



Report to Leader (Planning & Regeneration portfolio)


Decision Date:	20 September 2021
Reference number:	PR01.21
Title:	Adoption of the Hollands Farm Development Brief
Cabinet Member(s):	Councillor Gareth Williams
Contact officer:	Rosie Brake Principal Policy Officer Rosie.Brake@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	The Wooburns, Bourne End & Hedsor;
Recommendations:	To adopt the Hollands Farm Development Brief as a Supplementary Planning Document
Reason for decision:	Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, section 23(5), the brief is to be adopted by resolution of the authority as a Supplementary Planning Document (Local Development Document).

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Hollands Farm development brief sets out the Council's preferred approach to the development of allocation BE2 Hollands Farm. It adds further detail to requirements set out in policy BE2 of the Wycombe District Local Plan (2019). Its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document gives it material weight in planning decisions for the allocation. The Brief has been revised to respond to feedback from public consultation in January and February 2021. It is therefore recommended the Hollands Farm development brief now be approved for adoption.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 The Hollands Farm allocation is 23.74 hectares of land located towards the eastern side of Bourne End. Public consultation on a draft Brief took place during January and February 2021.

- 2.2 Early in the process, the Council established a Liaison Group of local stakeholders, which created the opportunity to gather local issues and insights. At that time, the local action group (Keep Bourne End Green, or KBEG) was engaged in a legal challenge to the Local Plan. It was therefore felt inappropriate to invite action group members to join the Liaison Group.
- 2.3 The Liaison Group met several times to work through a wide range of local and community issues. The draft Development Brief that we consulted on had therefore already addressed these where possible within the scope of the Brief.
- 2.4 Around 500 responses were received in the course of the consultation. Many of the points raised through the consultation were not appropriate to being addressed by the Development Brief. They had either been exhaustively debated as part of the Local Plan process and subsequent legal challenge, or sought a level of detail that would be worked out through the process of considering planning applications for this allocation (the development management process).
- 2.5 Many other points received had already had been raised, and answered, in the course of the Liaison Group process. These are recorded in appendices to the Consultation Statement.
- 2.6 Main issues included:
- The number and density of homes proposed
 - The capacity of local services, infrastructure and car parking space would not be upgraded to cope with more people and cars
 - More work needed to demonstrate that improvements to the road network to accommodate increased traffic would be effective and deliverable
 - More work needed to show that the site could be accessed appropriately and deliver two-way operation on the principal route
 - Heritage assets would be adversely affected by changes that might become necessary to the road network, to junctions and to the accesses to the site
 - There would be insufficient protection in terms of buffering existing homes and heritage assets from new development
 - Flooding and drainage matters would not be adequately addressed
 - Destruction of the natural environment and loss of agricultural land
 - Deliverability of mitigations proposed for Little Marlow Lakes County Park
- 2.7 There were very few points that had not already been considered and responded to, through the Examination in Public, or through the Liaison Group process. Otherwise, there were matters of detail that will be worked out through the development management process.
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2.8 Substantive points where the Brief has been updated to respond to feedback include:

- Recognition of the unlisted Barn within the allocation, and its treatment within development
- The requirement for trial trenching, as recommended by the Sustainability Appraisal report
- Greater precision in setting out the analysis of transport access and movement
- The addition of typical walking times between the development and the village centre / railway station
- Recasting the SWOT as a Constraints and Opportunities analysis, and linking this to climate change actions
- Greater precision on the treatment of heritage assets and their settings, especially in relation to redesign of junctions
- Greater precision in the role of the Principal Route and recognising to what extent a route via Princes Road can deliver two-way bus operation
- Recognition of the multiple land ownerships and how to manage the submission of multiple applications to deliver comprehensive infrastructure
- The potential role of the Parish Council for long-term maintenance of open and green space
- Staged funding and delivery of Little Marlow Lakes Country Park mitigations.

3. Other options considered

3.1 To decline to adopt the development brief. Should the Council decline to adopt the Brief as a Supplementary Planning Document then the series of principles setting out the Council's preferred approach for the development within Hollands Farm allocation and contained within the SPD cannot be used by officers in their evaluation of material considerations for individual planning applications within the Hollands Farm allocation. This could delay the consideration of planning applications and lead to a poorer outcome from the development management process.

3.2 A planning application (21/06215/OUT) has already been submitted for the major part of the site for up to 400 homes – from a development management perspective, it is in the Council's best interest to have an adopted Brief to allow for a robust and thorough assessment of the planning merits and potential harms of this application and any others that may be imminent.

