

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 13 September 2016

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 1.30pm and ended at 4.21pm.

***8 Public speaking**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

There were no members of the public that wished to speak.

***9 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Paul Diviani; minute – *12 - A30 Honiton to Devonshire Inn – Highway Improvement Scheme

Interest - Personal

Reason: Lives on the section of the A30 being considered for highway improvement.

***10 Cranbrook Development Plan Document: Issues and Options Consultation**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management's report outlining the consultation results of the Issues and Options stage of the Development Plan Document, and setting out key areas for further work. The proposed further work would inform the preparation of the Preferred Approach Document, which was hoped would be consulted upon in early 2017, with submission of the DPD in late spring/early summer for examination.

Members noted that nearly 160 responses to the consultation had been received, which included a significant proportion from Cranbrook residents. The committee report included a summary of the responses received from key bodies and organisations.

Having considered the representations received it was considered that areas for further work would include:

- Further assessment in respect of airport noise;
- Producing a baseline landscape assessment;
- Undertaking a heritage assessment;
- Addressing outstanding transport issues;
- Developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy to plan ahead for open space and SANGs
- Commissioning further work in respect of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment

Points raised during discussion included:

- Concern was raised about the economic role being played within Cranbrook. In response, Members were advised that Officers were working with the Cranbrook Consortium to secure employment space within the town and that an application was expected imminently for the provision of an 'employment hub'. Employment land would be allocated to meet the needs of the town through the Cranbrook DPD. Discussions were being held with CABE and the Consortium in respect of the built form of the Town Centre, however it was recognised that there was a need to deliver

short-term solutions until the Centre was completed – a report would be brought to a future committee on possible delivery models.

- There were issues to be resolved in respect of affordable housing delivery and concerns raised about the lack of community facility provision within the town.
- Update sought on the progress of introducing a passing loop at Whimple and second Cranbrook station. In response, Members were advised that there was a large amount of work to do and considerable costs involved, but it would be a key requirement for any expansion of the town to facilitate a modal shift from road to public transport in order to overcome capacity issues at Junction 29. Consideration needed to be given to a joined up transport system – bus and train – to encourage residents to use that mode of transport. It was not envisaged that the second rail station would be on the same scale as the existing station.
- Due to Cranbrook's elongated form a second station would be necessary.
- Suggestion that a tram/metro system be explored. In response, Members were advised that Devon County Council had been undertaking work looking into alternative transport systems, such as a metro system.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that the responses to the Cranbrook DPD – Issues and Options consultation and the main issues raised be noted.**
- 2. that the areas identified for further work, as outlined in the committee report, to allow the Preferred Option document to be prepared be endorsed.**

***11 Evidence base for the Cranbrook Development Plan Document**

The Committee considered the Planning Policy Manager's report which sought endorsement of the following strategies/documents to underpin the ongoing preparation of the Cranbrook Development Plan Document:

- Economic Development Strategy
- Cultural Development Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Cranbrook – Housing Density
- Sports, Leisure and Recreation requirements for the expansion of Cranbrook

The Cranbrook DPD was intended to guide the future growth and development of the town and it was essential that a robust evidence base supported its policies and proposals.

The Development Manager drew the Committees' attention to a letter received by the East Devon New Community Partners raising concerns about the housing density paper. In response to the points raised, Members were advised that the comments would be taken on board and that housing density would be a key variable in the expansion of the town. Density was recognised as a sensitive issue and there was a need to balance the housing figures set out within the Local Plan with issues such as airport noise and landscape sensitivity. All the supporting evidence strategies/papers would be appended to the Preferred Approach Document and would therefore form part of the consultation on that Document.

Points raised during discussion included:

- There were times when a higher housing density was appropriate, such as when providing sheltered housing or for the town centre. Good design was key.
- With demand for sports pitch provision increasing focus should be placed on the delivery of these facilities. In response, Members were advised that permission had

been granted for sports pitches and work on site had commenced. In the meantime sports clubs were making use of the facilities at the secondary school.

