

## **Community Planning Panel**

### **Representatives present at 26<sup>th</sup> January meeting**

Egham Residents' Association – ERA

Englefield Green Village Residents' Association – EGVRA

The Chertsey Society- The CS

The Ottershaw Society – The OS

Thorpe Residents' Association – TRA

Virginia Water Community Association – VWCA

Wentworth Residents' Association – WRA

West Addlestone Residents' Association – WARA

Apologies from Hamm Court Residents' Association

### **Council Officers present at 26<sup>th</sup> January meeting**

Corporate Head of Planning and Environmental Services – Ian Maguire (IM)

Policy and Strategy Manager – Richard Ford (RF)

Assistant Planning Policy Manager – Georgina Pacey (GP)

Planning Assistant (Policy and Strategy) – Anna Murray (AM)

The meeting commenced at 6:00 pm.

#### **1. Introductions**

RF welcomed all in attendance and invited round table introductions from all parties.

RF stated that the main purpose of the meeting was to feedback to the Community Planning Panel (CPP) on the Issues, Options and Preferred Approaches (IOPA) consultation, to advise what the Policy and Strategy team had been doing since the consultation had finished, and to provide an update on other important Local Plan matters since the last meeting.

#### **2. Issues, Options and Preferred Approaches Consultation – feedback on representations received and how the Council is responding**

AM introduced the agenda item related to the IOPA Consultation. AM outlined that the Council had received 762 representations during the IOPA consultation and explained that the Policy and Strategy team had begun to produce an initial statistical analysis of the representations received. The statistical analysis was outlined to the CPP and mostly focused upon Chapter 4 (Spatial Vision, Objectives and Strategy) and subsequently the Resultant Land Parcels.

The CS asked whether there was any possibility an index could be produced to show the representations on a ward by ward basis as the current table of representations and representors did not show this and it would be easier to find individual reps. IM confirmed that he could not promise that this could be done but if there was a way the Policy and Strategy team could do this quickly then it would be produced. There were concerns from members of the CPP surrounding not being about to find the table of representations and representors. The OS asked whether this could be sent to the group. AM clarified that the table of representations and representors was on the Council's Planning Policy webpages but would circulate the document to the CPP.

GP explained that the statistical analysis produced by the team also focuses on the other chapters of the IOPA Consultation document however; officers would not be going into detail about these at the meeting. GP explained that if any of the CPP were interested in the remaining IOPA chapters, the special planning committee, to be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> February, would go into more detail and give a flavour of the views about the Council's preferred approaches in chapters 5-12.

GP then went onto explain what the Policy and Strategy team had been doing since the IOPA consultation had ended and representations had been summarised and responded to. GP highlighted that the Infrastructure Needs Assessment and Infrastructure Delivery Plan were being produced; the team had also been looking at site capacity work (particularly in the case of Ottershaw East). Additionally, when the team begin developing the Local Plan policies, work will also begin on the Local Plan Viability Work.

IM added that the output from the representations had led the team to undertaking a second stage of the Green Belt Review, which has already commenced. GP stated that the Council needs to demonstrate to an Inspector at Local Plan examination that every stone has been turned in seeking to meet the Council's Objectively Assessed Housing Needs. It is possible that the Green Belt Review Part 2 could see additional sites recommended for removal from the Green Belt (following the consideration of sustainability credentials as well). RF stated that there would be a further consultation added to the Local Plan timetable if any sites were proposed for allocation through the Local Plan following this review. GP continued that Runnymede Borough Council officers had had a meeting with the consultants, Arup that afternoon and site visits were to start in the next few weeks. By the end of February Arup would feedback to the Council on any sites that were looking like they could potentially be considered by the Council for removal from the Green Belt. The review will be complete at the end of March and published on the Council's website.

WRA raised a query about the consultation process and the limited opportunities for residents to engage in the process. IM explained that the Local Plan procedure is defined by legislation and only a minimum of two rounds of public consultation are required. The Regulation 18 round of consultation has been done and we will now develop the policies before the pre-submission (regulation 19) consultation (the second statutory round of public consultation). As noted above however, if the Council does propose to add any allocations to those consulted on in the IOPA document, then there will be another round of Regulation 18

consultation. For example, this is what Woking Borough Council is doing at the moment – carrying out a focussed consultation on the Martyr’s Lane site.

