



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

TOPIC – Fareham Borough Council Local Plan Part 3: The Draft Welborne Plan April 2013

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

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SUMMARY

- This draft decision notice sets out the recommended response to Fareham Borough Council's (FBC) consultation on its Local Plan Part 3: The Draft Welborne Plan (North of Fareham Strategic Development Area). The consultation closes on 10 June 2013.
- The Welborne Plan sets the policy and delivery framework for the development of the new community over the period to 2041.
- The recommended response proposes support for the policies on settlement gaps and green buffers, new local bus routes and pedestrian and cycling routes, and highlights concerns that traffic should generally be directed to the south from the main site (across the A32) and that the boundary with the Knowle gap needs to be treated sensitively with suitable landscaping and about other potential impacts of the development.

DECISION

That the Council responds to the consultation with the comments set out in the section on 'Issues to raise through the consultation', using the on-line form provided by Fareham Borough Council.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The [Draft Welborne Plan](#) sets the policy and development strategy to 2041 for the development previously known as the North of Fareham Strategic Development Area. The principle of a Strategic Development Area North of Fareham has been established through the adopted Fareham Borough Council Core Strategy Policy CS13 and Policy SH4 in the adopted Winchester District Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy.

This consultation on the draft Welborne Plan follows the Options consultation held in July 2012, to which Winchester City Council responded following a Portfolio Holder Decision Notice ([PHD424](#)). Winchester's response considered that the options locating significant employment provisions around Junction 11 of the M27 separated from the main area of development were less sustainable. Other concerns were raised regarding potential underuse of land and potential environmental and landscape impacts in the northern part of SDA. Consideration of including a Gypsy and Traveller/ Travelling Showperson's Site or Transit Site was also suggested.

Fareham Borough Council have developed the options into proposed policies and drawn this together into the draft Welborne Plan, which it is considered has addressed many of Winchester's main concerns. In summary, the policies in the draft Welborne Plan provide for:-

- approximately 6,500 dwellings (policy WEL3);
- up to 78,650 sq.m of employment floorspace mainly in the southern area comprised of 39 - 44,000 sq.m office floorspace and the remainder as B2, B8 or other employment generating floorspace (policies WEL3, WEL9);
- settlement buffers 50m wide within the development, to prevent coalescence with Knowle and Wickham (policies WEL1,3, 5,25);
- transport works including:-
 - upgrade of M27 Junction 10 to facilitate all moves (policy WEL17);
 - widened approach lanes at the A32/A334 Fareham Road, Wickham junction (policy WEL17);
 - additional measures at Mayles Lane to mitigate traffic impacts if necessary;
 - additional local bus routes that will also serve Knowle (policy WEL18);
 - pedestrian and cycle connections to Wickham and Knowle (policy WEL20);
- community facilities including:-

- a District Centre (policy WEL10) with community facility (policy WEL11) and health care facilities (policy WEL12);
- a Village centre and a Local Centre (policy WEL13);
- 3 primary schools with pre-school provision (policy WEL14) and 1 secondary school (policy WEL15); and
- on-site Green Infrastructure including open space and sports pitches (policy WEL25).

Treatment of Knowle and Wickham settlement gaps

In addition to the above policies, the Welborne Plan acknowledges that Winchester City Council has identified the land between Knowle and Wickham in Winchester District and the new Welborne community as a settlement gap ([policy SH4 in the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1](#)).

The Welborne Plan sets out the strategy for green infrastructure provision on the Knowle triangle and Dash Wood/Ravenswood (part of the settlement gap between Welborne and Wickham). These areas will form part of the natural green space provision required by the development as alternative natural green space provision (off-setting impacts to sites protected under European Directives). This is set out in policy WEL26:-

- “...This natural green space should comprise of:*
- i. Approximately 55 hectares in the area of Dash Wood/Ravenswood;*
 - ii. 22 hectares on the triangle of land adjoining the eastern edge of Knowle;*
- and*
- iii. 22 hectares at Fareham Common...”*

The supporting text stipulates that Knowle Triangle will be considered as “semi-natural space, providing separation between Knowle and Welborne as well as the opportunity for informal recreation. It should be similar in character to the ‘Downland’ character area.” In contrast, the Plan states that “Dash Wood and Ravenswood could form a community woodland with controlled access and management to improve recreation, biodiversity and commercial woodland.”

Management and funding of the Green Infrastructure Network within Winchester District

The detail behind the exact location, quantity, nature and quality of natural green space for Welborne and the long-term management and responsibilities will be set out in an Open Space Strategy and a Green Infrastructure Network Plan. Policy WEL25 of the Welborne Plan requires a developer to agree these with Fareham Borough Council prior to the determination of any planning application and under Policy WEL26, Fareham have set out how they will work with Winchester on planning for the natural greenspaces within Winchester District:-

“...The Council will work with Winchester City Council to determine the appropriate uses of the natural greenspace within their area and the management that will be required. It is expected that a financial contribution will be required from the Welborne development to help fund on-going management of these areas.”