- Concern was raised that about the lack of community facilities and facilities for young people in the town. In response, it was advised that the town had an operational Community Centre, which included the GP surgery. There was work to be done to ensure that sport/open space provision was kept on track.
- Getting the density right for the town centre would be crucial to its success – higher density could work when broken up with open space.
- Disappointment that the sports pitches granted permission did not meet Sports England standards.
- Minimum standards in respect of living space sizes should be adopted. In response, Members were advised that this would be addressed through the production of the design guide.
- Queried whether more could be done through the planning process to deliver renewable energy as part of the housing developments. In response, it was advised that work was being undertaken with Exeter University in respect of renewable energy provision and that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the committee. Renewable energy would be addressed in more detail within the Cranbrook DPD.
- The Economic Development Strategy was currently failing to be delivered. The need for smaller start-up units was highlighted.
- Concern was raised that lifetime homes and homes for disabled people were not currently being delivered.

RESOLVED: that the Economic Strategy, Cultural Development Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Cranbrook – Housing Density paper and the Sports, Leisure and Recreation requirements for the expansion of Cranbrook be endorsed as a sound evidence base for the Cranbrook Plan.

***12 A30 Honiton to Devonshire Inn – Highway Improvement Scheme**

The Committee received a presentation from Dave Black, Devon County Council's Head of Planning, Transformation and Environment and Mike Smith of WSP on proposals for road improvements to the A30 Trunk Road from Honiton to Devonshire Inn. The proposals for improvements to the highway, which would form part of wider improvements to the A30/A303, were currently out for consultation. The A30 trunk road was managed and maintained by Highways England and the Department for Transport would be responsible for the final decision in respect of any improvement scheme, however Devon County Council were promoting options for improvements and were leading the consultation.

Dave Black outlined the background to and reasons for the proposed improvements, which was essentially to improve economic prosperity to the area through enhanced connectivity. Members were advised that a two into one scheme was being proposed; creation of a dual carriageway could not be justified for the level of traffic using the road. Having plotted the environmental constraints and assessed road alignments, two main routes were being promoted and these were outlined Members; both bypassed the village of Monkton.

A report had been prepared by the Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management providing Members with commentary on the consultation from the District Council's perspective.

Comments and questions were invited on the proposals and included:

- Queried whether the existing road could be upgraded. In response, it was advised that there were typography challenges and that the engineering works required would make the option too expensive. The existing road would be kept as a local route as it was not proposed to have local roads joining or exiting the new highway.
- Concerns were raised about the impact of the proposed routes on the AONB and loss of agricultural land. In response, it was advised that the existing road was already within the AONB and that a lot of work had been done to try to plot routes to limit the impact. Mitigation measures would be imposed.
- Local people do not support a two into one arrangement due to accident concerns;
- Proposed orange route was very steep. In response, it was advised that the road complied with design standards.
- Queried why a dual carriageway could be justified from Honiton to Exeter but not from Honiton to Devonshire Inn. In response, it was advised that the traffic levels from Honiton to Exeter were much higher. Evidence did not support a dual carriageway on this section.
- Needed to be mindful that when the M5 was blocked this was the main route out and into the South West.
- Concern was raised about the impact on properties from the proposed routes. In response, it was advised that the main distinction between the two routes was that the blue route had a greater impact on properties and the orange route had a greater impact on the landscape.
- Improving the route would lead to a greater number of vehicles using the A30/A303.
- Suggestion that the road designs allowed for the possibility for the road to become a dual carriageway at a later stage. In response, it was advised that land purchase could only be made based on the land needed at the time.
- Concern that the two into one arrangement created additional static traffic. In response, it was advised the 'merge' issue only tended to happen at peak times.
- In order to reduce noise levels the road surface should not be concrete.
- Queried whether there would be service station provision. In response, it was advised that there were currently no proposals for provision any that any service station would need to be provided a private company.
- Support expressed for the improvements.
- Queried whether linking the A30 and A35 had been explored. In response, it was advised that the two roads were approximately 2km apart and that there would be a number of challenges involved.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Devon County Council be advised that:**
 - a) support is given, in principle, to the proposals for improvements to the A30 from Honiton to Devonshire Inn.**
 - b) the approach adopted by Devon County Council, developing a scheme within the context of the environmental constraints at and along the length of the route, is welcomed and that with in mind the Council's preference is for the orange route.**
 - c) the final road scheme should be developed in a manner that ensures the highest levels of environmental mitigation and should avoid adverse impacts on residences and businesses.**
- 2. that the detailed observations and comments highlighted in the committee report be presented to Devon County Council, in particular the need to discuss with EDDC Officers the potential to accommodate new playing pitch provision on the former showground site and provision of gypsy and traveller stopping places along the proposed route.**

