

Public Document Pack



AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL Democratic Services

Please ask for: Alice Fisher; afisher@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Switchboard: 01296 585858
Text Relay Prefix your telephone number with 18001
8 December 2016

VALE OF AYLESBURY LOCAL PLAN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Scrutiny Committee will be held at **6.30 pm** on **Monday 19 December 2016** in **The Olympic Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF**, when your attendance is requested.

Membership: Councillor C Poll (Chairman); Councillors M Collins (Vice-Chairman), A Cole, P Cooper, M Edmonds, S Jenkins and L Monger

Contact Officer for meeting arrangements: Alice Fisher; afisher@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

Any changes will be reported at the meeting.

3. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2016, copy attached as an appendix.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests.

5. VALP UPDATE - UNMET NEED AND MAJOR ISSUES (Pages 7 - 10)

To consider the report attached as an appendix.

Contact Officer: Peter Williams 01296 585208

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 3

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Scrutiny Committee

7 NOVEMBER 2016

PRESENT: Councillor C Poll (Chairman); Councillors M Collins (Vice-Chairman), A Cole, P Cooper, M Edmonds, S Jenkins and L Monger

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J Brandis, B Foster, K Hewson and D Town

1. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

There were none.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2016 be approved as a correct record.

3. DRAFT VALP RESPONSES, PROGRESS AND UNMET NEED

The draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) had been approved for consultation at Council on 28 June 2016, with the closing date for responses being 5 September 2016.

A pre-submission consultation draft VALP would be prepared for consideration by this committee, Cabinet and Council in March 2017.

During the consultation period around 1,600 responses were received, containing over 5,000 representations. Council officers had been considering the responses and emerging evidence to be able to determine the content of the pre-submission version of VALP. They were also revising the local plan's policies and proposals. The results of this work would be available when the pre-submission draft VALP was published for the Scrutiny Committee in March 2017. A summary of the responses was being prepared by outside consultants.

The main issues raised were:-

- The overall level of housing;
- Meeting unmet need from other areas;
- The possible new settlement;
- Provision of infrastructure such as schools and roads;
- Removal of land from the Green Belt;
- Distribution of development; and
- Development in the villages.

Housing need figures were also central to the preparation of the new local plan. Since the production of the draft VALP, the Buckinghamshire Councils had commissioned an update to reflect the latest Government projections. A copy of the draft report had been published on AVDC's website [Link to Document](#). Members were advised that housing figures had been revised and that AVDC's housing need had been reduced by 2,000 dwellings. Overall, the reduction of dwellings for the Buckinghamshire authorities was around 5,000 (Wycombe District's need had reduced by just under 2,200). This had been shown to be due to a number of factors including a decline in household size; people were not moving from larger to smaller properties as quickly as had been anticipated and despite people living longer overall, which would have prompted a need

for new builds, this is not anticipated to happen as quickly as previously projected therefore more existing homes were being “recycled”.

Officers had also sought to reduce the unmet need from Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils through the continuing Duty to Co-operate. Both Wycombe and Chiltern/South Bucks had been able to find capacity for another 1,200 homes each. Overall this meant that AVDC would now be working to a figure of 26,800 homes and the Strategy would need re-writing. Therefore the timetable for submission had been pushed back by 8 weeks and the DCLG had been informed.

Work was also continuing to finalise a range of evidence that would be required before submission. These included:-

- Conclusions on the unmet housing needs of the other Buckinghamshire councils;
- Flooding and water usage to be evaluated through a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study;
- Mitigation of traffic impacts on proposed development;
- Clarification of the traveller needs assessment study;
- Potential for releasing employment land;
- Further assessment of land availability in relation to larger and medium villages; and
- An infrastructure delivery plan had been drafted and work to assess the viability of the policies and proposals had commenced.

New retail evidence was also under development. Additional sites in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HEELA) were being addressed and revisions to site suitability could lead to more sites being found suitable. A Habitat Regulations Assessment screening had also been commissioned, alongside Sustainability Appraisal. An overall map and detailed inset maps would be prepared to accompany the pre-submission consultation version of the plan.

It was noted that central to the responses received had been the question of un-met need. Representatives of both Chiltern and South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council were in attendance to discuss this issue.

It was reported that 71% of Wycombe's area was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and 48% Green Belt. During Wycombe's Draft Plan Consultation it had been indicated that 10,000 homes were required and that AVDC would be required to take 5,000 of these through unmet need. Wycombe had received 3,000 individual responses during their consultation. GL Hearn's report had since identified more areas in Wycombe where supply could be found. A workshop had taken place in October between the Bucks authorities and GL Hearn to share emerging findings and Wycombe had since responded to AVDC on the updated position. The HEDNA update now revealed that Wycombe's housing need figure came in at 12,900; a reduction of 2,200 homes and alongside additional capacity work reduced the unmet need to 1,700 homes.

