

Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive held on Wednesday 28th May 2014 at Pippbrook, Dorking, from 8.08pm to 8.27pm

Present:

Executive Members: Councillors Chris Townsend (Leader/Chairman), Simon Ling, Vivienne Michael, John Northcott and Charles Yarwood.

Non-Executive Members: Councillors Stephen Cooksey, Margaret Cooksey, Valerie Homewood, Mary Huggins, Chris Hunt, Roger Hurst, David Preedy and Philippa Shimmin.

81. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Friend.

82. Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Chris Townsend declared a personal interest in item 5 – Housing and Traveller Sites Plan – Additional Sites, as he was a member of Ashted Community Forum who had submitted comments on the Plan.

83. Report of the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee met on 28th May 2014 to consider the items on the agenda of the meeting of the Executive which followed. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee advised that he would report the comments and views of the Scrutiny Committee on these items when they were considered by the Executive.

84. Gatwick Airport – Additional Runway Consultation by Gatwick Airport Ltd [KEY DECISION]

The Scrutiny Committee at the preceding meeting had supported the recommendations in respect of the response to the consultation by Gatwick Airport Ltd, subject to a general strengthening of the wording of the response, in particular the points on housing, jobs, surface transport and flooding. A number of suggested amendments to the specific wording of the response were also suggested. The Scrutiny Committee had also recommended that a reference to the Council's policy of opposing a second runway at Gatwick should be included in the response.

The Executive agreed that the response should be strengthened, in particular in those areas identified by the Scrutiny Committee and proposed that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive and Planning Policy Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning to finalise and submit the response. It was noted that the references to surface transport should also include the rail infrastructure.

Members of the Executive were concerned that the comments made in response to the consultation by Gatwick Airports Ltd should also be brought to the attention of the Airports Commission, in order that the Commission was aware of the Council's views. It was agreed, therefore, that a letter should be sent to the Airports Commission outlining the comments made in response to the consultation by Gatwick Airport Ltd and highlighting specific issues to be taken into account by the Commission.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, subject to strengthening the wording of the response, in particular the points made with regard to housing, jobs, flooding and surface transport, and the inclusion of a reference to the Council's continued opposition to a second runway at Gatwick, the Chief Executive and Planning Policy Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, be authorised to submit the following response in respect of the consultation by Gatwick Airport Ltd:

Gatwick Airport Limited be advised that Mole Valley District Council:

- (1) Notes that Option 1 does not fully meet the criteria that the Airports Commission have

established for an additional runway at Gatwick Airport and is unlikely to be taken forward by the Commission.

- (2) Concludes that Options 2 and 3 for a second runway are likely to have similar implications for Mole Valley District.
- (3) Notes that Gatwick Airport Ltd has concluded that Option 3 provides the best fit against the Airport Commission's criteria is its preferred option and has been the subject of its final submission to the Commission.
- (4) Recognises that an additional runway as proposed in either Option 2 and Option 3 could stimulate beneficial economic growth in the Gatwick Diamond sub-region, but considers both Options raise the following significant issues for Mole Valley's communities:

(a) A new runway would result in the introduction of new flight paths around the airport which could introduce aircraft noise disturbance to communities previously unaffected. The lack of any information about the location of new flight paths in the consultation document is a regrettable omission which needs to be addressed by the Airports Commission in its appraisal and subsequently when it carries out its consultation later in the year.

(b) The introduction of a major aircraft maintenance area, including hangars, in the airport's North West Zone could have a harmful impact on the rural setting and historic character of the village of Charlwood without significant mitigation measures. Gatwick Airport Ltd should include measures to mitigate the visual and acoustic consequences of four new hangars in its final proposals to the Airport Commission and that the costs of such measures taken into account in assessing the overall cost of providing an additional runway at Gatwick.

(c) Notwithstanding this concern, the need for the concentration of all the airport's maintenance and cargo facilities in the North West Zone is challenged. Gatwick Airport Ltd is requested to look at the practicalities and environmental benefits to local communities of splitting the maintenance and cargo facilities between the north and south sides of the airport.

(d) The omission of detailed information in the consultation document about the ground noise implications of such a significant maintenance area in the airport's north west zone on the amenities of Charlwood is very regrettable. It is considered that Gatwick Airport Ltd should consider this aspect of their proposals as a matter of urgency and provide the evidence of the need or otherwise for a ground run engine testing pen to obviate the need for the continuation of engine testing at holding areas adjacent to the runway. The outcome of this work should be included by Gatwick Airport Ltd in its final submission to the Airports Commission and taken into account by the Commission in its appraisal of Gatwick's preferred option.

