

# GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

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30 September 2016

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU to attend the **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AD HOC ADVISORY GROUP** Meeting to be held in the Pepperpot, High Street, Godalming on Friday, 7 October 2016 at 6.00 pm.

Louise P Goodfellow  
Town Clerk

Committee Members:

- Cllr Bolton
- Cllr A Bott
- Cllr Hunter
- Mr K Lightfoot
- Mr J Murray
- Mr A Palmer – Vice Chairman
- Cllr Poulter
- Mr P Stevenson
- Mrs P Talbot
- Cllr Walden – Chairman
- Cllr Williams

## **AGENDA**

### 1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 22 August 2016, a copy of which has been circulated previously.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 3. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman to allow members of the public to ask the Council questions, make a statement or present a petition. This forum to be conducted in accordance with Standing Order 4.

### 4. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To receive from Members any declarations of interests in relation to any items included on the Agenda for this meeting required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

### 5. REPRESENTATIONS FROM OAKFORD HOMES

Representatives from WYG (planning consultants acting for Oakford Homes) and Oakford Homes to attend to make representations to the group concerning the site south east of Binscombe Lane (see also the confidential attachments for the agenda item below).

Members of the Public have the right to attend all meetings of the Town Council and its Committees and are welcome.

6. CALL FOR SITES

Members to note that two responses have been received to this Group's call for sites. Both are attached as confidential annexes to this agenda. A response from the Town Council is indicated but will have to await formal confirmation from the Town Council's Policy & Management Committee, however, the Town Clerk will speak to this at the meeting.

7. GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

Members to note the Town Council's response to Waverley Borough Council's draft Local Plan – response attached.

8. UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUPS

Members to consider updates from each of the working groups including the attached report from the Economy working groups.

9. ITEMS FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS

Members are asked to note the items which are tabled for their information.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Group is scheduled to take place on Monday, 21 November 2016 at 6.30 pm in the Pepperpot.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brought forward by permission of the Chairman. Requests to be submitted prior to commencement of the meeting.

This is the full text of a response from Godalming Town Council to the Waverley Borough Council Pre-Submission Local Plan, Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites Local Plan published for consultation on 19 August 2016..

## **Chapter 4 – The Local Plan Objectives**

Godalming Town Council has identified the following from the DLP objectives at Chapter 4 as being of particular importance to Godalming and Farncombe:

(4) To support the development of suitable brownfield land, including a new settlement at the Dunsfold Aerodrome site subject to appropriate infrastructure and mitigation.

(6) To support measures that promote sustainable transport, including improvements to public transport and improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

(7) To maintain and protect all those areas of the Green Belt that fulfil the purposes of the designation.

(10) To ensure that adequate provision is made for new or improved social, physical and green infrastructure to meet the needs of the increased population and additional demands arising from employment related development.

(11) To deliver an increase in the overall stock of affordable housing and to ensure that as far as possible the type and tenure of affordable housing meets local needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market where it is viable to do so.

(12) To support the delivery of a range of sizes and types of new homes and accommodation, including homes and accommodation to meet the needs of specific groups of the population, including older people and first-time buyers.

(13) To safeguard existing employment accommodation and support the delivery of new and improved commercial premises, both within the main settlements and in rural areas, in order to meet flexibly the needs of a range of businesses in Waverley; in particular to accommodate the project growth in B1a/b (Offices/Research and Development) uses and the specific needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Town Council is in broad agreement with the objectives above but has some concerns, detailed in the following pages about how they can be achieved in Godalming and Farncombe. All other objectives are agreed without comment.

## **Chapter 5 - Spatial Strategy**

Godalming Town Council supports the principle stated in Policy SP2 that 'non-strategic sites will be identified and allocated through Local Plan Part 2 and Neighbourhood Development Plans'. However, the Town Council would like clarity about how Waverley Borough Council (WBC) is defining a strategic site. Is the criterion simply housing numbers?

## **Chapter 6 – The Amount and Location of Housing**

Godalming Town Council notes the minimum number of 1,240 new homes allocated to this parish to accommodate in the period 2013 to 2032 and raises no objection.