It was noted that discussions were ongoing with Chilterns Conservation Board and Natural England regarding major development in the AONB. It was also noted that Wycombe's employment land supply was very different to AVDCs. Among a number of things that Wycombe had reviewed had been the scope for development at Great/Little Kimble, Longwick and Princes Risborough. The proposed growth for Princes Risborough to 2033 was 2,600 dwellings, an increase of 72% to the existing settlement; Longwick an additional 300 dwellings, an increase of 54% and Great and Little Kimble an additional 160 dwellings, an increase of 37%.

As Wycombe had not yet been tested on appeal with regards to its 5 year housing land supply, it was reliant on Counsel's advice. A number of reserve sites such as Abbey Barn North and the Gomm Valley and Ashwells had been reviewed. However as well as constraints on the land such as being AONB/SSSI, much of the land in Wycombe's area was not suitable for building on due to it being very steep or within a flood plain.

Members asked questions regarding over the number of sites already with planning permission for development and the density of housing.

Chiltern/South Bucks had received 5,000 individual representations during its previous consultation which took place earlier this year. Densities had been reviewed and were now comparable to Wycombe's and AVDC's. Similarly, the amount of housing required to 2033 had also been reduced, and the unmet need figures were now lower.

Significant issues for Chiltern were infrastructure, such as new transport links and schools which would take up available land. BCC's Replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plan had also identified mineral sites in the south of the County through its Call for Sites. The effects of the third runway at Heathrow need assessing as well as HS2 and the Western rail link. 450 sites had been looked at, 402 of which were not considered suitable to come forward as part of the Local Plan process.

Members were concerned that a number of sites such as land south of Beaconsfield, at Old Amersham, Stony Lane Little Chalfont, and at Fulmer Green had been reviewed but were still not being put forward for inclusion as potential sites. Other sites not being put forward included Pheasant Rise Chesham, Farnham Common, and Iver. It was explained that Chesham was not included for GB reasons, Farnham Common was an exclusion zone because of its close proximity to Burnham Beeches and Iver was Grade 1 agricultural land. Land at Pinewood was also mentioned. Members also felt that in comparison the infrastructure in the south of the County was far superior to AVDC's. It was pointed out that much of this infrastructure was already at capacity.

Overall though it was hoped that the district councils could continue to work together and the representatives of Wycombe and Chiltern/South Bucks were thanked for taking the time to address the committee.

It was confirmed that as soon as any further evidence was finalised it would be published on the AVDC's website and be used to inform the pre-submission version of VALP.

Members sought clarification and made comments on the following with regard to VALP:-

- How the revised figures would affect the areas struggling to find capacity, and would villages be looked at individually;
- The possible need for all communities/villages to take some development to mitigate any "them and us" situation;
- Whether the need for a new settlement could be removed from the plan;
- How the proposed application for Verney Junction would affect this plan or the next one;
- Whether the announcement of the third runway at Heathrow would have any affect;
- The effect of the Oxford – Cambridge Expressway in the next plan should it pass through the Vale;
- The need to respect Neighbourhood Plans, including those already made and those still to be confirmed;
- The five year land supply figures;

RESOLVED –

1. The Committee noted the progress made so far on the pre-submission version of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan and noted the information received during the consultation phase on the draft plan. It also noted the discussions regarding unmet need.
2. That officers summarise main issues to be addressed and the main points of the GL Hearn reports, and bring back to the next meeting of the VALP Scrutiny Committee on 19 December 2016.

Agenda Item 5

DRAFT VALP UNMET NEED AND MAJOR ISSUES

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To inform the VALP Scrutiny Committee of the progress on the preparation of VALP, particularly in relation to unmet housing need, and undertake a discussion of the major issues raised in the recent draft VALP consultation.

2. Recommendation

1. That the VALP Scrutiny Committee receives the information on draft VALP progress and engages in discussions regarding major issues raised in consultation.

3. Unmet Housing Need

- 3.1 Following the AVDC response to the draft Wycombe Local Plan, which included a report by GL Hearn on potential new capacity, a workshop was undertaken involving representatives of the Bucks councils to evaluate the potential extra capacity. As a result of the information which was discussed at the workshop and contained in a response to the report from Wycombe District Council, GL Hearn have now concluded that the unmet need figure of 1700 dwellings "represents a reasonable basis to progress with in terms of the scale of unmet need at the current time". A draft Memorandum of Understanding to formalise acceptance of the figure based on current evidence has been drawn up with the assistance of the Council's barrister and supplied to Wycombe District Council for them to consider. A verbal update on any further progress will be given at the meeting.
- 3.2 In relation to the unmet need from Chiltern/S Bucks, currently estimated to be 5,800 dwellings, GL Hearn have been commissioned to prepare a report to consider the potential for further housing need to be met in the Chiltern/S Bucks area. A workshop has since taken place with Chiltern/S Bucks to inform GL Hearn's work and a draft report has been prepared and supplied to Chiltern/S Bucks for their consideration. The report does not identify a specific figure for the potential further capacity but rather states that "It is unlikely that the current unmet need figure will remain at 5,800 dwellings". The actual unmet need figure will be agreed with Chiltern/S Bucks through further cooperative working. The draft report has been supplied to Chiltern/S Bucks on a confidential basis for their initial response. A verbal update on progress will be given at the meeting.

