

Minutes of a meeting of the **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Council Offices, West Street, Boston, on Friday, 24 June 2016 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

P Bedford (Chairman)
R Gambba-Jones (Vice-Chairman)

B Alcock
P E Coupland

C Brotherton
A Austin

M Brookes
C Rylott (Substitute)

Joint Policy Unit Manager (South Holland District Council), Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager (Boston Borough Council), Strategic Planning Manager (South Holland District and Breckland Councils), Senior Planning Policy Officer (South Holland District Council), Planning Policy Officer (South Holland District Council), Two Forward Planning Officers (Boston Borough Council), Strategic Planning Officer (Lincolnshire County Council) Planning Solicitor (Legal Services Lincolnshire) and Principal Planning Adviser (Environment Agency)

In Attendance: Councillors R McAuley, F Biggadike, C J T H Brewis, M D Seymour and C N Worth.

There were fifteen members of the public.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Brown, Colin Davie and B Rush, the County Commissioner for Economy and Place, the Strategic Planning Manager(Lincolnshire County Council) and the Corporate Director (Boston Borough Council).

1. **WELCOME**

The outgoing Chairman, Councillor R Gambba-Jones, opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.**

The Joint Policy Unit Manager requested nominations for the election of the Chairman of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee for the ensuing year.

DECISION:

That Councillor P Bedford be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

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3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman invited nominations for the election of the Vice-Chairman of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee for the ensuing year (to be from a different authority to that of the Chairman).

DECISION:

That Councillor R Gambba-Jones be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

Councillor B Alcock declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of land in Crowland and therefore would leave the meeting for the debate and vote at the appropriate time.

5. MINUTES

The Joint Policy Unit Manager asked for the Draft Minutes to be amended so as to include the following paragraph before the Chairman's concluding remarks on the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan as follows:

'The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager added that there was no set methodology for undertaking objectively-assessed housing needs so the approach for South East Lincolnshire should not be compared in terms of being somehow deficient or inappropriate. Our approach seems justified when considered against past delivery and the circumstances of the Local Plan area.'

The amendment was agreed unanimously, and the minutes of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 27 May 2016, as amended, were then signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN: PREFERRED SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Consideration was given to the report of the Joint Policy Unit Manager which asked members to approve, for the purpose of public consultation, revisions to the January 2016 'Draft Local Plan' Policy 2: Spatial Strategy (Policy 2) and Policy 12: Distribution of New Housing (Policy 12), and the Policies Map Insets (Insets) which now identified 'preferred' sites, instead of site options, for development.

Councillor Brewis requested, and it was agreed unanimously, that Gedney Church End and Gedney Black Lion End be separately identified within revised Policy 2.

Members of the Joint Policy Unit then briefly explained the background to the formulation of the revisions to Policies 2 and 12 and the Insets. This was undertaken by reference to the preparation of the 'Housing Paper' for each settlement identified

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in the settlement hierarchy as a Sub-Regional Centre, a Main Service Centre or a Minor Service Centre.

Boston

The Forward Planning Officer pointed out several drafting errors on the Boston Inset. He then explained that three tiers of preferred housing sites had been identified for the town: sustainable urban extensions (SUEs), large sites and small sites. The total capacity of these sites exceeded the target dwelling requirement for Boston, but this overprovision was justified on the grounds of providing choice and to compensate for the risk of some sites not coming forward.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer explained the reasoning behind the identification of employment sites to the south of Boston and the deletion of a previously-identified site because of unavailability.

Spalding

The Senior Planning Policy Officer explained the current approach to a housing strategy for Spalding and its relationship with the proposed delivery of the Spalding Western Relief Road (SWRR) and the provision of a new integrated primary and secondary schools facility. She said that the purpose of the identified range of sites was to facilitate a mix of developers and to maximise the chances of delivery. The integrated school would be located in proximity to the proposed housing growth and, at the request of the County Council, as Local Education Authority, its design and layout should be well related to the proposed new housing development adjoining it.

In respect of the proposed SUE to the north of the Vernatt's Drain, it was explained that the gas pipeline easements to the east of the railway line could form the basis of a network of open spaces throughout the housing development. The first phase of development would focus on the provision of a roundabout junction linking the Spalding Road with the eastern end of the SWRR and housing development between the railway and Spalding Road. The next phase would include the extension of the SWRR south-westwards via a bridge crossing of the railway and further residential development to the west of the railway. Significant further development of the SUE would take place beyond the period of the Local Plan.