## **Chapter 7 - Sustainable Transport**

Paragraph 7.9 of the DLP makes reference to the Waverley Cycling Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2005 which identified a number of preferred cycle routes. Whilst Godalming Town Council welcomes the proposed update to this list, it feels that the DLP should provide clearer policy support for these routes and signpost the fact that Neighbourhood Plans could identify additional routes. The SPD dates from 2005 and in the intervening eleven years there has been little progress made in developing quality cycle routes in Godalming and Farncombe demonstrating that there needs to be a stronger commitment to achieving this. In the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Godalming and Farncombe the focus for transport is on cycling and walking and, with the inevitable increase in traffic from Dunsfold as well as growth in Godalming and Farncombe, credible alternatives to the private car need to be provided.

Paragraph 7.10 of the DLP notes that measures to tackle traffic growth and address congestion hotspots and improve travel options and accessibility will be addressed through the Surrey Local Transport Plan and ‘...where appropriate, will be reflected in the Local Plan Part 2: Non-Strategic Policies and Sites.’ Godalming Town Council considers it vital that Neighbourhood Plans are also added to this because, as Policy SP2 (Spatial Strategy) notes, Neighbourhood Plans are one of the main ways that new development will be allocated. A coherent approach to such allocations should ensure that sustainable movement is addressed as well as part of the same plan. Similarly, in paragraph 7.25, commitment is made by WBC to work with Surrey County Council on improving the existing network of pedestrian and cycle routes; this should also include town and parish councils and Neighbourhood Plan groups.

Generally, therefore, Policy ST1 (Sustainable Transport) needs to make more explicit reference to the role that Neighbourhood Plans and town and parish councils should play in improving non-vehicular movement in particular. This should include particular reference in the first sentence as to who ‘key stakeholders’ include, i.e. town and parish councils and Neighbourhood Plan groups.

## **Chapter 8 – Infrastructure and Community Services**

Godalming Town Council supports Policy ICS1 with the caveat that the words “...or Neighbourhood Plans...” should be inserted at the end of the first sentence of paragraph 4, i.e. it should read, “The Council will support the development of new services and facilities where required and may safeguard land for infrastructure if identified through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan *or Neighbourhood Plans*.”

## **Chapter 9 - Affordable Housing and other Housing Needs**

Godalming Town Council has a concern over the lowering of the percentage of affordable housing (from 40%, in the Draft Local Plan as considered by the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to 30% in the Draft Local Plan published for consultation).

There are 350 households requiring Council social housing:

As at 1 April 2016 there were 1509 households on Waverley's Housing Register, of which 23% (350) lived in the Godalming area:

	<b>Godalming</b>	<b>Farncombe</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>1 Bed:</b>	113	93	206
<b>2 Bed:</b>	68	37	105
<b>3 Bed+</b>	19	20	39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>350</b>

The average waiting time for applicants in Bands A-C during 2015-16 was 896 days.

There are 173 affordable houses planned for Godalming in the plan period: From the total Planning permissions granted for Godalming so far (1032) this gives an average of 16% affordable homes.

Location	Amount	Notes	Affordable Percentage
Riverside	37	25 Affordable rented	25%
Furze Lane	20		40%
Godalming College	14	10 Affordable rented 4 Shared Ownership	30%
Ockford Ridge	40	Council owned	100%
Wey Court	24	Council owned	100%
Station Approach	13	Council owned	100%
Woodside Park	25		25%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>173</b>		

Waverley have an emerging policy (AHN1) of a 30% affordable housing threshold. One of the reasons for justifying this is by intensifying Council owned sites. In section 9.8 the plan states: "In addition to updating planning policies, the Council is working to deliver a programme of new build affordable housing on council-owned land which includes exploring the redevelopment of low-demand Council stock and schemes that are no longer fit-for-purpose."

Whilst this Policy is clearly effective and welcomed, (as shown in the table above), in Godalming we are relying on this contribution to deliver 45% of our affordable homes. This should not be seen as a reason to reduce the affordable threshold though.