4. Major issues arising from consultation

- 4.1 A summary of the representations has been prepared by outside consultants and has been published on the Council's website together with spreadsheets which detail the content of the responses. The main issues raised were:
 - a) the overall level of housing – this has now reduced from 33,300 in the draft VALP to 26,800 because of a reduced forecast of housing need and reductions in unmet need. Unmet need may reduce further, but a total

absence of any unmet need falling on Aylesbury Vale is unlikely.

- b) meeting unmet housing need from other areas – unmet need has now reduced from the councils to the south and may reduce further, but a total absence of any unmet need falling on Aylesbury Vale is unlikely.
- c) the possible new settlement – none of the options were deemed acceptable by all and with the need to reduce supply significantly the option of removing a new settlement from the Local Plan is one that has to be considered. However, it is likely that a new plan will be needed soon after VALP is finalised and a new settlement option will have to be considered for the longer term. Also a further option has been suggested at Verney Junction.
- d) development on the edge of Milton Keynes – sites on the edge of Milton Keynes have to be considered as potential development options and could only be removed if suitable alternatives could be identified. Given their scale this would be difficult to achieve.
- e) provision of infrastructure such as schools and roads – detailed discussions are ongoing with all infrastructure stakeholders, particularly health organisations and the County Council to identify the necessary infrastructure for inclusion in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- f) removal of land from the Green Belt – with the reduction in housing need the exceptional circumstances justification has weakened for removing land at Wendover and alternative sites have been suggested. May however need to identify the land as a potential site for development in the longer term.
- g) distribution of development across the District – it was suggested that because of unmet need arising to the south development should be focussed in the south of the District, but the capacity of Aylesbury cannot be significantly increased. So pursuing such an option would probably require a new settlement at Haddenham
- h) level of development in the villages – the justification for the percentage approach was queried. Alternative approaches are now being considered based on the capacity of settlements to accommodate development.

- 4.2 The Committee is invited to express its views on the preferred strategy for meeting the forecast housing need taking into account the above information
- 4.3 Although not raised as a significant issue during the consultation the over supply of B1/B2/B8 employment land is a major issue as a significant reduction is necessary to avoid further housing being sought to support economic development. The revised HEDNA has raised the need to 26ha and Wycombe have indicated that they wish to transfer employment land need to us which has reduced the employment oversupply and further detailed work is underway to identify locations where other uses might be appropriate.

5. Local Plan progress

- 5.1 Central to the preparation of the new local plan are the housing need figures. These depend on the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) for Buckinghamshire. Since the production of the draft VALP the Buckinghamshire Councils commissioned an update to reflect the latest Government predictions. The

report has now been finalised and has been published. Implications for the housing and employment provision in VALP has been set out earlier in this report.

- 5.3 Work is continuing to finalise the range of other evidence that will need to be finalised before submission. The level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study have been received in draft and are being discussed with stakeholders. Modelling and mitigation of traffic impacts from proposed development is nearing completion and consultation is underway on transport strategies for Aylesbury and Buckingham . The joint traveller needs assessment has been revised but the implications of the study still need to be clarified through further discussion. Further assessment of land availability is being carried out in relation to the larger and medium villages and a number of parishes have responded with site suggestions.

5.4 New retail evidence has been received in draft. Additional sites in the land availability assessment are being assessed and revisions to site suitability because of new information could lead to more sites being found suitable. New consultants have been appointed to carry out a full sustainability assessment alongside the revisions to the draft VALP strategy. A Habitat Regulations Assessment screening has been commissioned. An overall map and detailed inset maps are also being prepared to accompany the pre submission consultation version of the plan.

5.5 As soon as any further evidence is finalised it will be published on the councils website and the evidence will be used to inform the pre submission version of VALP. The evidence will all have to be in place to accompany the submission version of the plan during the pre submission consultation on the local plan and the council is confident that the evidence will be in place to allow consultation and submission in accord with the expected timetable.

6. Resource implications

- 6.1 Funding of Local Plan preparation is being derived from existing budgets.

Contact Officer Peter Williams (01296) 585208

Background Documents Draft VALP consultation document

Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) revision

Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

This page is intentionally left blank