Councillor Alcock expressed concern about the time it might take to deliver the bridge crossing of the railway, but accepted there was a need to provide sites for smaller housing developments in Spalding that could help delivery in the short term.

The Strategic Planning Manager (South Holland District and Breckland Councils) stated that South Holland District Council was seeking alternative sources of funding for the roundabout with a view to 'kick-starting' the first phase of development.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer stated that the Local Plan was promoting changes to commercial development at the 'Lincs Gateway' with mixed 'B-uses' on the east

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side and, following application of the 'sequential approach', a limited amount of retail development on the west side. She accepted that this site was somewhat removed from the town centre but was reasonably confident that it could be delivered in the short term. However, should a planning application for retail development on this site be received in the near future, it would require robust justification in the form of a 'sequential test' and retail impact assessment. Furthermore, given its location, such a proposal would need to be well designed.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer also explained proposals to extend the area of the designated Town Centre of Spalding.

In response to a request from Councillor Gambba-Jones, the Senior Planning Policy Officer explained the terms 'comparison' retail floor space and 'mixed use'. Mixed use in the specified context was mixed 'B-Class' uses and other employment-generating uses such as hotels, public houses etc. It was agreed by all that such terminology and related policy wording would have to be well-defined.

With respect to discussions about the proposed role of the Springfields Outlet Centre, Councillor Gambba-Jones referred to South Holland District Council's (SHDC's) original experience of dealing with this development and cautioned that proposals needed to be defined very carefully.

Councillor Brewis expressed appreciation of the definition of 'comparison' and noted that he voted against the original Springfields proposal. He said that he would appreciate more detailed policy wording instead of the use of jargon; a view endorsed by Councillor Worth.

The Strategic Planning Manager (South Holland District and Breckland Councils) suggested that the 'Glossary of Terms' was an appropriate location for explaining the jargon.

Councillor Austin enquired as to whether SHDC representatives were happy with the proposed allocation of retail floor space at the Lincs Gateway given the impact that Springfields had had, not only on Spalding but also Boston; and did the public appreciate the terminology relating to the sequential test? She thought that there was a need for a Glossary.

Councillor Alcock considered that there was a need to be careful in defining the proposed allocation of retail floor space at the Lincs Gateway, as it could serve to undermine the current planning permission. He didn't want to see a repeat of the Springfields mistakes.

Councillor Brewis reiterated the need to be careful.

Councillor Austin enquired as to where else the proposal for additional retail floor space could be accommodated.

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The Senior Planning Policy Officer explained that several other sites had been considered and discounted for a variety of planning-related reasons, but in choosing a suitable site, consideration should be given to the opportunities for improving sustainable transport facilities between it and the town centre.

Councillor Alcock enquired as to whether there were any suitable sites which could support the provision of the SWRR, to which the Senior Planning Policy Officer responded that no such sites for comparison floor space had been declared available.

Councillor Gambba-Jones stated that while he did not consider the Lincs Gateway site to be ideal, it should be the subject of serious investigation.

The Strategic Planning Manager (South Holland District and Breckland Councils) suggested that the public consultation on the 'Preferred Sites for Development' should be used to seek suggestions for alternative sites for retail development.

There followed expressions of general concern about the suitability of the Lincs Gateway site. It was suggested that if members had reservations about the site and more suitable sites could not be identified, it should not be progressed as a proposal for the time being. It was therefore proposed by Councillor Gambba-Jones, and seconded by Councillor Alcock, that the Lincs Gateway not be identified as a location for accommodating additional comparison floor space, and, instead, the public consultation on the Preferred Sites for Development be used to issue a 'call for sites' that may be suitable for accommodating comparison retail floor space.

This recommendation was agreed unanimously.

Crowland

Councillor Alcock left the meeting for the duration of discussions relating to Crowland.

In explaining the proposals for Crowland, Senior Planning Policy Officer paid particular attention to the preferred employment sites and the reasoning behind the identification of Site Cro045.

The Joint Policy Unit Manager explained that whilst the work on the Strategic Flood Risk Update for South Holland District had not yet been completed, he had been informed by the consultants that there were no significant issues relating to the identified preferred sites for development in Crowland.

Long Sutton

Councillor Alcock returned to the meeting.

Councillor Brewis expressed support for all the proposals.

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The proposal to designate the Butterfly Park as Countryside in order to protect the landscape setting of the town received wide support.

