

Hart District Council Comments on the Rotherwick Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan, December 2015

January 2016

Page	Para/ Policy	Comments
	Front Cover	Would be helpful to put the plan period on the front cover.
6 - 8	Introduction/ Context Overview	It might be useful to include some context maps here such as the NDP boundary map rather than as Appendices?
6	Context for this NDP	First para – in the Submission version of the NP this should more accurately reflect the number of houses required over a given time period (there is no time period qualification given to the quoted 4,000 new homes). For example, the evidence from the SHMA suggests that there is a need for 7,500 new homes in Hart between 2011 and 2032. Of these, 5,000 are already built or planned for. Whilst there is national pressure to increase housebuilding, this is driven by a range of social and demographic factors.
		Second para – ‘allocation’ may be clearer than ‘use’ The emerging Plan may either set targets for each parish or actually allocate sites for each Parish – this has not yet been decided.
7	Status of the NDP	Last para – it is probably better to more accurately reflect the wording of the basic conditions, so perhaps ‘..have regard to national policy and guidance, be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the relevant Local Plan, and be compatible with European regulations’.
7	NDP consultation process	Third para – ‘Steering Committee .?’
8	Section 5	Demographics are set out in Annex J but it might be useful to include number of dwellings and population here.
9	Objectives	Is ‘Housing’ the right heading for Objectives 3 – 7 or should it reflect the ‘Built Environment’ heading used in the Plan?
9	Objective 5	This Objective refers to tenure but there are no specific policies relating to tenure in the Plan. In addition housing need does not form part of this Plan so perhaps consider whether this objective is more about design?
9	Objective 6	Perhaps reword so refers to ‘ensuring that..’ rather than identifying appropriate policies?
9	Objective 7 and Objective 9	Question whether these are land use planning objectives which can be met through using the policies in the Plan
10	Para 1	As above it would be worth more accurately reflecting the wording of the basic conditions, for example, policies should be appropriate having regard to the NPPF and in general conformity with strategic local plan policies. As yet there are no draft policies for the emerging local Plan so may be better to delete this reference. Or add some text along the lines of the new Local Plan not being sufficiently advanced to be taken into account in this

		Plan. The exact wording will obviously need to reflect the stage the new Local Plan has reached at the time that the NP is submitted to the Council.
	All Policies	It would be useful for all policies to have policy titles for quoting in documents, decisions etc.
11	Policy SP01	Could add ' <i>..will be supported which maintain...</i> '
12	Policy SP02	<p>As recognised in the Context section of the Plan, the emerging Local Plan will be allocating sites to meet future housing needs and under consideration are three sites around Rotherwick.</p> <p>If any of these sites are taken forward through the Local Plan these lie outside the existing Rotherwick settlement boundary. The preparation of a new Local Plan (either through the current Local Plan document being prepared or the next one) is likely in these circumstances to amend the existing settlement boundary within the proposed life of the NP. It is therefore suggested that the following changes are made to avoid the NP Policy becoming out of date:</p> <p>Amend 'existing Rotherwick village settlement boundary' to '<i>.. defined Rotherwick village settlement boundary</i>'</p> <p>Amend second sentence to '<i>Elsewhere in the Plan Area, other than on any allocated Local Plan sites,..</i>'</p> <p>There is a risk that by quoting saved Local Plan policies, this Policy will become dated, particularly as the District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan. For example, the withdrawn Core Strategy was proposing to replace saved Local Plan policies RUR2 and RUR3 and it is likely that the emerging Local Plan: Strategy and Sites will do the same. Would wording in the Policy referring to consistent with 'Local Plan policies' without being specific be a way of overcoming this?</p> <p>Criterion (b) is very open and would suggest wording amended to: '<i>Designated green spaces and the integrity of the rural environment...</i>'</p> <p>Once the next stage of the SHLAA site assessments is completed we would welcome discussion regarding the relationship between open rural views and the shortlisted SHLAA sites, in particular Open View 15 and SHLAA site 87 and Open View 4 (should this be 14?) and SHLAA site 290.</p> <p>The Stage 2 Assessment of Housing Sites is due for completion shortly.</p>
12	Para 9	Could also add in reference to the Hart Landscape Character Assessments and Hampshire Character Assessment available at http://www.hart.gov.uk/Evidence-base - see Environment section.
13	Para 10	Second sentence – should this say ' <i>... development being concentrated within..</i> '
13	Para 11	Last sentence – see comments to SP02 re saved Local Plan policies.
14	Policy SP03	We are pleased to see that the neighbourhood plan aims to conserve and enhance ponds, streams and rivers. Ponds provide important surface water storage so we are pleased to see that these are being protected. It would be good to extend SP03 to cover ditches. This policy could also encourage green buffers to be left where possible alongside all watercourses (regardless of size). This not only encourages a green corridor for wildlife

