

**BOROUGH OF KETTERING**

**PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting held: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

**Present:** Councillor Mike Tebbutt (Chair)  
Councillors Linda Adams, Duncan Bain, Cedwien Brown,  
Ash Davies, June Derbyshire, Ruth Groome, Ian Jelley and Jan  
Smith

**18.PP.25      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mike Tebbutt declared a personal interest in items 6 and 7 as a resident of Desborough. Councillors Ian Jelley and Cedwien Brown declared personal interests in items 6 and 7 as members of Rothwell Town Council.

**18.PP.26      MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**            that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**18.PP.27      MATTERS OF URGENCY**

None.

**18.PP.28      SITE SPECIFIC PART 2 LOCAL PLAN – DRAFT PLAN CONSULTATION**

A report was submitted which informed members of the responses to the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Draft Plan consultation; and which sought endorsement of the officer responses set out in the comments schedule and summary sheets. The report also sought agreement to the ‘next steps’ outlined in the summary sheets for officers to advance in the production of the Pre-submission Plan.

At its meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 the Committee endorsed officer comments and agreed the next steps in relation to the Spatial Portrait, Vision and Outcomes, with the second part covering some topic-based policies. At its meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 the Committee endorsed officer comments and agreed the next steps in

relation to the Kettering and Barton Seagrave; Burton Latimer; Desborough; Rothwell and the Rural Area with the exception of Stoke Albany.

The report under consideration considered the following sections:-

- The Natural Environment and Heritage
- Stoke Albany

Comments made during the debate are summarised below:-

#### Natural Environment and Heritage

The summary of officer comments and the next steps were noted and unanimously agreed.

#### Stoke Albany

Three speakers addressed the Committee under the Council's Right to Speak policy.

Mr David Benson, representing Stoke Albany Parish Council, stated that the recommended discounting of site RA120 was welcomed but that the parish council were unhappy that plans for site RA221 remained in place, explaining the reasons for the objection. Mr Benson reiterated a previous offer to members of the Committee for an on-site visit to the village.

Mr Nick Carr, on behalf of the promoter of Site drew members' attention to ongoing work in the village, making particular reference to the speed survey that had been undertaken in Harborough Road. He informed members that the promoters of the site were willing to undertake further survey work in Desborough Road. A preliminary ecological appraisal and heritage assessment had also been undertaken. A detailed noise assessment had been prepared, including on-site monitoring. Surveys were planned in relation to drainage, contamination and trees.

Mr Alex Brodie addressed members as the owner of Site RA120. He circulated aerial photographs of the site and outlined relevant policies of the Joint Core Strategy. He advised members that the site was immediately available and outlined two more options for development in addition to those put forward at a previous meeting:-

- Opt 3 – scale down to 8 units with 40% affordable homes
- Opt 4 – bring forward the site in advance of allocation with 40% affordable housing or a commuted sum.

The Committee noted that planning permission for three large dwellings already existed for the site in question.

A short presentation was given by an officer, summarising issues raised in relation to Stoke Albany, including those from CPRE and comments received in relation to STA02 (Stoke Farm) and STA03 (Harborough Road). The summary included photographs of the village showing the location of the sites.

During debate members were of the opinion that it was important to think ahead and deliver housing whilst maintaining the character of the village. It was also felt to be important that any trees or landscaping removed should be replaced – in an alternative location if necessary. Members discussed concerns about highway safety and the need to ensure public transport links, particularly for those people who may not have a vehicle. It would also be important to ensure that any development did not create additional dangers to those that already existed. The safety work that was being undertaken would identify issues and explore how they might be addressed. If unlawful speed issues were identified, there were ways to address these by changing the perception of drivers.

In response to a comment regarding frequent over-spilling of the pub car park, it was noted that a criterion is recommended to explore and address this concern.

Discussion was then held on the characteristics of both sites, adjacent open spaces and the need to reflect the adjacent styles of housing in any new developments. It was noted that the proposed footpath link with Wilbarston would provide a better physical connection between the two villages but there were issues about speed of vehicles, visibility and sharp bends in the road. There was also a need to consider the amount of horse traffic, as there were three commercial stable yards in the village.

It was suggested that the recommendation of the Committee should be held in abeyance until a site visit could be held, as it was felt this would be beneficial to members. However, it was noted that in the context of overall consideration of the plan, other settlements had not had the benefit of site visits. Members noted that discussions could not be reopened on decisions already made.