(e) The development strategies of the local planning authorities around the airport are based on its operation as a single runway, two terminal airport. An additional runway would require a substantial revision of existing strategies and could result in pressure to accommodate some of the additional development arising from a second runway on open countryside around Charlwood and Hookwood which is currently in the Green Belt.

(f) Gatwick Airport Limited's forecasts of additional jobs and homes that would be required to support an additional runway appear to have been revised upwards since the publication of the Consultation Document. It is recommended that GAL should provide a clear explanation of its latest forecasts and the evidence behind them.

(g) The catalytic employment that could result from the development of an additional runway needs addressing together with evidence of the implications on the economies of areas around the airport of not developing a second runway at Gatwick.

(h) The consultation fails to provide any concrete proposals to deal with the additional surface traffic generated by an additional runway over and above what is already committed in existing plans and proposals.

(i) Resilient, sustainable measures to reduce the anticipated increase in vehicle movements on the rural road network between the A25 and the airport/Crawley must be agreed with the Surrey County Council.

(j) The consultation document indicates that Lowfield Heath Road will be closed. However, there does not appear to be any evidence behind Gatwick Airport Limited's assertion that there would be no increase in vehicular traffic in Charlwood as a result of this closure. There is also a lack of clarity as to how Gatwick Airport Ltd. would deliver their priority to prevent an increase of traffic in Charlwood.

(k) An assurance should be given that the existing restrictions on the use of the vehicle access off the Old Brighton Road will remain in place in the event of an additional runway.

(l) Details should be provided to explain where it would be necessary to reduce the height of trees to ensure safe operation of the airport and what impact of this would have on the landscape to the west of the airport.

- (2) That a letter be sent to the Airports Commission outlining the comments made in response to the consultation by Gatwick Airport Ltd and highlighting specific issues to be taken into account by the Commission.

85. Housing and Traveller Sites Plan – Additional Sites [KEY DECISION]

An addendum detailing a number of proposed changes to the consultation document was tabled.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee had welcomed the proposed consultation on the additional sites, although Members had been concerned that the consultation be adequately publicised to allow as full a response as possible to be made.

Members of the Executive stressed the importance of the consultation document being clear and easy to understand and recommended that the introductory section of the document include some context for the consultation and a reference to some of the information in the original consultation document.

Members noted that the consultation on the additional sites would, by its nature, be less extensive than the original consultation. Officers confirmed that responses to the consultation would be considered on merit and not on the basis of the number of comments received.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Housing and Traveller Sites Plan - Additional Sites Supplementary Consultation Document, amended as detailed in Appendix 1, be published for a 6 week period from 9th June to 21st July 2014.
- (2) That consultation be undertaken on a potential minor change to the Green Belt boundary at 46 Epsom Road and 4-6 Quarry Gardens, Ashted, also for a 6 week period from 9th June to 21st July 2014.
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder and Chairman of the Local Plan Working Group, to make minor editorial and other changes to the documents, including an amplification of the introductory section to provide more context for the consultation, prior to its publication.

Addendums to Housing and Traveller Sites Plan – Additional Sites consultation document

The following changes are proposed to the consultation paper. They are made in response to further information received by the Council. *Italic text* is new wording, ~~strikethrough~~ is wording to be deleted.

Page 5 (LH29)	<p>Access and travel: Replace text with the following - <i>Surrey County Council report that from their initial observations current vehicular access arrangements are acceptable to the site from Upper Fairfield Road. Any change in access may require the relocation of a street light column located close to the current access. The County Highway Authority would not consider parking a main issue with this site given the close proximity to local services and transport routes. It is also noted that a public car park is located adjacent to the site and parking restrictions are currently in place on Upper Fairfield Road.</i></p> <p><i>Good footway provision is provided along Upper Fairfield Road linking to the site to nearby local services including public transport routes.</i></p>
Page 15 (DK31)	<p>Access and travel: Replace text with the following - <i>Surrey County Council has undertaken an initial assessment. Vehicular access has been assessed from Chart Lane and they consider that it may be acceptable to serve the development as proposed subject to usual design and construction standards including adequate visibility splays provided in both directions. Access to the site from the A24 is unlikely to be supported in this location because of restricted visibility due to the alignment of the road.</i></p> <p><i>Parking restrictions have recently been provided along Chart Lane preventing parking at any possible new access location.</i></p> <p><i>Footway provision is provided on the east side of Chart Lane and any development of site DK31 may be obligated to improve footway provision and pedestrian crossing points in this area to ensure safe and adequate pedestrian access.</i></p> <p><i>Pedestrian access is available to local services and transport routes.</i></p> <p><i>The applicant should note the threshold for requiring a Transport Statement is between 50 – 80 dwellings.</i></p>

Access and travel: Replace text with the following - *Surrey County Council has undertaken an initial assessment. Vehicular access to this site is likely to be a continuation of Monks Green which is accessed from Cobham Road. This section of Cobham Road is subject to a 30mph speed limit and suitable visibility should be achievable at the Monks Green/Cobham Road junction.*

Good footway provision is provided on both sides of Monks Green which should be linked into any new development. Footway provision is also provided linking the site to nearby local services including public transport routes; however, a pedestrian crossing point is likely to be required on Cobham Road to ensure that the pedestrian route to the village centre is safe and continuous as the footway on the western side of Cobham Road ends at the railway bridge and does not continue into the village centre.