Issues to raise through the consultation

Although it is considered that the draft Welborne Plan addresses many of the concerns raised by Winchester through the consultation on options, it is recommended that following points and statements of support or concern are made in response to this consultation before the draft plan is subject to formal ‘Pre-Examination’ consultation in late 2013, or is submitted for examination in 2014:-

Chapter: 2

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL2

Comment: Winchester City Council welcomes the analysis of the different character areas and supports the definition of the area to the North as a ‘woodland character area’.

Chapter: 3

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL3

Comment:

The City Council is concerned that the secondary school is located to the east of the A32 separating it from the main development. If it is deemed that this is the only suitable location for the school without encroaching on space currently identified as semi-natural greenspace separating the development from existing settlements, then the provision of good pedestrian and cycle links across the A32 to the school would be supported, including a well designed pedestrian and cycle bridge.

Chapter: 3

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL5

Comment: Winchester City Council welcomes the provision of a 50m settlement/green buffer within the Welborne boundary to prevent coalescence with Knowle, Ravenswood Hospital and Wickham. However, it has some remaining concerns regarding the landscape impacts north of Heytesbury Farm, and along the Knowle Buffer. The landscape to the north of Heytesbury Farm is recognised as a very sensitive location as it is highly visible on skyline and enclosed by ancient woodlands (also designated SINC). A tree belt, as indicated on the Landscape and Habitats Plan, is not sufficient mitigation for this sensitive location. The City Council considers that there needs to be a much wider, more robust, continuous woodland buffer along the northern edge of the site than shown if it is to properly address concerns and ensure the new woodland is best placed to cope with pressures of so much new housing close by.

As stated in the Council’s comments on the options consultation, the existing boundary vegetation to Knowle Buffer is in itself vulnerable to pressures from the

development and for this reason it would expect an additional landscape buffer as part of the development. In order for this to be provided, and to avoid the creation of a hard urban edge, extra green infrastructure and lower housing densities should be included within the new community where it adjoins the buffer.

Chapter: 6

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL16

Comment: Winchester City Council supports the aim for high self containment, with the main transport links focusing on the A32 and M27. Winchester would want to see the main road links encouraging movement from the site to the south and the M27, so it is important to ensure that the main access junctions from the site prioritise traffic turning southwards onto the A32. Winchester welcomes the improvement of J10 and the rejection of development at Junction 11, and would suggest this needs to take place in the earliest phase possible.

Chapter: 6

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL17

Comment: WEL17 refers to improvements to the A32/A334 Fareham Road but this implies only the part between the SDA and Wickham. It may well be necessary to secure contributions to other improvements further afield, e.g. A32/B2177 junction, A334/B2177 junction, Wickham village centre, etc and the policy should provide for this. The policy should also specifically state that Mayles Lane should not be used for vehicular access and should have appropriate traffic management measures to secure this, as the reference in paragraph 6.26 is not sufficiently clear.

Chapter: 6

Paragraph/Policy Number: Para 6.36 and WEL20

Comment: Winchester City Council supports the additional local bus routes to include services for neighbouring communities and the wider cycling and walking improvements and links to the North of the SDA to benefit the communities of Knowle and Wickham proposed in policy WEL20.

Chapter: 8

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL26

Comment:

Winchester City Council (WCC) supports the retention of the areas within Winchester District (including Knowle Triangle and Dash Wood/Ravenswood) as semi-natural green space under policy WEL26, which is consistent with the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1. WCC strongly support the references to appropriate uses and long-term management and funding on these sites but suggests that the policy should be amended to make clear the requirement for development to fund any acquisition and laying out, as well as management and maintenance of these areas in the long term. This would provide clarity regarding the responsibilities for delivering and maintaining these important areas. However, this area is sometimes referred to as 'natural greenspace' (in policy WEL 26) and other times as 'semi-natural' greenspace (in supporting text); we suggest a consistent terminology is used.

Chapter: 8

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL28

Comment:

Given the importance of green infrastructure and green networks, we would strongly encourage Fareham Borough Council to consider potential mitigation measures which also contribute to the Forest of Bere proposals in the PUSH Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Chapter: 9

Paragraph/Policy Number: WEL30 and WEL 31

Comment:

The City Council is concerned that the requirements for energy/water conservation don't seem to increase over the almost 30-year Plan period, or have scope to be reviewed to take account of the fact that the scheme will take 20-25 years to develop. We suggest that the policy at least includes a requirement to raise the standards at appropriate times in the development.

Chapter: Gen

Paragraph/Policy Number: Gen

Comment: Due to the proximity to key infrastructure and transport routes, the City Council suggests that there should be explicit consideration of whether the site could provide for 'Traveller' / transit sites to help meet the requirements of the Travellers Accommodation Assessment for Hampshire (2013).

END

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

No implications directly. The recommended comments seek to ensure that the Council will not be liable for any costs associated with areas retained as (semi) natural greenspace within the District.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

Consultation has taken place with the Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment - Councillor Weston.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

n/a

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None.

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

None.

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 10.06.13

Councillor Weston – Portfolio Holder for Built Environment