(Cllr Mike Allen asked that his vote against the resolutions be recorded)

***13 Draft Gypsy and Traveller Supplementary Planning Document**

The Committee considered the Senior Planning Policy Officer's report, which sought agreement that the draft Gypsy and Traveller Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be subject to a six week public consultation. The SPD, which accompanied Local Plan Policy H7, set out detailed technical considerations to inform planning applications for new gypsy and traveller pitches. Members noted that the SPD could be taken forwards as an DPD at a later stage.

The Committee discussed the proposed number of pitches per site (15), and suggested that sites should not exceed five pitches in unsustainable locations. In response, the Development Manager advised that the SPD had been drafted based on previous Government guidance, which had been supported by evidence.

RESOLVED: that the draft Gypsy and Traveller Supplementary Planning Document be subject to a six week consultation, in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for the Local Plan and other planning documents, subject to any minor typographical amendments and the insertion of diagrams and pictures, and the 'Number of pitches per site' section being amended to read:

- **The needs assessment suggests that small, family sized sites are usually preferred by Gypsies and Travellers and that larger sites in sustainable locations should not exceed 15 pitches.**

***14 East Devon Local List of Non-designated Heritage Assets**

The Committee considered the Development Manager's report, which sought agreement for the draft Local List Supplementary Planning Document to be subject to public consultation. The draft SPD sets out criteria for assessing whether locally important heritage assets should be placed on the East Devon 'Local List'. This process sought to update an existing out dated List.

Members noted that the impact of development proposals on all heritage assets placed on the 'Local List' would be considered when preparing plans, such as neighbourhood plans, and that any implications on the asset must be taken into account when a decision was taken on a planning application. The Development Manager advised that the establishment and maintenance of the List would place extra work on existing resource and that there might be the requirement for additional resources depending on the number of nominations submitted.

In response to a question about the assessment process, the Development Manager referred Members to the consultation document which outlined the process. It was proposed that the decision would be taken by a senior EDDC officer in association with the relevant Portfolio Holder or Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee. The Planning Authority was required under the NPPF to have regard to non-heritage assets, however at present there was no formal way of identifying them.

Comments made during discussion included:

- Concerns raised about the resource implications for administering the List;
- Correction to appendix 2 - 'Otter Valley Association';
- Appendix 2 should include Fairlynch Museum (Budleigh Salterton);
- Suggestion that the existing List be used as a starting point;
- Nominations were already being received and therefore it was important that criteria were established.

RESOLVED: that consultation on the draft Local List Supplementary Planning Document to guide identification of non-designated heritage assets for inclusion on the East Devon Local List be deferred for further assessment of the resource implications, with a further report to be brought to a future meeting.

Attendance list

Committee Members:

Councillors

Andrew Moulding – Chairman

Peter Bowden – Vice Chairman

Mike Allen

Susie Bond

Peter Burrows

Jill Elson

Graham Godbeer

Mike Howe

Geoff Jung

David Key

Philip Skinner

Brenda Taylor

Mark Williamson

Also present (present for all or part of the meeting):

Councillors:

Brian Bailey

Alan Dent

Paul Diviani

John Dyson

Peter Faithfull

Simon Grundy

Tom Wright

Officers present:

Mark Williams, Chief Executive

Richard Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive

Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Strategic Planning and Development Management

Henry Gordon Lennox, Strategic Lead – Legal, Licensing and Democratic Services

Chris Rose, Development Manager

Hannah Whitfield, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

Committee Members:

Councillor Matt Booth

Non-committee Members

Councillor Ian Hall

Chairman

Date.....