It can be seen that sites owned by Waverley or Godalming Town Council are key in delivering infrastructure, community benefits or affordable housing, as the sites that trigger larger amounts of affordable housing are not available in Godalming.

The Government has defined 'starter homes', for planning purposes as 'affordable', which it will require to be 20% of new developments. This would mean that if Waverley's 30% proposal goes through, then only 10% of houses would be left for all other types of affordable housing, such as Housing Associations or Council houses, which are critical for many residents in genuine need.

In deriving the 519 number as the total houses required each year in Waverley, the West Surrey SHMA made an adjustment for affordable homes (Table 7.57; page 119) which was based (SHMA 6.59) on the assumption that Waverley would require 40% affordable homes on sites with over 15 units (with 30% on 10 – 15): by reducing this % it is reducing the number of affordable homes that the plan will deliver below the expectations of the SHMA.

In addition the government policy for starter homes, which will be defined as affordable for planning purposes, will mean that some 2/3 of the 30% of market led developments will be starter homes. As these have not been restricted to those whose circumstances make them in need of affordable homes, this government policy will mean a shortfall in the delivery of affordable homes to those who are in need.

Godalming Town Council wishes to see commuted sums for affordable housing focused on Godalming and Farncombe as one of the main settlements in Waverley. Policy AHN1 states that on small sites of fewer than 11 dwellings, affordable housing will be sought as commuted sums which will be used to deliver affordable housing off-site. Godalming Town Council believes it likely that much of the development in Godalming and Farncombe will be on small sites and therefore possible that our community will not see the provision of affordable housing that is needed if the commuted sums are used by Waverley Borough Council on sites it has elsewhere in the Borough that can deliver affordable housing.

Godalming Town Council finds the summary in Policy AHN3 (Housing Types and Size) overly general. The Town Council agrees with the policy as far as it goes - reflecting the findings of the West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and requiring the specific needs of older people, families with children and people with disabilities to be addressed. More specific requirements linked to the size of dwellings (by number of bedrooms) would be more helpful for example, 'families with children' could be seeking dwellings from anywhere between 2 and 5-beds; although the evidence in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan Godalming suggests that 3-bed homes are required for this group.

In the same way that Policy AHN1 (Affordable Housing) identifies a role for Neighbourhood Plans, Policy AHN3 would benefit from stating that Neighbourhood Plans should be able to identify alternative mixes in local areas where there is the appropriate evidence.

## **Chapter 10 - Employment and the Economy**

Godalming Town Council observes that at paragraph 10.20 the DLP notes that the Borough has lost a significant number of employment premises since the amendment to permitted development rights to allow conversion of such premises to residential use. We acknowledge that this arises from national policy and is not something that the DLP can necessarily counter but this issue is particularly pertinent to Godalming and Farncombe where 243 new dwellings are already expected as a result of this

permitted development and the trend is expected to continue. It will erode the employment base and result in further windfall housing development.

Despite this problem, paragraph 10.28 states that employment development will be focused in the main settlements including Godalming. It is currently unclear where this development would be located in the town, therefore Godalming Town Council finds it rather disingenuous for the DLP to make this statement. However, the Council supports Policy EE2 (Protecting Existing Employment Sites) for its intention to protect, as far as it can, the existing employment base in the borough.

## **Chapter 11 - Town Centres and Shopping**

Godalming Town Council supports Policies TCS1 (Town Centres) and TCS2 (Local Centres).

## **Chapter 12 - Leisure, Recreation and Sport**

Godalming Town Council is concerned by the statement in Paragraph 12.13 that 'Detailed criteria for designating Local Green Spaces through local and neighbourhood plans will be provided as part of the Local Plan Part 2.' A Local Green Space designation affords the same level of protection as green belt. Whilst guidance on the criteria for being able to designate Local Green Spaces is generally helpful, this is already provided in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. To suggest that any criteria as interpreted by Waverley Borough Council should be enshrined in policy is of concern.