Map – amend annotation to remove reference to sites ‘a’ and ‘b’.

Proposed Development:

~~Two schemes have been prepared for consideration, They are at an early stage and are considered to be conceptual.~~

~~Option 1 – 400 homes, new primary school and open space.~~

~~Option 2 – 200 homes, open space / allotments.~~

Mixed use development comprising:

- *New primary school of up to 3 Form Entry*
- *Up to 400 market, affordable, intermediate and key worker homes including a range of dwellings sizes, densities and types.*
- *A new doctors surgery*
- *A Country Park including new sports pitches, play areas and community pavilion, plus further publically accessible open space*
- *Allotments and community orchard*

Access and travel issues: Parts of the site are currently accessed through field gates from the A29. The promoters are considering *new access(es) from / onto A29 and potentially the A24. They also propose highway safety improvements including new pedestrian links across the A24 and to the A24 Beare Green junction.* ~~consideration of access is at an early stage but it is currently proposed to principally access the site through a new arm off the Beare Green roundabout.~~

The land is crossed by a number of public footpaths which then pass through Great Turners Woods and onto Highlands Road. It is a short distance from the railway station. The promoters are proposing the *retention of existing and provision of new rights of way alongside new footpath and cyclepaths to improve connectivity with existing village.*

Surrey County Council report that from their initial observations a full transport assessment would be required to analyse the impact of the proposed development on the adjacent Beare Green roundabout and local highway network. Surrey County Council raise concerns about the ability to achieve the minimum visibility splays required in each direction in relation to the road speed of the A24 in this location (50mph). They also raise concerns about the access to local services and transport routes which may lead to an increasing dependence on the private car.

In relation to pedestrians, Surrey County Council report that adequate provision is not currently provided along the A24 at this location and proposals of this scale would require considerable upgrading of pedestrian facilities including footways and crossing points.

	<p>Key services and community facilities: This site is large and would need to include a range of services as well as open space, sports and other recreation facilities <i>as set out under the 'Proposed Development'</i>. The proposal One option includes proposals for a new school replacing the Weald School currently on the other side of the A24 and the promoters are also aware of local desire for a doctors surgery. <i>The future of the exiting school site is not currently known, but any redevelopment would have to be in accordance with the planning policies that apply at the time, in particular taking into account its Green Belt status.</i> Existing Other local services are located in the village centre about 800 - 1200m away but due to the separation created by Great Turners Wood linkages may be poor. This needs further consideration.</p> <p>Flood Risk: The site is located in Flood Zone 1. Information from the Environment Agency indicates that parts of the site may be susceptible to surface water flooding, this will be linked to the changes in levels and will require further investigation. Any application on this site, due to its size would require a flood risk assessment. <i>The promoters plan to incorporate a Sustainable Drainage System as required feeding into the retained watercourse.</i></p> <p>How will the development of the site contribute towards Green Infrastructure provision? The proposed development would include significant areas of open space and would retain the woodland around the site. <i>The promoter proposes a Country Park including new sports pitches, play areas and community pavilion, plus further publically accessible open space. They are also considering the potential for allotments and a community orchard. In addition to this they would seek to retain existing hedgerows and trees to provide green corridors for new development and provide additional buffer and woodland planting</i></p>
Page 34 (CP11)	Site Area (HA): 0.56 0.27
Page 44 (HK05)	<p>Access and travel: Replace text with the following – <i>The site is accessed off Reigate Road very close to its junction with the 217. Surrey County Council has undertaken an initial assessment and report that vehicular access to the site looks to be acceptable in principle; however a road layout improvement is likely to be required in order to provide safe access into the site from the north via the roundabout junction. A ghosted right turn waiting facility for vehicles turning right into the site would be required directly adjacent to the roundabout exit arm so that vehicles can wait safely out of the path of vehicles exiting the roundabout junction and travelling south. Visibility looks to be achievable in both directions.</i></p> <p><i>Good footway provision is provided linking to the site to nearby local services including public transport routes.</i></p>
All sections	<p>Sustainability Appraisal: <i>For further information on the analysis of the characteristics of the Green Belt in this area please see the Green Belt Review 2014 available on the Council website, at its Offices or in local libraries.</i></p>