**BOROUGH OF KETTERING**

**PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting held: 8th June 2016**

**Present:** Councillor Mike Tebbutt (Chair)

Councillors Linda Adams, Mike Brown, Ash Davies, Ruth Groome, Ian Jelley, Mark Rowley and Jan Smith

**16.PP.01 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bain.

**16.PP.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Tebbutt, Brown, Groome, Rowley, Jelley and Smith declared personal interests in Item 6 on the agenda (Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space) as residents of property in close proximity to green spaces.

It was noted that if at any point during the debate it became evident that such individual personal interests became pecuniary, members would leave the room during discussion thereon.

**16.PP.03 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th March 2016 be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

An update arising from the minutes was noted as follows:-

15.PP.31: It was confirmed that the updates for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell Town Centres had now been sent to the Clerks of the Town Councils, the Neighbourhood Plan Groups and the Chambers of Trade.

**16.PP.04 AGREEMENT OF FUTURE PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE START TIMES**

A report was accepted as urgent business by the Chair and circulated at the meeting.

The report provided the Committee members with the opportunity of deciding whether to alter the start time of committee meetings.

**RESOLVED** that future meetings of the Planning Policy Committee commence at 6.30 pm.

(Voting For: 6; Against 0; Not Voting 1)

**16.PP.05 KETTERING BOROUGH OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT**

A report was submitted which informed members of updates to the Kettering Borough Open Space Assessment and the additional work required to inform the preparation of the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan.

It was noted that there were two types of open space. The first type was open space that was publicly accessible and was important because of how it was used (eg playing fields, allotments, play areas for children etc). The second type was open space which was important because of its location (eg because of the contribution it made to the character of a settlement).

Work on updating the publicly accessible open space maps was ongoing and would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

The following points were made during the debate:-

* The opportunity to include sports and recreation provision was welcomed
* If open space was lost or a use withdrawn, provision of additional open space should be considered elsewhere
* Developers should be requested to provide green space on new developments
* Provision should be more innovative within the policy (eg outdoor gyms)

Members noted that the provision of open space within developments was a pre-cursor to development and a mechanism existed to ensure the developer fulfilled their obligations through planning applications and monitoring. The needs and requirements of communities to improve the use of open spaces could be considered through Neighbourhood Plans. Sport England worked with local authorities as a consultee on planning applications, and national and local issues were taken into consideration.

It was noted that there was an intention to update the Open Space Supplementary Planning Document or appropriate alternative mechanism to ensure that the requirements of open space provision would continue to be clear and visible to developers and landowners from the outset.

**RESOLVED** the updates to the open space audit and the additional work to be undertaken to compile the evidence base and inform the preparation of the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan be noted.

**16.PP.06 HISTORICALLY AND VISUALLY IMPORTANT LOCAL GREEN SPACE**

A report was submitted which:

(i) informed members of the results of the focused consultation with landowners and Town and Parish Councils on the Historically and Visually Important Open Space Background Paper;

(ii) informed members of the outcome of additional assessment work following the consultation; and

(iii) sought agreement to a list of sites to be progressed as Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space in the draft Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan.

An update containing additional comments received in relation to sites HVI016 (Geddington), HVI056 (Burton Latimer) and HVI069 (Desborough) was circulated at the meeting.

It was noted that the Committee endorsed the Historically and Visually Important Open Spaces Background Paper for a focused consultation with landowners and Town and Parish Councils in September last year. The subsequent consultation took place between 30th October and 11th December 2015. Consultation responses were noted. However, members were advised that there would be an opportunity for the broader community to comment through the consultation on the draft Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan consultation.

Additional work had been carried out by the Council’s consultants, the River Nene Regional Park (RNRP), which involved assessing new sites; reviewing existing assessments and reviewing boundaries of existing sites.

During discussion the following points were noted:-

* The criteria for inclusion as a site of historically important open space could include sites which contribute to the setting of a conservation area or listed building or which are connected with a historic event
* Additional sites could be suggested through the public consultation process which would take place later in the year

Burton Latimer

* Site HVI056 would be discussed with RNRP following the meeting and the Chair advised of the outcome

Desborough

* HVI055 had been previously discounted. RNRP had looked at this site, together with the wider Ise Valley, and recommended that part of the site (The Damms) be included as a local green space but was of the opinion that the remainder of the site did not meet the requirements
* Site HVI069 be included as recommended in the report and on the update

Rothwell

* Site HVI054 remained

Other sites

* Ashley – plan had been updated
* Braybrooke – gardens had been removed in accordance with comments received
* HVI052 (Broughton) – it was agreed this would be amended in accordance with the Parish Council’s comments
* Dingley – four sites had been put forward and assessed, but none satisfied the criteria
* Geddington – RNRP had reassessed the sites – two parcels of land within HVI016 did not warrant designation and were removed.
* Grafton Underwood – a new area had been included and some garden land removed
* Harrington – two new sites had been put forward and assessed by RNRP, but did not meet the criteria. One other area was also discounted as it was in the conservation area and part-protected by a tree preservation order and so was considered to be already adequately protected
* Loddington – an area was reassessed by RNRP and met the criteria
* Pytchley – The Parish Council’s comments were supported
* Rushton – One additional area was put forward and assessed by RNRP. It was felt the site made an important contribution and so it was included.
* Weston-by-Welland – site was challenged but recommended to remain
* Wilbarston – a new site was put forward by the Parish Council. RNRP recommended that it be included

It was noted that supporting text on the wording of the policy would provide further detail on what type of development may be considered appropriate within sites identified on the Proposals Map as Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space. The full draft plan would come back before the Committee for approval before it was released for consultation.

Discussion was held on protection of the Ise Valley and Slade Brook, particularly in relation to Policy 20 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. It was felt there was a need to revisit this Green Infrastructure Policy in the light of the new Joint Core Strategy, particularly in relation to delivering access to the Ise, Nene and Slade and preventing coalescence between local communities. It was noted that it was intended to take account of this at a later stage of the Local Plan.

A general discussion was also held on the need to ensure design was appropriate for individual sites. It was noted that there were no Design Codes, but the Council would seek to align and recognise good quality work which reflected local aspirations through contributors, for example Rockingham Forest Trust. An approach had been made by CPRE to consider adopting design guidance. However, the conclusion had been drawn that it was difficult to agree and adopt generic design guidance, and individual applications should be assessed and conditioned by balancing different influences.

New Regulations in relation to Building for Life reflected new national standards for room and house sizes. These regulations were a replacement for the Code for Sustainable Homes.

**RESOLVED** that:-

(i) responses to the consultation on Historically and Visually Important Open Space (2015) be noted;

(ii) the updated Background Paper (June 2016) be endorsed; and

(iii) the list of sites at Table 1 in the report be identified as Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space.

**16.PP.07 KETTERING BOROUGH HOUSING COMPLETIONS UPDATE 2015/16**

A report was submitted which informed members of the numbers of housing completions in Kettering Borough for the period 2015/16.

In response to a question on potential challenges to sites identified for development, it was noted that the report contributed towards a statistical process to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply.

Some disappointment was expressed regarding the proportion of affordable housing completions, and it was noted that some modifications had been necessary in order to bring forward sites for development.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

*(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.15 pm)*

Signed …………………………………………..

Chair

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