		<p>but also prevents development from being located in the areas adjacent to a watercourse from flooding and prevents flood water being displaced elsewhere. Further advice on the flooding comments made to the NP can be obtained from Susanna Hope, Flood Risk Infrastructure Engineer at susanna.hope@hart.gov.uk.</p> <p>There is some overlap in this policy which seems to protect features of biodiversity with other policies. For example, hedgerows are mentioned in this Policy and Policy NE02 and NE03 with a variety of terms used. Check the wording is consistent or consider whether repetition is necessary or whether policies or parts of policies can be combined (for example SP03 and NE03).</p> <p>A definition of what 'green space' means in this context would be helpful. Not all development proposals will achieve this and the requirement goes beyond that in the NPPF (109 – 118). Could say '<i>Proposals which adversely affect ..will not be supported</i>'?</p>
15	Policy SP04	<p>The way in which this Policy would be used to determine applications is unclear. Does it mean proposals relating to the continuation of these facilities will be supported and proposals leading to a loss of them would not be? Consider rewording so clearer as to what will or won't be supported?</p> <p>Could consider supporting this with a list of facilities as part of the evidence base. Is there some overlap between this Policy and Policy CP03?</p>
17	Policy NE01	<p>The justification for these sites to be designated should be properly evidenced against the criteria set out in paragraph 77 of the NPPF. The NPPG advises also that landowners should be notified at an early stage of proposals to designate their land as Local Green Space and so should have been consulted as part of the pre-submission consultation and/or before.</p> <p>It is not clear whether the text under the list of sites relates to all green spaces or those listed in the Policy. The designation of these would mean that different approaches to development should be taken to designated Local Green Spaces (where policy equivalent to Green Belt can be applied) and to other green spaces.</p> <p>The boundaries of Local Green Spaces should be identified on the Policies/Proposals Map.</p> <p>In the absence of any evidence behind these designations, no comments are made on their appropriateness but we would be happy to discuss these further as you develop the evidence base.</p>
17/18	Policy NE02	<p>There is some overlap with Policy SP03 and NE03. Do you need to name the sites within the Policy or could these be an Appendix?</p> <p>Could consider merging NE02 and NE03.</p> <p>Could refer to the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre who survey the SINC and maintain data on them – a link to SINC information could form part of the evidence base.</p>
19	Policy NE03	<p>This Policy seeks to conserve or enhance biodiversity. References in the NPPF seek to minimise impacts on biodiversity with a distinction being made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites (paras 109 – 118).</p>

		<p>Do the sites identified in criteria (C) as sites of special interest for nature conservation relate to specific sites such as SINCs identified in NE02.</p> <p>Some repetition with criterion (d) and previous policies</p> <p>The reference in the final paragraph to ‘natural habitats’ may be unduly onerous as it could be read as applying to even small areas of limited or no value and should be qualified.</p> <p>We are pleased to see there is a policy in the neighbourhood plan considering flood risk. It may be worth expanding g) to state: ‘Incorporating satisfactory alleviation or mitigation measures for management of rainwater run-off and flooding risks ... from all sources to ensure new developments are safe and not increase offsite flood risk. Developments that reduce flood risk will be encouraged. All developments should employ Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for water quality and quantity management purposes.’</p> <p>Protecting water quality, especially of the River Whitewater, has been cited as important to Rotherwick in the neighbourhood plan (page 20, paragraph 36). SuDS measures if employed correctly can reduce pollutant loads in surface water runoff as well as reducing the amount of surface water runoff leaving a site. Less surface water getting into the foul system should mean less foul flooding entering the River Whitewater. For this reason SuDS and careful surface water management should be encourage in the policy. Rotherwick is at risk of flooding from surface water, ordinary watercourses and foul sewers so it is worth NE03 g) mentioning all sources to ensure all relevant flood risk issues are addressed by developments. As the flooding issues are existing, these flooding issues will persist even if new developments do not make them worst. It would therefore be good to encourage a reduction in flood risk where possible. As a minimum development should be safe from flooding internally and not increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p>It may not be possible in all cases across the NP area to avoid new street lighting, and it may be better to seek to minimise this rather than avoid? Some street lighting and domestic external lighting may not need planning permission.</p> <p>The Hart Biodiversity Action Plan could form part of the evidence base for this Policy.</p>
20	37	<p>We are pleased to see that the knock on issues associated with foul flooding have been recognised and that surface water ingress into the system is cited as a cause. We are pleased to see that the need to demonstrate that the sewer system will not be overburdened has been stated. What isn’t clear and is not well emphasised within the Neighbourhood plan is the need to manage surface water runoff so as not to overburden the foul system.</p>
21	NE04	<p>May be helpful for clarity to include the term ‘public rights of way’</p> <p>The Hampshire Countryside Access Plan might be a useful evidence base for this Policy http://www3.hants.gov.uk/countryside/access-plans.htm</p>
23	Para 50	<p>Last sentence - environmental</p>

