

Local Plan Sub-Committee Report - November 2016

Local Plan timetable

- Just over 6,000 residents/businesses/community groups and stakeholders responded to the latest Draft Local Plan (900 fewer than the previous consultation in November 2014). They submitted 32,000 comments – a 62% increase compared to the last time.
- The Council is currently in discussion with the Planning Inspectorate about changes based on recent consultation. Councillor Spooner has said that the changes are likely to be substantial and include “possible” removal of strategic sites from the Plan.
- A further targeted consultation will take place next summer, but GBC will only be asking for comments about the proposed changes. These, along with all comments from this latest consultation, will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate.
- The targeted consultation will also review the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), the Employment Land Needs Assessment and the Retail and Leisure Needs Study. These reviews will take into account any impact of Brexit, and the latest 2014-based household projections.
- Changes to the Draft Plan will be published in March 2017 and GBC aims to submit the final Plan in late 2017. Cllr Spooner is confident that GBC will meet these deadlines.
- Cllr Spooner has said that intervention by the Department for Communities and Local Government is "extremely unlikely" in Guildford's case.

Recommendation from LP Sub-committee:

The fact that GBC is revisiting its Local Plan and considering dropping one or more strategic development sites is positive news. However, if Blackwell Farm (which occupies 20% of Compton Parish) is not among the sites selected for removal, it will be even more difficult to persuade a planning inspector that it should be removed. It is therefore recommended that the Parish Council writes to GBC highlighting the impracticality of developing the site from a traffic point of view.

Joint recommendation from the Local Plan and Traffic Sub-committees:

Given the influence of the University of Surrey (which owns Blackwell Farm), it is possible (perhaps likely) that Blackwell Farm will remain as a strategic development site within the Local Plan, even though evidence suggests it is not a suitable site. It is therefore recommended that the Parish Council ring-fences a sum of up to £10,000

to secure the services of Planning Expert Richard Bate to undertake the necessary research with which to oppose the inclusion of Blackwell Farm as a development site and to present this at the Public Examination on behalf of the Parish Council. It is expected that part of this sum will be met by other PCs and organisations, such as Worplesdon PC, Compton Village Association, the CPRE and Save Hogs Back. (See Annex A for further details.)

AONB boundary review

The LP Sub Committee has written to Charmaine Smith (Landscape Architect at Surrey County Council) to request that a large portion of Blackwell Farm be included in the Surrey Hills AONB Board's proposed AONB boundary. The request was based on an independent landscape study, carried out by Land Management Services and on behalf of Compton, Worplesdon and Wanborough PCs, which concluded that the vast majority of the area met with Natural England's latest AONB criteria.

SCC has declined this request. Ms Smith said that, although she does not doubt the professional standing of Land Management Services, which is a registered landscape practice, SCC cannot pass on our evidence to Natural England because "the report was commissioned by a third party and does not accord with the evidence submitted from the Board".

Instead, Ms Smith suggests that the PC submits the report directly to Natural England, which is the arbiter of the revised boundary, not SCC.

The Local Plan Sub Committee has communicated SCC's decision to Anne Milton MP, who has offered to submit the Land Management Services report to Natural England on behalf of the PCs.

Recommendation from the Local Plan Sub Committee:

- 1) In addition to Anne Milton's submitting the report, the PCs also submit the Land Management Services report directly to the Natural England.*

Wisley

Wisley Property Investments has made an appeal to the Secretary of State against GBC's decision to refuse planning permission for 2,068 houses at the former Wisley Airfield near Ockham. Following the refusal by GBC, the site was put forward for development in the draft Local Plan.

We do not know the timeframe for the SoS's decision.

