constraint in bringing forward pdl?
- 3.10 What has been the record during the previous 10 or so years in achieving housing development on pdl? Does the Local Plan give sufficient attention to the contribution which "windfalls" might make throughout the plan period to housing requirements? How much scope is there for more housing in the town centres?
- 3.11 Does the Local Plan clearly and consistently set out what amount of development, in terms of number of units and definition of sites, will take place in the locations identified? And is the precision of the stated figures supported by the evidence base? For example, what are the components of the 3,400 proposed dwellings during 2011-2028? Presumably some are already built.
- 3.12 Does the Council's evidence base identify a sufficient level of housing supply to meet and exceed expected requirements? For example, is it clear from the evidence how the housing land supply figures have been broken down into relevant components, and is this evidence base sufficiently up to date with particular regard to:
- 1) Completions
 - 2) Commitments - extant planning permissions
 - 3) existing development plan allocations that have not yet been implemented and remain available (excluding those with extant permissions)
 - 4) housing supply anticipated to come from sites to be allocated in future DPDs (excluding those with extant permissions)
- 3.13 Does the Local Plan adequately promote a wide choice of high quality homes, promote wider opportunities for home ownership and provide for the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities?
- 3.14 Does the Local Plan adequately support a suitable mix of housing sizes and types? Does it adequately identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand, or will the Development Management Plan address that requirement? In particular, however:
- a) Should explicit provision be made for larger houses to meet the particular needs of the Borough's ambitions and its various population groups, in anticipation of economic growth and/or for any other reason?

- b) Does the Local Plan make adequate provision for family housing? In any event, is the market working in these directions?
 - c) Should there be any provision for car-free housing schemes?
- 3.15 What policies, proposals and resources does the Council have, and to what extent have they achieved success, in bringing back vacant dwellings into residential use? Can any such re-use after a given period of vacancy really count towards the housing requirements and, if so, what is the extent of any such contribution?
- 3.16 Should there be a policy to resist inappropriate development in residential gardens where that would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area (Framework paragraph 53)?
- 3.17 What measures are being introduced, and how are they being funded, to improve the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock and thereby reduce fuel poverty? Should the Local Plan include any further relevant reference to this matter?

Participants: -

Mr Simmons (194) - agent: Kember Loudon Williams Ltd,

Mr Ingleton (169),

Town and Country Planning Solutions (938),

Mr Lyons (299)- agent Savills

Mrs Brown (341)

Tuesday 12 February 2013 at 10 am

Matter 4: Affordable Housing and Other Needs

Issue 4: Is the Local Plan effective in meeting special housing needs, including for affordable homes and for gypsies and travellers?

- 4.1 Is the Local Plan's approach to affordable housing sufficiently justified and consistent with national policy? In particular:
- a) Are the various thresholds (e.g. 1-4 & 5-14) suitable for the application of Policy H3? How are they justified?
 - b) What are the prospects of grant aid, and how might this affect viability and the consequent % of affordable homes and tenure mix?
 - c) Does the Local Plan provide sufficient guidance on the application of viability testing on a site-by-site basis?
 - d) Is there sufficient emphasis on intermediate housing, bearing in mind the comments made by DTZ in its Housing Market Assessment?
 - e) Is sufficient clarity provided about how affordable housing policies will be carried forward into other development plan documents?
- 4.2 In summary, is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the Core Strategy's affordable housing policies and targets are realistic? Does the Council have a target for affordable housing, and how close could it reasonably come to the annual shortfall of 596 dwellings? What is the Council's track record in this respect during the last 5-10 years or so?
- 4.3 Does the Local Plan adequately provide for the special needs of the elderly, especially with regard to housing?
- 4.4 Does it provide satisfactorily for the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople? Is there any unmet need; if so, what is it, and what is the evidence that demonstrates it? Should any unmet need be left to an allocation on the Development Management Plan?
- 4.5 Is the Local Plan's criteria-based Policy H5 sufficiently rigorous or too demanding? In short, does it and its reasoned justification accord with national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites?
- 4.6 Does the Local Plan provide for the additional student accommodation likely to result from any expected expansion of the University Centre?
- 4.7 Is it being too restrictive with regard to Houses in Multiple Occupation, contrary to the need to create healthy, inclusive communities?

Participants: - Mr Lyons (299)- agent Savills, Healthwatch/Link (340), Mr Ingleton (169), Town And Country Planning Solutions (938) and Residential Landlords Association (333)- agent Bury Walkers LLP

Wednesday 13 February at 10 am

Matter 5: Employment, Economic Development and Town Centres

Issue 5: Is the Local Plan's approach to economic development and the protection of employment land clearly articulated, sufficiently justified and in line with national policy?