Sutton Bridge

Councillor Brewis expressed support for the proposed allocations, but disagreed with the limited extent of the designated Primary Shopping Area and requested its extension further along Bridge Road. The Joint Policy Unit Manager stated that officers would review the extent of the Primary Shopping Area in this regard.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer then provided further detail in respect of the identification of the existing and permitted power station developments. Councillor Brewis further added that he supported the limited allocation of employment land at Wingland, but observed that the Wayne's Transport site in Chalk Lane should be identified. It was therefore proposed by Councillor Gambba-Jones, and seconded by Councillor Brewis, that the Wayne's Transport site be appropriately identified.

This recommendation was agreed unanimously.

Donington

Councillor Bedford sought clarification in respect of the status of the Frutex site, to which the Senior Planning Policy Officer responded.

Holbeach

The Senior Planning Policy Officer provided more detail in respect of the large Ashley King and Lincolnshire County Council housing allocations, including the extension of development on these sites beyond 2036; and she also explained the approach to education provision on the 'University site'.

Bot Councillors Biggadike and Coupland expressed disappointment with the lack of smaller housing sites in the town.

Councillor Worth endorsed the proposals, including the relocation of the new primary school facility from the Lincolnshire County Council site to the University site.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer noted that there was interest in developing the proposed Food Enterprise Zone (FEZ) as a mixed employment and educational (University) facility.

Councillor Worth suggested that provision for new hotel accommodation in the town may be justified given the nature of the proposed employment facilities.

Councillor Biggadike enquired about the suitability of the former unofficial Gypsy and Traveller site in Cranmore Lane for accommodating 'self-build' housing

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developments, to which Councillor Worth responded that SHDC were exploring this possibility.

The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager explained the requirement for local planning authorities to maintain a register of people seeking sites for self-build housing developments. However, he stated that officers were not looking to predetermine where self-build housing developments should go by specifically allocating land for this purpose.

Kirton

Councillor Austin referred to the proposed preferred housing site Fra024, and asked what approach would be adopted if a planning application for the site were to be received in advance of the completion of the Local Plan. The Forward Planning Officer responded by suggesting that the determination of such an application would be informed by the provisions of the 1999 Boston Borough Local Plan, and the fact that Boston Borough Council cannot presently demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Councillor Austin enquired about the use of a 'white land' site, to which the Forward Planning Officer explained that it was proposed for inclusion within the settlement boundary but not for allocation for a specific purpose.

Councillor Brewis suggested that it was suitable for employment development, to which the Forward Planning Officer responded that, for various reasons, it was not.

Pinchbeck

The presentation of the proposals was accepted without discussion.

Sutterton

The Forward Planning Officer reported that although the proposals contained in the Draft Local Plan had generated some controversy, it was not intended to revise Sutterton's role in the spatial strategy nor its housing requirement. He added that the village's housing requirement would be met by a single site to the south of the settlement, in spite of the concerns raised by Historic England.

Councillor Brookes expressed the view that the housing capacity of the site would be reduced if the necessary service provision for the development were to be provided on-site; and that the site's proximity to employment areas would also serve to reduce the number of dwellings.

In response to Councillor Brookes asking if part of the site could be designated for services, the Forward Planning Officer stated that it was not possible to require on-site provision of services, but accepted that the incorporation of service provision within the proposal would help to support its acceptability.

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Councillor Brookes concluded his query by stating his acceptance of the situation and that he had no objection to it.

Councillor Austin endorsed the need for services in the village.

The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager recognised that this matter had been a 'hot issue'. He considered Sutterton to be one of the more sustainable locations in Boston Borough, and that the site in question needed to be promoted in order to avoid the potential alternative situation of a number of disparate proposals.

Councillor Brookes thought that the Local Plan should seek to allocate land for the provision of services.

Swineshead

Councillor Brookes left the meeting for the duration of discussions relating to Swineshead.

The Forward Planning Officer pointed out a mistake in the calculation of the residual housing requirement in explaining the contents of the Housing Paper for Swineshead.

Other Service Centres and Settlements

Councillor Brookes returned to the meeting.

The Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager explained the approach to development in these smaller locations and the nature of the comments that had been received during the public consultation on the Draft Local Plan; and he sought any observations on these matters.

Councillor Brookes asked whether there was the potential for accommodating 'windfall' infill housing developments within these settlements, to which the Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager replied that there was such potential.

AGREED:

That Appendices A, B and C as amended be approved for the purpose of public consultation.

7. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.

There was none.

(The meeting ended at 1.20 pm)

(End of minutes)