WRA further queried whether development on resultant land parcels (RLPs) could come forward before the new local plan was adopted. IM responded by summarising the content of paragraph 216 of the NPPF which confirms that:

From the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

So whilst it is technically possibly that the RLP sites could come forward before the Local Plan is adopted, this is probably unlikely. WRA mentioned that in particular, looking at development close to Wentworth there is a significant amount of development outside Runnymede that would have an impact on this area. WRA asked whether the INA takes that into consideration. GP responded by stating that the Transport Impact Assessment produced by Surrey County Council considers the impacts of cumulative growth commitments in the area surrounding Runnymede. Although it is important to stress that this is at a snapshot in time and schemes can only be modelled if there is an adequate degree of certainty that they will be delivered. RF added information regarding the Duty to Cooperate with other local authorities. .

Lastly, WRA asked whether the assessments look forward to 2035. IM responded by stating that yes the assessments do look forward to 2035, although assessments are likely to be refreshed and updated when the wider local plan is reviewed (this review process occurs approx. every 5 years). GP added that infrastructure and service providers are also engaged in the infrastructure needs assessment work being undertaken by the Council.

The OS asked whether the Green Belt buffer pdf could be circulated. AM confirmed this could be done. ERA asked whether the buffer was a new idea to Runnymede. IM confirmed that it was and the Green Belt Review methodology defined the width of the buffer zones. ERA questioned if a piece of land lay within the 400m around the urban area, could any piece of land then be removed from the Green Belt? GP explained that any sites that are being actively promoted for development (i.e. the Council has been made aware that the site is available for development) to the Council, are being looked at within this review. There is potential that a site or sites may be recommended to be removed from the Green Belt in this buffer zone. IM went onto explain that if during the Local Plan examination process a developer objects, then we will need a robust evidence base to demonstrate to an

Inspector that all stones have been turned by the Council in trying to meet its objectively assessed housing needs.

RF clarified for ERA that there may be sites that are recommended to come out of the Green Belt from the part 2 review or there may be no sites. ERA asked what the officers thought would make land vulnerable. IM responded by suggesting that heavily developed land could be vulnerable as there is already encroachment to the countryside. ERA questioned what the Council's baseline position on this piece of work was. IM outlined that the Council's baseline position is that the Council wants a robust evidence base that has been soundly assessed. ERA asked whether gravel raising would prohibit this vulnerability. GP outlined that both the 2014 Green Belt Review and the Site Selection Assessment and Methodology (SSMA) consider mineral and waste designations. Whilst such designations do not necessarily rule out development on a site at some point in the future, depending on when extraction is likely to occur, and how long it would take, the existence of such a designation generally makes sites less preferential for allocation than those sites without such designations.

WARA asked whether the Council has looked at brownfield sites robustly. Also asked whether we have had sight of the Housing White Paper. IM confirmed that brownfield sites had been robustly assessed in particular the Council's preferred approaches included introducing a minimum density policy into Local Plan and also confirmed that a significant part of the Council's suggested housing target would be met through the development of both urban and/or previously developed sites (of the housing target recommended under option SS3 (5740-7280), 3337-4243 would be delivered on RLPs. The remainder of the Council's housing growth would come from the development of urban and/or previously developed sites). IM added that the Council had not had sight of the Housing White Paper.

The CS asked for clarification on the name of the consultants carrying out the Infrastructure Needs Assessment. IM confirmed that name was Aecom and they also produced the Surrey Infrastructure Study. GP asked in relation to the comments raised about brownfield sites, whether any members on the CPP knew of any potentially available sites that the Council could consider for development potential through its 2017 Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). GP highlighted that the deadline was the day after the meeting. WARA stated that the DERA site is a good example of what should be done with brownfield sites. IM added that the Council is currently doing some more work on the capacity at DERA, to explore whether there are any further opportunities for additional development. Additionally, density may come up in the white paper which would influence the Council's site capacity work. The OS added that in the South East Plan the capacity for DERA was listed at 2000 homes –significantly more than what is being proposed now.

