
LOCAL PLAN PANEL

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 7 October 2021 from 7.00 pm - 8.05 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Chairman), Monique Bonney (Vice-Chairman), Alastair Gould, James Hunt, Carole Jackson, Elliott Jayes, Peter Marchington, Richard Palmer, Eddie Thomas and Ghlin Whelan.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Simon Algar, Natalie Earl, James Freeman, Emma Gibson, Kellie MacKenzie, Jo Millard, Jill Peet, Anna Stonor and Aaron Wilkinson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Steve Davey (Remotely), Tim Valentine (Remotely) and Mike Whiting.

355 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

356 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 September 2021 (Minute Nos. 244 - 249) were taken as read, agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

357 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

358 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: ISSUES AND PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION

The Chairman introduced the report which presented the Issues and Preferred Options Regulation 18 document set-out in Appendix I of the report and sought agreement for the document to go out to consultation from Friday 29 October 2021 until Monday 29 November 2021.

The Planning Policy Manager drew attention to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Swale Local Plan Review (LPR) which was tabled and had previously been emailed to all Members and published on the Council's website. The Planning Policy Manager apologised for the late circulation of the SA and explained that the aim of the SA was to assist with selecting the preferred option. The final version of the SA would be considered by Cabinet on 27 October 2021. The Regulation 18 document contained various topics including five options for a development strategy.

Members considered the report and raised points which included:

- Option 5 in the SA included further options, so officers needed to bear that in mind;
- the options listed within the SA were the same as those previously looked at and it should be a mixture of sites;

- the SA should have been provided before Members considered the new Regulation 18 document;
- timescales were too quick;
- the SA document appeared to “sit on the fence”;
- considered that Option 5 made a good case;
- Option 3 did not address issues on the M2 or health and educational provision issues;
- the proposed consultation period was not in-keeping with Council policy;
- when would the SA be finalised?;
- other than the reasons given were there other reasons why the Council was going back to Regulation 18?;
- aware that Horsham Council had pulled their Regulation 19 document due to changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
- concerned that Cabinet would be making a decision without enough information.

In response the Head of Planning explained that the SA was to be used as ‘a tool’ rather than to say which options were best, and legal had advised that planning policy officers were handling the LPR appropriately. The Planning Policy Manager said that both Kent County Council (KCC) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would be consulted. The Regulation 18 document would help to shape the new Regulation 19 document.

A Member asked whether consultees who had responded to the previous Regulation 19 consultation would need to respond again to this document. The Chairman confirmed that they could comment on the Regulation 18 if they had a preference on that strategy, and would need to respond to a new Regulation 19.

Recommended:

- (1) That the Issues and Preferred Options Reg 18 consultation document set out at Appendix I be approved for consultation purposes and the consultation arrangements be endorsed.***
- (2) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to make minor amendments to the document prior to consultation.***

359 MILSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Conservation & Design Manager introduced the report which set-out proposed boundary changes and the recent review work in respect of Milstead Conservation Area (CA). Members were asked to note the content of the public consultation draft of the character appraisal and management strategy document produced for the review, as set-out at Appendix II of the report, and to confirm support from the Panel for the CA being formally re-designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The Conservation & Design Manager reported that 13 responses to the consultation had been received, 9 in support, and the remaining provided minor suggestions. He explained that the CA had been designated in April 1973, so a review was long overdue, and thanked the

consultant for her work on the review. Seven boundary changes were proposed and KCC Archaeology and KCC Highways raised no comments.

The Ward Member thanked officers for their work and welcomed the “fascinating” document.

The Chairman thanked officers for the excellent piece of work.

The Conservation & Design Manager thanked local residents and the Milstead Parish Clerk for their input and local knowledge.

Recommended:

- (1) That the content of the public consultation draft of the character appraisal and management strategy document produced for the review, and the representations made on this by interested parties, the details of which are set out in the report appendices be noted.**
- (2) That the changes to the review document proposed by officers in response to the representations received during the public consultation be agreed.**

360 SITTINGBOURNE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Conservation & Design Officer introduced the report which outlined proposed boundary changes and the recent review work in respect of the Sittingbourne CA, as set-out in Appendix II to the report, and asked Members for their support in formally re-designating the CA under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The Conservation & Design Officer reported that Sittingbourne CA was a priority as it had been identified as one of the eight “at risk” CAs in Swale following the adoption of the Swale Heritage Strategy in 2020. The proposal included extending the CA to include parts of East Street as it had a distinct character with a good mix of architectural buildings and was very closely matched to that of the High Street in terms of its urban grain. The sole substantive consultation response had been positive and he considered the boundary changes proposed were sound.

The Conservation & Design Manager drew attention to an error in the report. The surgery building on the south side of East Street had accidentally been missed off the character appraisal and management plan document in terms of the alignment of the proposed eastern extension to the CA. The Conservation & Design Manager considered the building had a strong architectural character and requested Member approval to allow officers to correct the drafting error to include the building within the extended CA boundary. This was agreed by Members.

Members considered the report and their comments included:

- Really good document and important to have up-to-date management plans;
- concerned that residents in East Street would have restrictions imposed limiting what they could or could not do to their properties; and

- pleased that East Street had been included and considered it would help to tidy-up the area.

In response to a comment from a Member, the Design & Conservation Officer explained that most of the properties in East Street were flats and did not benefit from Permitted Development Rights and that therefore, the CA restrictions would not be very different to those they currently had.

Recommended:

- (1) That the public consultation draft of the character appraisal and management strategy document produced for the review, and the representations made on this by interested parties, the details of which were set out in the report appendices be noted.***
- (2) That the review document proposed by officers in response to the representations received during the public consultation be agreed.***
- (3) That the doctors surgery building be included within the Sittingbourne CA Appraisal and Management Plan as minuted.***

Chairman

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel