

Runnymede Borough CouncilPLANNING COMMITTEE7 January 2020 at 7.30pm

Members of the
Committee present

Councillors M Willingale (Chairman), D Anderson-Bassey (Vice-Chairman), J Broadhead, I Chaudhri, E Gill, C Howorth, R King, I Mullens, J Olorenshaw, P Snow, J Sohi, S Whyte and J Wilson

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors M Kusneraitis and M Nuti.

Councillors D Cotty, R Edis, L Gillham and J Hulley also attended

408. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Vice - Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

409. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Group mentioned below had notified the Chief Executive of their wish that the change listed below be made to the membership of the Committee. The change was for a fixed period ending on the day after the meeting and thereafter the Councillor removed would be reappointed.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Remove</u>	<u>Appoint instead</u>
Independent	Cllr Cressey	Cllr Olorenshaw

The Chief Executive had given effect to the change to Committee membership in accordance with section 16(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

410. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nuti.

411. RUNNYMEDE 2030 LOCAL PLAN: MAIN MODIFICATIONS

The Committee was informed that at the conclusion of Examination Hearings in November 2019, the Local Plan Inspector had made it clear that 'Main Modifications' would be required to the Local Plan in order for it to be made 'sound' and move forward to adoption. The Inspector had subsequently requested that the Council draft a schedule of Proposed Main Modifications to the Plan which appeared necessary to make the Plan 'sound'.

The Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications which had now been drafted and agreed with the Inspector, was considered by the Committee. The Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications took account of modifications suggested by the Council subsequent to its submission of the Local Plan in July 2018; modifications suggested in response to representations received on the Submission Plan and subsequently; in response to issues raised during the Examination hearings, where the Inspector considered that a modification might be appropriate.

The Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications set out included a brief explanation as to why each Main Modification was being proposed. In summary, the key Proposed Main Modifications comprised:

- The deletion of Policy SD1 (Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development), which was considered to simply repeat policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Updates to Policy SD2 (Spatial Development Strategy), to take account of updated completion and permission information and the potential 'out-turn' of sites, following discussion at the Examination hearings;
- Clarification of those sites which would rely on the implementation of highway improvement works to the A320 and M25 Junction 11;
- A number of clarifications and amendments to some of the policy requirements associated with development sites being allocated in the Local Plan (including for example, the affordable housing mix requirements for Longcross Garden Village);
- A change to Policy SL20 (Affordable Housing), to provide an amended affordable tenure split which seeks 70% of affordable housing as affordable/social rent (rather than 80% as suggested in the Submission Plan), and 30% (rather than 20%) to be provided as other forms of affordable housing (such as shared equity and affordable home ownership). The policy was also modified to specify that one in three homes which comprise other affordable tenures (the 30%), should be delivered specifically as homes for affordable home ownership (such as starter homes, discounted market sales housing etc.);
- A change to Policy SL22 (Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Needs), which reduces pitch and plot requirements in the Borough, taking account of changes in provision since the Plan was submitted;
- Improved clarity of wording for a number of 'development requirement' policies including:
 - Policy SL23 (Accommodating Older Persons and Students)
 - Policy SL24 (Self & Custom Build Housing)
 - Policy EE1 (Townscape and Landscape Quality)
 - Policy EE2 (Environmental Protection)
 - Policy EE9 (Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation)
 - Policy EE10 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area)
 - Policy EE14 (Extensions and Alterations to and Replacement of Buildings in the Green Belt)
- The inclusion of a new Policy IE11, to set out specific requirements associated with the development of Strodes College Lane, Egham, rather than simply identifying it as a 'town centre opportunity area';
- The inclusion of an updated housing delivery trajectory, including those sites specifically allocated by the Local Plan.

In addition to the Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications agreed with the Inspector, a further series of Additional Minor Modifications were also proposed. These minor modifications dealt with very minor wording changes to text, corrections and errors and needed to be published alongside the Main Modifications, though no comment was invited

on the additional minor modifications. The Schedule of Additional Minor Modifications (Appendix 2 to the agenda report) was circulated to Members of the Committee.

A number of consequential changes and corrections to the Policies Map had also to be published for information and these were noted.

The three options available to the Committee to respond to the Modifications were outlined. The Committee noted that without the Main Modifications suggested, the Inspector was unlikely to find the Plan 'sound' when she formally reported back to the Council in due course. The Committee was fully supportive of the Proposed Main Modifications, but some comments were made by Members on the following Main Modifications:

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- MM36- Policy SL16 (criterion a)- Housing allocation at Parcel C ,Chertsey Bittams, Chertsey- a Member commented over the location of the increased provision of net additional serviced gypsy/traveller pitches and likely objection thereto from local residents when responding to the consultation process. Officers explained the various reasons behind the Modification , that it would be subject to public consultation, and the Inspector would take account of any representations received in making her final report;
- MM28- Policy SL8 (criterion f)-Housing allocation at Thorpe Lea Road West, Egham- reservations expressed by some Members over removal of reference to 'off- road' cycle routes. Officers explained that the Modification would not preclude 'off road' cycle routes being provided but that the Modification would provide further flexibility as it would allow for provision of both 'off' and 'on' road cycle routes in association with development schemes;
- MM10- Policy SD2 -Spatial Development Strategy- a Member supported both Thorpe Village being removed from Green Belt, and inclusion of a reference to the NPPF allowing for Neighbourhood Plans to make detailed non -strategic amendments to Green Belt boundaries where strategic local plan policies established the need for strategic changes to the Green Belt boundaries;and
- MM45-Policy EE2-Environmental Protection- a Member expressed concern that the Modification could restrict provision of energy efficient measures in development proposals. Officers confirmed that the Modification was for clarification purposes and would not be burdensome for developers.

A further review of the EqIA had been undertaken of the Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications. The EqIA review of the Proposed Main Modifications was made available to Members prior to the Planning Committee meeting. The reviewed EqIA concluded that the Proposed Main Modifications did not change the overall conclusion of the EqIA, which confirmed that the overall impact of Local Plan policies were generally assessed to be neutral to positive in terms of impact of persons of protected characteristics.

The environmental/sustainability/biodiversity implications of the Main Modifications proposed had been subject to both Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) by independent consultants working alongside officers, to inform the plan-making process. The SA and HRA reports (Appendices 3 and 4 to the agenda report) were circulated. Both reports would be formally considered by the Inspector before she made her final recommendations and report back to the Council.

The Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications would be subject to public consultation for a six-week period. At the conclusion of the public consultation period ,the Inspector would consider the responses received and finalise her report back to the Council recommending any final Main Modifications that she considered necessary to ensure a 'sound' Plan and whether the Council could then move the Plan to adoption

The Committee congratulated Officers, past and present, on their work on the Local Plan over the past few years. Subject to the inversion of the 'Actions' on MM9 and MM13, the Committee unanimously

RESOLVED that

- a) **a six-week public consultation be undertaken on the Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications to the Runnymede Local Plan 2030, as agreed with the Planning Inspector presiding over the Local Plan examination and necessary for the Local Plan to be found 'sound', (Appendix 1 to agenda report);**
- b) **the Additional Minor Modifications to the Runnymede Local Plan 2030 (Appendix 2 to the agenda report) be published; and**
- c) **the Corporate Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development, in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee, be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments and corrections to the Runnymede Local Plan 2030 and its associated documents up to and prior to Local Plan adoption.**

(The meeting ended at 8.02 pm)

Chairman