



Planning Policy Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Policy Committee held at The Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall, Northampton on Wednesday 16 March 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Rebecca Breese (Chair)
 Councillor Matt Golby (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Adam Brown
 Councillor Phil Bignell
 Councillor Stephen Clarke
 Councillor Jonathan Harris
 Councillor Jamie Lane
 Councillor Kevin Parker
 Councillor Wendy Randall
 Councillor Cathrine Russell

Officers: Jim Newton (Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration)
 Richard Wood (Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy)
 Amanda Jacobs (Senior Planning Policy Officer)
 Rhian Morgan (Heritage Policy Officer)
 Paul Everard (Planning Policy Team Leader)
 Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)
 Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)

7. **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

No apologies were received.

8. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th December 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

9. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair announced that the HMO Policy was recently discussed at the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee where it was recommended that the Policy should stay within the remit of Housing. However, there were clear resolutions, both at the last full Council meeting and in the minutes of the last Planning Policy Committee, that it should continue to sit within the remit of the Planning Policy Committee. When ready, the Policy would go to the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee for review.

Members confirmed their agreement with the course of action as set out above.

10. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

11. **Canons Ashby Conservation Area**

The Heritage Policy Officer presented a report which sought the Committee's agreement to consult on the draft Canons Ashby Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2022). Canons Ashby was first designated as a conservation area in 1976 and was last reviewed in 1997. An online meeting was held with members of the public in November 2021 to publicise the current review. A draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was subsequently produced, and approval was now sought to carry out a public consultation with a view to the appraisal being adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The draft appraisal also included proposals to extend the conservation area in 2 locations to include a small wooded area and an area of archaeological interest, and to exclude a small area so that the boundary was in line with a scheduled monument designation in the village. Proposals for candidates for the local list of buildings and sites of archaeological and historical interest were also included in the appraisal, as well as initial proposals for Article 4 Direction, but these would be subject to a separate consultation later. The consultation would last for a 6-week period, during which time a second public meeting would be held to inform the public of the proposals and how to respond to the consultation. The next stage would be to publish all comments received along with the officer response and suggested actions, with a view of the appraisal and management plan being adopted as an SPD and the proposed boundary being adopted.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

1. The Planning Policy Committee:
 - a) Agreed that public consultation be undertaken on the draft Canons Ashby Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan SPD (appendix A of the report), which includes proposed changes to the conservation area boundary
 - b) Agreed that public consultation be undertaken on proposed Article 4(1) Direction controlling development with regards to:
 - Alteration of windows
 - Alteration of doors
 - Alterations to roofing
 - Alterations to porches
 - Addition of roof lights or skylights.

12. **Article 4(1) Directions for conservation areas in Flore, Weedon, Everdon, Little Everdon, Kilsby, Pitsford, Staverton and Welford**

Councillor A Brown declared an interest in this item as one of the respondents to the consultation was a family member.

The Heritage Policy Officer presented a report which contained responses to 2 consultations undertaken as part of the ongoing review of conservation areas within

the former Daventry District area of West Northamptonshire. Article 4 Directions were proposed for the conservation areas of Flore, Weedon Bec, Pitsford, Kilsby, Staverton, Welford, Everdon and Little Everdon. The proposals were originally consulted on as non-immediate directions in Autumn 2020; under normal circumstances the directions would have been recommended for confirmation by the September 2021 deadline. This was not possible, so a second consultation began in September 2021, with no changes to the directions at that stage. The directions were made with immediate effect at the Cabinet meeting on 12th September 2021. The second consultation had now been completed and the report before Members contained responses from both consultations. Some minor alterations to the proposed directions were contained in the report, however they did not change the sense of the directions.

In response to questions, the Committee decisions by the Council when determining planning applications, for example, decisions were based on the range of policy documents in place at the time. There was a need to strike a balance between conserving historic assets and making sure that it was done in a sustainable way; examples of best practice from Historic England was formulated with climate change and energy efficiency in mind. It was not the case that historic assets were conserved “at any expense”.

It was advised that work was underway to create an FAQ page on the Council’s website which would provide information relating to conservation areas to members of the public.