4. Legal and financial implications

4.1 Whilst there are no immediate legal implications to the adoption of the Hollands Farm Development Brief, this SPD will form part of the Council's Development Plan and regulatory framework for determining planning application. As such officers

from planning and legal will rely on this document to support decisions on individual planning applications. The adoption of the development brief is covered within the existing financial plan.

5. Corporate implications

- 5.1 The development of the Hollands Farm allocation helps meet the corporate priority of 'strengthen our community'. It will provide homes for local people, including affordable homes, supporting our growing community needs.
- 5.2 Development of this allocation also supports the corporate priority of 'improving the environment'. Due to the proximity of the allocation being near to the Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation (SAC), there is a requirement for a suitable alternative green space to be provided to reduce recreational pressures on the SAC. Mitigation measures to improve the attractiveness and accessibility to the nearby Little Marlow Lakes Country Park (LMLCP) will be put in place as part of the Hollands Farm development so that recreation pressures on the Burnham Beeches SAC are reduced. This includes new and improved footpath as cycle ways and signage to LMLCP. The Hollands Farm Appropriate Assessment sets this out in detail (see supporting documents). Improving our country parks enhances the quality of life for our local residents.
- 5.3 Another corporate implication is 'increased prosperity'. By providing homes for people to live in, this supports workers for job and economic growth.
- 5.4 The sustainability of the approach set out in the Brief is assessed in the Hollands Farm Sustainability Assessment (see supporting documents). This document sets out the environmental, economic and social implications for different options considered in the approach to developing the allocation within the policy requirements for BE2 of the WDLP.
- 5.5 There are no equality and / or diversity implications arising from the proposed recommendation of this report. A full Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the Local Plan process setting out how the Council met its Public Sector Equality Duty when approving the Local Plan. It is available here:
<https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Community/Equality-impact-assessments/Planning-and-sustainability/Equality-impact-assessment-local-plan.pdf> .
- 5.6 The WDLP Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been reviewed and is considered relevant and up to date. There have been no material changes in circumstances and/or policy changes since the EqIA was done. The Development Brief does not change the amount or type of development or the scope of the proposals, hence this decision does not require a separate Equality Impact assessment.

6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 6.1 Ward members and local parish councillors have been consulted with as part of the local liaison group where pre-engagement for the development brief took place through a series of meetings and workshops. This was chaired by Cllr Dominic Barnes who chairs the South West Chilterns Community Board. Prior to Buckinghamshire Council, Cllr David Johncock, the former cabinet member for planning, chaired these meetings.
- 6.2 Local elections took place in May 2021 and new Members were elected to the three seats in the ward for Wooburns, Bourne End and Hedsor. These new Members all sit as Independents and two of these are members of the KBEG action group.
- 6.3 The new local councillors were invited to a meeting on 14 July with the Cabinet Member and officers as a briefing opportunity for them to get up to speed on the Development Brief.
- 6.4 They referred to concerns which were raised in the KBEG response to the consultation on the draft Brief. They remain concerned about a number of these matters including access points. Potential access points to the site are set out in the Wycombe Local Plan, and the finer details of those access points will be addressed in any subsequent planning applications rather than explicitly in the Development Brief.
- 6.5 As previously outlined in this report, many concerns were either settled through the Examination in Public of the Local Plan and subsequent legal challenge, or they are matters of detail (particularly around access to the site and mitigation of traffic impacts) which will be worked out through the development management process.

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 7.1 A Hollands Farm website has been made available since the start of the development brief process. This has details of the liaison group meetings held to date, including agendas and meeting notes. This has been kept up to date as and when meetings have taken place.
- 7.2 Formal public consultation on the draft Brief took place from 6 January to 17 February 2021. It was advertised using 'Your Voice Bucks' website, using an online survey to capture views. In addition, there was a leaflet drop to residents immediately surrounding the allocation. Social media and a press release were also used to help advertise the consultation. Due to covid-19, live public events were not possible. Paper copies of the development brief and survey were available on request to ensure all members of the public had an equal opportunity to engage.

7.3 The brief has been revised where appropriate to respond to the main issues raised.

8. Next steps and review

8.1 As soon as reasonably practicable after the Brief has been adopted through the Key Decision, we must make the final Brief and Adoption Statement available on the Council website, and provide paper copies at the usual locations.

8.2 We must also send a copy of the Adoption Statement to any person who has asked to be notified of the adoption of the Brief.

8.3 No review of the decision is required.

9. Background papers

Hollands Farm Development Brief (August 2021)

Hollands Farm Appropriate Assessment (June 2021)

Hollands Farm Sustainability Appraisal (June 2021)

Hollands Farm Statement of Consultation (August 2021)

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone 01296 382343 or email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.