- 5.1 Does the Local Plan set out a clear economic vision and strategy for the Borough which positively and proactively promotes sustainable economic growth and suitably responds to any relevant wider opportunities for growth? Does it take sufficient account of the Chancellor's 2011 Budget proposals to help the economy, including the "Plan for Growth", and the Written Ministerial Statement "Planning for Growth"? How material are these considerations for the Borough?
- 5.2 Does the Local Plan ensure, as far as it can, that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support economic growth and innovation? Has the Council worked together with neighbouring authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnerships and the local business community, in accordance with the Framework paragraph 160?
- 5.3 Are the proposals for new office space appropriate? If implemented, what benefits would they bring and could they damage the employment prospects of neighbouring authorities and result in any more commuting into the Borough?
- 5.4 Is there sufficient protection for existing industrial and warehousing floorspace in the Borough for the requirements of start-ups and other enterprises needing low rent premises?
- 5.5 Is the Local Plan's stance and policy on employment land protection clearly defined and adequately justified? Does it accord with the Framework paragraph 22 that the long term protection of sites allocated for employment where there is no reasonable prospect of their being used for that purpose? Would alternative uses of such land and buildings be considered? Have land allocations been regularly reviewed as a basis for the Local Plan's approach?
- 5.6 Does the Local Plan provide clear guidance on the acceptability (or otherwise) of housing development on sites currently used or allocated for employment? If not, how could this be clarified?
- 5.7 Does the Local Plan accord with the policy in the Framework of ensuring the vitality of town centres? What measures will be introduced to promote and ensure the vitality of Hastings and St Leonards town centres, and what funding is in place for them? Could any existing markets be retained and enhanced?
- 5.8 Will there be a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism etc development in the town centres?

- 5.9 To what extent is the Local Plan and its implementation able to support innovation and enterprise at the University Centre, Conquest Hospital and any other bodies involved in the promotion of a knowledge-based and more diverse economy? And to what extent is the Council promoting this objective? How important are these and other institutions as drivers of the local economy?
- 5.10 Does the Local Plan promote a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and expanded communities, and what is the Council's track record in securing improvements in the quality and accessibility of schools, colleges and universities?
- 5.11 Does the Local Plan provide enough encouragement for tourism? How could it be better promoted? Could it do more to draw attention to such places as the Old Town, Alexandra Park, Hastings Castle and Burtons' St Leonards?
- 5.12 Does it take sufficient account of the increasing trend towards working at/from home, and to what extent does, or can, the Local Plan support the expansion of electronic communications networks?

Participants: -

Healthwatch/Link (340)

Wednesday 13 February at about 2.30 pm

Matter 6: The Built & Natural Environment

Issue 6: Does the Local Plan provide sufficient protection, preservation and enhancement of the built and natural environment and introduce measures of sufficient force to mitigate any potentially adverse effects upon these interests?

- 6.1 Does the Local Plan pay sufficient attention to heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens? Does it convincingly demonstrate the Council's intention to protect and enhance these interests? Does it set out a positive, proactive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment? Does it adequately consider the qualities and local distinctiveness of the historic environment?
- 6.2 Does the Local Plan convincingly set out how the architectural heritage of town centres will be conserved and, where need be, enhanced to provide a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic pride and activity? What is the Council's track record here? Are any heritage assets at risk and, if so, what is proposed for them?
- 6.3 Does the Local Plan adequately encourage new uses for vacant or derelict buildings, including historic buildings?
- 6.4 In which ways does the Local Plan contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution?

Participants: -

Mr Ingleton (169)

Thursday 14 February 2013 at 10 am

Matter 7: Sites for Housing and other matters including Recreation, Leisure and Culture

Issue 7: Is the Local Plan sufficiently in accord with national planning policy with regard to suitable land for housing and other matters including recreation, leisure and culture

- 7.1 Should the Local Plan identify land at Breadsell Lane for housing? What are the constraints to its development, and how could they be reduced or overcome? How many dwellings could be accommodated there?
- 7.2 Which measures are in place, or will be put in place, to achieve a comprehensive range of recreation facilities across the Borough? What scale of new provision is expected, and is it realistically achievable during the plan period?
- 7.3 Will there be sufficient provision for allotments?
- 7.4 Is there a robust and up-to-date assessment of the need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision, including public rights of way? And is there provision for the protection of existing facilities?
- 7.5 Which measures have been put in place by the Council and its partners to improve the quality of sea water, to the benefit of local people and the tourist industry?

Participants: -

Mrs Stephenson (272),

Mr Lyons (299) – agent Savills,

Mr Ingleton (169),

Mr Simmons (194)- agent Kember Loudon Williams Ltd

Mrs Brown (341)