TWRA referred back to the Green Belt Review Part 2 and asked whether there was a difference between the 250m and the 400m buffer. GP outlined that the Council has completed in draft form an assessment of the hierarchy of its centres as required by the NPPF (paragraph 23, bullet point 2). This work is to be published on the website soon. On the basis of the Council's analysis, the Borough's larger and better served centres (and their

surrounding settlements) have a larger buffer area for assessment than the Borough's smaller centres (and their surrounding settlements) which have fewer services and facilities.

### **3. Local Development Scheme**

IM introduced the agenda item related to the Local Development Scheme. GP explained that the timetable had been amended to allow for additional time to ensure that the Plan and the evidence base underpinning it were as robust as possible prior to submission to the Secretary of State. There was an extension to the timetable of 9 months. RF also added the Housing White Paper could potentially have implications. IM stated that delay is not an option and that there is unlikely to be any substantial changes from now until the submission of the Plan at the end of the year.

WARA asked whether the Council has a voice at county level on the Runnymede Local Committee IM replied that there is very little voice on this.

### **4. Garden Village at Longcross**

GP raised that Fair Oaks had not been successful in being given the Government's backing for a locally led garden village in the recent announcement. However CBRE are actively promoting this site and it is understood that by the end of February there will be a weekend workshop held with the public. GP explained to the CPP that Runnymede Borough Council has made it clear that we expect the applicant to interact with our residents. The OS expressed concern that 2 days is very limited for a workshop and it will be in the village hall in Chobham. The developers have said they will only consult Ottershaw at the planning application stage. IM outlined that this is unacceptable and will be actioning this. The CS explained that there was a meeting at Chobham Cricket Club the previous Monday which was hosted by the Chobham Society and they want to keep Fair Oaks as a working airport with some limited development. ERA asked whether there will be pressure for the Longcross development to have direct access to the M3. WRA raised concern about congestion in the area given the amount of development which could potentially come forward in Runnymede and the surrounding area and asked how this will be assessed. IM replied that the Infrastructure Needs Assessment and Infrastructure Delivery Plan will assess this and potential funding from the garden village will be used to look at the A320 corridor. WRA asked about construction traffic. The OS also expressed this concern on Foxhills Road – which already had problems with congestion. IM stated that infrastructure will be the biggest challenge.

### **5. Self-Build Register**

AM gave an explanation on the new self and custom build regulations which came into force in October. A report is anticipated to go to committee at the end of February or early March.

### **6. Neighbourhood Planning**

RF referred to TWRA who sits on the Thorpe Neighbourhood Forum in order to feedback to the CPP about this item agenda. TWRA stated that the Forum had recently sent out a questionnaire to gain views of the local residents and what they would like to see in the village. The questionnaire achieved 134 responses and 3 more were received after the

deadline. The Forum split into 4 working groups looking at the concerns expressed by local residents. Most of these concerns were to do with speed, downsizing of housing, car parking and schools. The Forum will be holding a consultation event so that all interests can come together. The Forum is also having a historical review of the village of Thorpe done. There have been many problems with funding but seems to be nearly in a good direction.

RF highlighted that there had been some movement from Englefield Green to set up a Forum and Area. EGVRA added that EGVRA were due to discuss this at the 14/2/17 committee meeting and on the 4/3/17.

RF also highlighted that officers had interest from WRA to set up a Forum and Area.

ERA asked whether any part of the Borough can set up a neighbourhood forum. IM replied that anywhere can however they need to designate an area. RF added that setting up a neighbourhood forum and designating a neighbourhood area should not be undertaken lightly. TWRA gave examples of the neighbourhood forum difficulties, for example getting 21 representatives from the area and funding problems. The OS stated that OS had thought about this however cannot, as they would be setting it up for the wrong reasons. RF clarified that any neighbourhood plan must be in conformity with the emerging Local Plan. IM stated how the Thorpe Neighbourhood Forum was a real true representation of the area and if any other associations or groups would be interested in setting up a neighbourhood forum or area to contact Runnymede Borough Council as they would be happy to assist.

#### **7. Any Other Business**

HL raised a query about the phasing of development coming forward throughout the Local Plan period. HL asked whether RF or IM could email the response to her. RF and HL agreed to correspond by email to email.

#### **8. Date Of Next Meeting**

RF outlined that it would not be appropriate to set a date for the next meeting; instead we should focus on the key stages of the plan. CPP agreed with this and AM will be in contact in due course to arrange a date.