It was then agreed that a site visit to Stoke Albany be arranged as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the comments received during the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Draft Plan consultation be noted;

- (ii) the recommendation of the Committee on the Stoke Albany section of the document be deferred until a site visit had been held;
- (iii) the Next Steps as set out in the summary sheets in relation to the Natural Environment and Heritage be agreed for officers to advance in the production of the Pre-submission Plan.

**18.PP.29**      **LOCALISING POLICY FOR OPEN SPACE, PLAYING PITCH AND SPORTS FACILITIES**

A report was submitted in relation to the Chapter on Heritage and the Natural Environment in the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2), which included a policy specifically in relation to open space, playing pitches and sports facilities. The report set out the preferred policy approach for open space, sport and recreation in the SSP2 and the rationale behind the decision.

**RESOLVED** that the preferred policy approach in the SSP2 Local Plan for open space, sport and recreation would provide a policy hook directing policy officers and developers to the Open Space, Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategies. These documents would guide decision making and master-planning with respect to open space sport and recreational provision within the Borough. They would ensure a strategic approach to the development and delivery of such provision until 2031.

**18.PP.30**      **KETTERING TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN – MONITORING UPDATE**

A report was submitted which informed members of the results of the seventh monitoring report of the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan.

It was noted that the town centre was now rated 132 out of 200 town centres, dropping from 41<sup>st</sup> in 2016, which reflected the challenges now faced by Kettering town centre which was experiencing a significant decline in terms of footfall, and an increase in vacancy rates. There were some positive points highlighted, including growth in the night time economy, investment in delivering against the Town Centre Delivery Plan, and discussions were underway with Network Rail around strengthening the contribution the railway station could make to the town centre.

The Committee then held a debate, making several suggestions which could potentially improve the town centre, namely:-

- Creating residential units above shops
- Attracting new companies to invest in the area around the railway station
- Creating an access to/exit from the railway station from the Northampton Road recreation ground side of the station
- Removal of the red-lining of the building in Wadcroft to open this site up to more potential uses
- An innovative refurbishment/updating of the High Street to improve and modernise the look of the area
- Breaking up large expanses of concrete and paving in the town centre with landscaping and street furniture such as wooden planters
- Bringing the youth into the town centre by encouraging skateboarders, the provision of fixed table tennis tables and fitness facilities
- Remarking of cycle routes into the town centre
- Looking at the tertiary sector and ways of encouraging people to enjoy spending time in the town centre
- Increasing the number of festivals and events in the town centre to at least monthly
- Expanding the use of the Art Gallery, for example by showing films and holding more events to encourage people into the town centre and increase footfall

Members were of the opinion that the general impact of the internet on the way people shopped, together with the Rushden Lakes development, had impacted on town centres across the country. It was noted that Rushden Lakes was expanding to include smaller units, and it was felt this would impact on Kettering town centre as it would have to compete for investment in this type of unit.

The view was expressed that housing developments in town centres potentially impacted on public car parks, as they tended to be used by residents with no on-site parking facilities.

It was **Agreed** that the red-lining in the AAP would be further explored, as would the potential for the creation of an access to the railway station from the recreation ground.

**RESOLVED** that

(i) the following be noted:-

- Kettering Town Centre had gained an interim Purple Flag renewal status

- Overall, the night time economy was growing significantly in strength
- Events, including the Christmas Market and Kettering by the Sea, continued to promote Kettering Town Centre as an attractive and vibrant destination
- The Kettfest festival proved to be popular, incorporating areas, culture and music, for a third successive year at various venues
- Overall, vacancy rates had increased to 13.9%; this was less positive than national average of 11.1%
- The closure of a number of high profile stores shows the negative impact Rushden Lakes has had in the retail sector in Kettering town centre
- A decrease of footfall on a non-market and small increase on a market day in September, as well as significant decreases on both days in December, compared to last year
- A total of 238 dwellings had been delivered in the town centre since the plan was adopted
- The Council was working with the town centre stakeholders to deliver projects set out in the Town Centre Delivery Plan which provided improvements to Kettering town centre

(ii) The comments made by the Committee be passed on to the Town Centre Task and Finish Group for consideration.

#### **18.PP.31 FIVE YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY**

A report was submitted which informed members of the Council's five year housing land supply position.

An update to the report was given at the meeting, and members noted that since the report had been written, the government had published results of the housing delivery test, which confirmed that Kettering Borough had delivered 129% of its housing measurement, and there would be no resultant consequences. The schedule had also been amended to include Broughton Grange site in Broughton Parish, instead of in Kettering.

**RESOLVED** that the Council's five year housing land supply position be noted.

*(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 8.25 pm)*

Signed .....  
Chair

AI