RESOLVED:

1. The Planning Policy Committee:
 - a) Confirmed the Article 4(1) Directions for the conservation areas at Flore, Weedon, Little Everdon, Everdon, Staverton, Welford, Pitsford and Kilsby as amended with the changes set out in appendices A and B of the report.

13. Great Houghton Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented a report which sought the Committee’s consideration of recommendations made by the Independent Examiner of the Great Houghton Neighbourhood Plan and to seek approval to take the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum on 5th May 2022. An application was made by Great Houghton Parish Council on 6th March 2020 to designate the Parish Council area for neighbourhood plan purposes and was approved by Northampton Borough Council’s Cabinet on 10th June 2020. An initial consultation exercise on the draft Neighbourhood Plan was carried out by Great Houghton Parish Council in April and May 2021 and following the submission to WNC in August 2021, a further consultation was carried out in September and October 2021, also known as the Regulation 16 submission consultation. WNC had issues relating to the following:

- How the Neighbourhood Plan dealt with the proposed area of ecological enhancement contained within the emerging Policy 41 of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2

- Designation of the Brackmills employment estate buffer zone as local green space, and
- Policies relating to the natural environment should be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Independent Examiner submitted their report on the Neighbourhood Plan to the Council on 8th February 2022. Officers were supportive of the suggested modifications contained within Appendix A of the report as they resolved the issues raised at the Regulation 16 submission consultation.

The Committee were informed that in respect of advertising the referendum, an information statement would be posted on the Planning Policy page of the Council's website and further information and details on who would be eligible to vote would be posted on the Elections page.

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Noted and welcomed the significant progress in making the GHNDP by Great Houghton Parish Council.
- b) Accepted the Examiner's recommended modifications in respect of the GHNDP.
- c) Accepted the Examiner's recommendation that the GHNDP, as modified in accordance with recommendation (b) above, should proceed to a referendum of voters within Great Houghton Parish.
- d) Approved the proposed decision statement set out in Appendix 1, subject to recommendations (b) and (c) above and any necessary factual alterations.
- e) Agreed that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy to make further minor editorial changes to the GHNDP to address any factual and typographical errors and to reflect the fact that the document will be in its intended final form.
- f) Agreed that the costs of the referendum be met from the existing budget for neighbourhood planning.

14. **Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Mitigation Strategy**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented a report to the Committee which sought Members' consideration to consultation responses on the draft Mitigation Strategy for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and subject to proposed amendments contained in Appendix A of the report, adopt the Mitigation Strategy for use by WNC. Cabinet approved the consultation on 9th November 2021, and it ran from 13th December to 7th February 2022. 7 responses were received and raised the following issues:

- The Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Fee had been calculated incorrectly.
- The Mitigation Strategy should reference the mitigation hierarchy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- The Mitigation Strategy should be explicit in that it only deals with recreational pressure and not other impacts that may result from development.
- The Mitigation Strategy should provide clarity on where bespoke mitigation may be needed.

- The Mitigation Strategy should make reference to the historic landscape in which it sits.

The proposed changes in Appendix A sought to address all of the issues raised and by adopting the Mitigation Strategy, the Council would be able to mitigate proposed and windfall development within 3km of Unit 1 of the SPA which sits within WNC's boundary and continue to protect the SPA for the reasons of its designation.

Emerging local plan part 2 was examined in November 2021. In their post-hearing letter, the Inspector set out that the Mitigation Strategy would need to be in place before the main modifications to the Plan being finalised and consulted on, due to the likelihood of wording changes required to make the relevant parts of the Plan legally compliant. Should the Committee adopt the Mitigation Strategy, the document would be appended to the existing Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document.

Members discussed the report.

RESOLVED:

1. The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Noted the responses to the public consultation on the mitigation strategy;
- b) Accepted the recommended modifications to the mitigation strategy set out in 'suggested actions' in appendix A;
- c) Approved the adoption of the mitigation strategy, modified in accordance with recommendation (b) above, as an addendum to the UNVGP SPA supplementary planning document; and
- d) Agreed that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy to make further minor editorial changes to the mitigation strategy to address any factual and typographical errors and to reflect the fact that the document will be in its intended final form.

15. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 6.23 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____