The Town Council notes the observation in Paragraph 12.18 that Godalming is one of the places in Waverley borough that has a below-average level of equipped play provision and informal play space. This has been noted and will be picked up through the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy LRC1 (Leisure, Recreation and Cultural Facilities) states that the loss of existing facilities is acceptable subject to a series of criteria. One of these relates to alternative provision and ensuring this is of a suitable scale and type. Godalming Town Council recommends that added to this is the requirement for any re-provision 'to be in a location that is accessible to the community it serves'.

## **Chapter 13 – Rural Environment**

Godalming Town Council supports Policy RE3 (Landscape Character) with the caveat that the Council seeks early warning if the boundary of the Godalming Hillsides is likely to change.

The Town Council objects to the DLP recommendation of the removal of two pieces of land from the green belt around Godalming

- at land south-east of Binscombe (Paragraph 13.12); and
- land between Aaron's Hill and Halfway Lane (Paragraphs 13.13 to 13.15).

The Town Council is specifically concerned that these two pieces of green belt land should not be designated for housing. Any development on these sites should be considered as an exception to policy – and their use to meet the community's infrastructure needs such as a new medical centre or 'extracare' facility would be viewed more positively.

The Town Council further notes a particular issue for the Aaron's Hill/Halfway Lane land in that there is no defensible boundary, e.g. a road, river or other physical boundary at that site.

#### **Chapter 14 – Townscape and Design**

Godalming Town Council supports Policy TD1 (Townscape and Design) and the role of Neighbourhood Plans in helping deliver it.

#### **Chapter 15 – Heritage Assets**

Godalming Town Council supports Policy HA1 (Protection of Heritage Assets) and the role of Neighbourhood Plans in helping deliver it.

#### **Chapter 17 – Climate Change and Flood Risk Management**

Godalming Town Council wholeheartedly supports Policy CC4 (Flood Risk Management).

#### **Chapter 18 – Strategic Sites**

##### **Policy SS7 – New settlement at Dunsfold Aerodrome**

Godalming Town Council supports the principle of significant development at Dunsfold. However, the principal concern with the Dunsfold policy is the lack of certainty that a proper and full evidence base has been assembled which demonstrates that this scale of development can be delivered along with the supporting infrastructure and in a way that does not have significant adverse impacts on neighbouring areas including Godalming and Farncombe.

There is a clear need for Waverley Borough Council to publish a strategic assessment of the impact of the Dunsfold proposals on Godalming and surrounding villages. The impact of the proposal on traffic and parking in Godalming and Farncombe is a specific concern.

Godalming Town Council believes that at 2,600 homes the proposal in the DLP for Dunsfold Park is the worst possible scenario. A strategic housing target of 7,000 to 8,000 homes in Dunsfold should be adopted, this settlement size is large enough to support a secondary school and would also attract the other major services that residents require, thereby drastically reducing the need for its residents to have to travel around Waverley. Indeed the prospective gain is in fact much greater than this, because the existing residents of Dunsfold, Alfold and Chiddingfold and intervening parishes such as Hambledon and Hascombe would then have an alternative main settlement focus with shorter journeys than at present, when currently a trip into Godalming or Cranleigh is necessary. This would offer the prospect of actually reducing journeys on key roads such as the B2130, as well as alleviating some of the town centre congestion in Godalming and Cranleigh

A strategic housing target of 7,000 to 8,000 homes in Dunsfold would remove the need to allocate any green belt sites in Godalming and its neighbouring parishes of Busbridge, Hambledon, Hascombe, Peperharow and Witley.



### **Policy SS8 – Strategic Mixed Use Site at Woodside Park**

Given the lack of previous dialogue about this site Godalming Town Council is surprised by the inclusion of Woodside Park as a strategic site. Godalming Town Council would wish to see employment land retained at that location.

We would understand the definition of a strategic site, as being a site that is 'important to delivering the strategic objectives of the plan'. We find the justification for the strategic role of this site to be unclear and would wish for clarification.

Godalming Town Council

Neighbourhood Plan July 2016

Results of the survey conducted by the Economy Group with local businesses.

Fifteen replies were received from local businesses (using Survey Monkey website) during July / August 2016.

Hard copies of the returns are available together with an analysis by the Survey Monkey software programme.