23	Policy BE01	<p>The wording of the first part of this Policy and the subsequent criteria does not quite read correctly. For example 'design' is repeated in the first sentence and in criterion a.</p> <p>Criterion d – The NPPF (para 58-60) supports Neighbourhood Plans setting out the quality of development that is expected. However, it also seeks to ensure that policies do not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation and avoid unnecessary prescription and detail. In order to ensure this is reflected it is suggested that criterion d is amended to read '<i>Reflect the principles..</i>'.</p> <p>Should the words '<i>In addition</i>' be inserted before 'Development proposals within Rotherwick Village..'?</p> <p>Last criterion on density – should this be qualified to say '<i>unless all other aspects of design and layout are acceptable</i>'?</p> <p>The Village Design Statement could be quoted as evidence for this Policy – although see separate comments on the VDS.</p>
25	Policy BE02	<p>Criterion c – replace 'of' with 'with'.</p> <p>The final paragraph takes one approach to a range of heritage assets. The NPPF makes it clear that the acceptability of a proposals on a heritage asset will depend to an extent on the significance of that asset (see for example NPPF para 132). Para 133 of the NPPF also sets out circumstances where some harm or loss may be acceptable, taking into account public benefit. The current wording of Policy BE02 is more onerous than that set out in the NPPF.</p> <p>Criterion e – there may be instances where more modern materials are acceptable and which still reflect the existing materials in the CA (see comments on BE01) – perhaps delete 'traditional and vernacular'?</p> <p>This paragraph also refers to buildings of merit which are not listed in Annex G.</p>
26	CP01	<p>May need to specify what 'community' is taken to mean. Much of the content of this policy appears to be covered already in other environment and built environment policies.</p> <p>There is no national policy requirement for development to enhance these factors – perhaps consider rewording the Policy so that it sets out that development proposals which adversely affect the existing tranquillity etc will not be supported?</p>
28	CP03	<p>It would be helpful to have some clarity around the meaning of 'land which provides benefits to the community'. What is the link with sites identified in CP02? The policy appears to be about services, facilities and protecting / enhancing local employment prospects.</p>

28	Policy CP04	<p>To note – there may be some conversions which fall within the ‘permitted development’ limits and which do not need planning permission.</p> <p>Criterion c – the NPPF in para 32 states: ‘Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe’. This is a lower test than that proposed in the NP.</p> <p>The Employment Land Review may provide a part of the evidence base for Policies CP03 and CP04 see http://www.hart.gov.uk/Evidence-base#ELR There are references to rural businesses – including paras 4.8, 6.46, 8.31 and 8.40. Ray Bryant in the Planning Policy team can provide further information on the ELR if required.</p>
30	Section 4	3 rd para ‘identity’ not ‘identify’
	Annex A and B	These could be included within the document itself.
33	Annex C1	The map appears to have two x no.4. It is also hard to read in the current format.
37	Annex C2	A map would be useful to show the ‘Other Important Views’
41	Annex D	<p>VDS generally. The preparation of a VDS is supported as a tool to guide the design and layout of new developments. However, the level of detail of the VDS and of the requirements for new development are considered to exceed those supported in the NPPF which as set out under BE01 supports the development of design guidance and the protection of local character but which sets out that policies should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or impose architectural styles. We would suggest that the wording of the VDS is reviewed to ensure that whilst clear guidance on design is provided, it is not overly prescriptive.</p> <p>It would be helpful to include some illustrative material within the VDS.</p> <p>Some elements of the VDS seem to relate more to planning policies than providing design guidance for new developments and we would suggest the VDS is reviewed with this in mind in particular, the guidance on Open Space (page 54/55).</p>
41	Annex D	4 th para – ‘included within the <i>main body</i> of the ..’ ?
49	Annex D	<p>Para before ‘Built environment’</p> <p>There is some inconsistency with this paragraph and Policy BE01 and whether the VDS relates to the settlement area or the NP area.</p>
52	Annex D	Reference to providing off road parking – is this mentioned in any of the NP policies?
53	Annex D	<p>Third para – seems to suggest that even those carrying out PD developments will need to comply with the VDS. This could not be enforced.</p> <p>Landscape principles box – consider using ‘encouraged’ rather than ‘expected for the requirement for new hedges.</p>
	Evidence base	Other than the outcome of the consultation process there is little evidence base supporting the NP. Some sources of evidence to support the policies are suggested in the comments above, and specific evidence will be needed to support Policy NE01 and the designation of Local Green Spaces.