

WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

DRAFT NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP

HELD ON 21 JULY 2021 IN VIRTUAL MEETING

Present: Councillor Tahir Aziz (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Steve Dorsett
Councillor Gary Elson
Councillor Adam Kirby
Councillor Louise Morales (Chairman)

Giorgio Framalicco
Ernest Amoako
Daniel Ashe
Gillian Bernadt
Stephanie Broadley

Absent: Councillor Simon Ashall
Councillor Will Forster

Actions

6. Review of Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy

Ernest Amoako introduced the report and explained that it outlined the proposed revision to the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy and sought agreement of the Working Group to publish it for public engagement and consultation between September 2021 and November 2021.

Following a question from the Chairman regarding the implications of leaving the EU, Ernest Amoako referred to paragraph 1.8 on page 20 of the agenda and clarified that all regulations had now been transposed into UK law and there were only specific circumstances when the EU directives applied.

Following a question from the Chairman in regards to predatory animals in paragraph 1.2, Ernest Amoako stated that there was no specific guidance on how to control cats and that there were a lot of predatory issues that caused problems.

Referring to pages 24/25 of the agenda, the Chairman queried whether when the majority of people were driving electric cars in the future, would the rules regarding cars going near to SANGs be changed. Ernest Amoako commented that the Council was proactive in reviewing their SPDs, so as and when new information was known on how pollution could be controlled, this aspect could be reviewed.

Regarding paragraph 1.21 and specifically road traffic being a significant source of NOx emission which damages the heathland, Councillor Kirby

queried if there was any way this impact could be mitigated. Ernest Amoako explained that there was a section in the document that explained how the capacity of SANG was allocated to homes and one criteria was the proximity of the homes to the SANG. It was hoped that it would be in close proximity to the development and therefore limit the amount of car use. There was also a number of cycle and pedestrian improvements that had been identified to encourage less car use. Councillor Kirby commented that this was interesting as his observation had been that there were often busy roads separating developments and SANG areas, which would not necessarily reduce car use.

On page 29 of the agenda, the Chairman queried why Gresham Mill had been split into two; Ernest Amoako explained that one was a bespoke SANG to serve a development and the other was an adjacent land that could be added. Once they were completed, it could become a single SANG..

On page 39 of the agenda, the Chairman queried the average occupancy rate of 2.9 for a 4+ bedroom dwelling. Ernest Amoako commented that the data comes from the Census and County Council Specialist Analyst who managed Surrey. It was the consensus that this 2.9 figure was the average at this time, but this was monitored. Councillor G Elson added that often new build properties have smaller bedrooms than older house, which could mean people are using the fourth bedroom as a study and therefore this occupancy rate would be accurate.

The Chairman queried whether the Heather Farm proposal could be amended now with the additional cycle route or whether this had been finalised. Ernest Amoako commented that the Council could choose to improve access to green infrastructure with additional resources, however the CIL fund was limited. The Council could decide how they wanted to use this.

Councillor Kirby queried whether there was an error on the flow chart on page 33 which showed all monies going to Hampshire County Council. Ernest Amoako confirmed that the information was correct and that there was a Joint Strategic Partnership that Woking was part of and all monies were managed by Hampshire County Council.

The Working Group RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the Executive that

- (i) the contents of the proposed revision to the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy Supplementary Planning Document be noted and approved for public engagement and consultation between September 2021 and November 2021; and**
- (ii) delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning to approve amendments to the draft SPD to reflect new information before it published for community engagement and consultation.**