The Chair of the Economy Group has extracted many of the comments, suggestions, and ideas coming from those returns in order to give an overview of some of the key issues. They are presented in the form of a "strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats" table format (SWOT) attached to this paper. Where there has been a range of responses to some of the questions a personal judgement has been made to try and identify where the majority of opinion is by the participants. In some cases "no opinion" has been logged by the participants in the survey.

Fifteen replies and opinions do not provide an overwhelming weight of argument but does give an indication of which facilities etc might receive more detailed consideration in the interests of the local economy.

The responses have been linked to the original questionnaire by showing the question (Q1 etc) to which they relate.

The various types of businesses which responded to the survey together with other information about them including location, number of employees etc can be found in the Survey Monkey analysis if required.

Strengths				Weaknesses			
Q1	Sufficient range of business types?	YES	53%	Q1	Sufficient range of business types?	NO	47%
Q2				Q2	Lack of shops for teenagers eg gaming		
					Lack of mobile phone shop		
					Lack of M&S Food Hall		
Q3	Retail economy - Godalming						
	Good range of shops		60%		No – not enough variety		33%
	Opening hours enough		80%		No		20%
	Good range of personal services		100%				
	Opening hours enough		93%		No		7%
	Good range of professional services		93%		No		7%
	Opening hours enough		93%				
	Variety of restaurants etc		60%		No		33%
	Like to see more		33%		No		53%
Q3	Retail economy - Farncombe						
	Good range of shops		8%		No		58%
	Opening hours enough		58%		No		16%
	Good range of personal services		42%		No		33%
	Opening hours enough		41%		No		8%
	Good range of professional services		8%		No		58%
	Opening hours enough		33%		No		16%
	Variety of restaurants etc		16%		No		42%
Q4	Good range of IT and SME companies			Q4	Recommendations to improve attractiveness:		
	Good leisure space				More (small) office space and start up facilities / areas		
					Free parking one hour		
					10 minute free parking in High Street		
					Not enough retail shops in High St and Church St		
Q5					Lack of “anchor shops” like M&S, Wagammama etc		
					Sainsburys and Waitrose attract people to that end of town to detriment of Church St. Half hour free parking at West end of town		
Q6	Accessibility						
	Roads		20%		Insufficient or not at all		70%
	Car parking		0%		Insufficient or not at all / too expensive		92%
					Farncombe needs more		
	Rail transport		81%		Insufficient or not at all		18%
	Bus transport		36%		Insufficient or not at all		18%
Q7	Sufficient quality hotel accommodation		7%	Q8	Hotel accommodation is one extreme or the other. Limited availability or poor quality		43%



Opportunities			Threats		
			Q4	Business rates in High St	
Q3	Like to see more shops in Godalming Particularly independent retail for clothes, kitchen, food	86%	Q6	The number of decent independent shops is decreasing rapidly. People can go elsewhere for more variety for same car parking charges eg Farnham thriving town centre	
	Like to see more shops in Farncombe	83%			
	Like to see more personal services "	42%			
	Like to see more professional services "	41%			
	Like to see more restaurants etc "	58%			
			Q7	Insufficient hotel accommodation	
Q4	More offices above retail units				
	More office space to rent short term / 1 off meetings				
	Farncombe facilities need promoting and needs more for employees				
	Farncombe station area could do with more service type businesses				
	Farncombe village centre needs more cafes, restaurants.				
	Chamber of Commerce facilities need promoting				
	Catteshall good area for light industry and needs more				
	Improve WIFI facilities			Too many charity shops at expense of "real shops"	
Q5	Make parking free after 1800 hrs for evening economy		Q12	Increased car park charges are driving people to out of town centres	
Q5	Promote tourism				
			Q15	Office / industrial units in short supply and expensive Godalming and Farncombe are becoming commuter towns	
Q16	Use the Neighbourhood Plan to market Godalming and Farncombe		Q16	The right to convert business buildings into dwellings	
	The Plan should maintain the importance of variety / range of choiceto attract and retain customers / visitors and trade				
Q21	Develop better business support, drop in advice centre, better use of empty shops				

Peter Stevenson

Chair- Local economy group – Neighbourhood Plan – Oct 2016