

REVIEW OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY STUDY AND DELIVERY PLAN – EAST OF THE BOROUGH AND BOROUGH-WIDE STUDY

Executive Summary

It is essential that the delivery of the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) is supported by an up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to ensure sustainable development. National Planning Policy (NPPF) requires local plans to make provision for infrastructure to support planned development. In this regard, the Council had prepared and IDP to enable the sustainable delivery of the Core Strategy. The latest IDP was published in 2018, with a policy commitment to review it bi-annually.

The Council at its meeting on 3 December 2020 resolved that 'Council calls for a joint study with other authorities and partners on the future infrastructure requirements of the east of Woking based on both current and future demand and that the terms of the study come to the next meeting of the Executive'. The terms of the Study was reported to the Executive accordingly, and was approved at its meeting on 4 February 2021.

The revised IDP (2021) identifies the nature and type of infrastructure that will be needed to enable the on-going delivery of the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations DPD, how the infrastructure will be delivered, by whom and at what cost. It is intended that the revised IDP will be published by the end of the year. The IDP is a living document that will be regularly updated to take account of new information to make sure that it continues to be robust in supporting the delivery of the Core Strategy. The revised IDP goes further than a study of the infrastructure needs of east of the Borough, it also reviews the borough-wide infrastructure needs to support the delivery of the Site Allocations DPD. The IDP for the east of the Borough and the borough-wide IDP are both in Appendix 1.

The report was considered by the LDF Working Group at its meeting on 21 July 2021. Members of the Working Group were supportive of the recommendations of the report. The Draft Minute of the meeting is in Appendix 2.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

the contents of the Infrastructure Capacity Study and Delivery Plan be noted and approved.

Reasons for Decision

Reason: To ensure that there is an up to date IDP to enable the sustainable delivery of the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations DPD.

The items above will need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to Council.

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Background Papers: None.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council at its meeting on 3 December 2020 resolved that ‘Council calls for a joint study with other authorities and partners on the future infrastructure requirements of the east of Woking based on both current and future demand and that the terms of the study come to the next meeting of the Executive’. The terms of the Study was reported to the Executive accordingly, and was approved at its meeting on 4 February 2021.
- 1.2 The Executive should note that National Planning Policy (NPPF) requires local plans to make provision for infrastructure to support planned development. In this regard, the Council had prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the delivery of the Core Strategy. This was scrutinised by the Secretary of State as part of the Examination of the Core Strategy. The Secretary of State considered the IDP sufficiently robust. The IDP was reviewed in 2018, and once again was scrutinised as part of the Examination of the Site Allocations DPD. Planning for infrastructure provision is a continuous and an iterative process. In this regard, the Council has committed to review the IDP bi-annually to bring it up to date and take into account any new information. The next review is due, and it is within this broader policy context that the terms of the Study was agreed by Council.
- 1.3 The review of the IDP has been done in-house with significant engagement and partnership working with all the key infrastructure providers, including Surrey County Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups and relevant Officers of the Council. In preparing the IDP, Officers had been acutely aware that the Council is establishing a stronger commitment to embedding a culture of engagement and consultation into the decision making process, empowering communities and making decisions alongside communities. As such, stakeholder and community engagement had been central to the preparation of the IDP.
- 1.4 In accordance with the Council resolve, it is intended that the IDP will be reported to Council at its meeting on 14 October 2021 with a recommendation to note and approve it as an evidence base document to support the delivery of the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations DPD.

2.0 Purpose of the review of the IDP

2.1 The revised IDP

- provides an up-to-date baseline position establishing current infrastructure provision, identifying any shortfalls and potential constraints to development;
- sets out up-to-date infrastructure and service requirements in respect of the overall quantum of growth proposed in the Core Strategy;
- sets out specific infrastructure and service requirements in respect of the Council’s proposed spatial distribution of growth contained in the emerging Site Allocations DPD; and
- identifies, where appropriate, the specific infrastructure requirements for individual site allocations included in the Site Allocations DPD.

- 2.2 The study comprise of a comprehensive review of the 2018 IDP, and is borough-wide in its geographical coverage. It covers four infrastructure categories – transport, education, health and flood alleviation. In accordance with the Council resolve, there is also a bespoke and a separate extract setting out the specific infrastructure requirements to support development proposals in Byfleet and West Byfleet (east of the Borough).

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- 2.3 The IDP is purposely structured to provide clarity. The first part is a schedule of infrastructure identified to support the planned development. The second part is a detailed analysis of infrastructure needs that has informed the infrastructure schedule. Copies of the borough-wide IDP and the extract for Byfleet/West Byfleet are attached as Appendix 1.

3.0 How the IDP has been prepared including stakeholder engagement

- 3.1 The Council had agreed for the Study to be done in two phases. This first phase focused on four key infrastructure areas – transport, education, flooding and health. These were selected because they were the infrastructure categories that received significant number of responses during the various consultations on the Site Allocations DPD. It was agreed that a draft of the first phase will be completed by end of May 2021 to form the basis for community engagement. The deadline was met, and the Portfolio Holder and the Director of Planning were informed accordingly. The second phase is planned for completion by end of September 2021. The Executive will be briefed in due course when the second phase is completed.
- 3.2 Stakeholder involvement had been central to the preparation of the IDP. The IDP has been prepared in-house by the Planning Policy team with an on-going involvement and partnership working with the relevant Infrastructure Providers. This includes Surrey County Council's spatial planners, school commissioning officers, transport planners, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Surrey Heartlands and officers of the Council. The Infrastructure Providers had been involved in all aspects of the Study, including determining and agreeing the methodology for the Study, providing necessary technical and up to date information, assisting in drafting relevant sections of the document and scrutinising each stage of the process for quality assurance.
- 3.3 Community engagement and consultation was an essential part of preparing the IDP. All Neighbourhood Forums and Resident Associations were engaged in a face to face virtual discussion of the contents of the IDP, which was well received by those who attended. They were also given sufficient time to send their written comments for that to be taken into account before the draft IDP was finalised. Council had requested that the Byfleet/West Byfleet and Pyrford Neighbourhood Forums be consulted when undertaking the Study. Given the nature and scope of the Study, the invitation to engage was extended to all the other Neighbourhood Forums and Resident Associations across the Borough.
- 3.4 Officers of the Council were joined by all the relevant Infrastructure Providers (except the CCGs) for the local community engagement event.
- 3.5 Members have been appropriately and adequately engaged. The Portfolio Holder for Planning has been informed at each key stage of the process. Ward Councillors for Byfleet, West Byfleet and Pyrford and the Leader of the Opposition have all been sent advanced draft copies of the Borough-wide IDP and the extract for Byfleet/West Byfleet. It is expected that the final draft IDP will be reported to Council on 14 October 2021 for approval.

4.0 Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 The IDP supports the following objective of the Corporate Plan - An enterprising, vibrant and sustainable borough by:
- Promoting a strong economy – by ensuring that development is supported by adequate and appropriate infrastructure such as transport and education. This will help promote investment, support business retention and promote Woking as a destination for business to relocate to.
 - Improving the Borough's biodiversity and green infrastructure – the IDP will set out how much green infrastructure is needed to support development.

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- It will help to improve the health and wellbeing of the community by ensuring the provision of health facilities to support development
- 4.2 Sustainable development – The IDP identifies further opportunities for energy efficiency and generation. This will help the Council to achieve its climate neutral objectives.

5.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 5.1 National planning policy requires local plans to make provision for infrastructure to support development. This should be informed by an up to date information. There is a risk that the delivery of the Core Strategy will be supported by an out of date IDP if it is not agreed for the revised IDP to be published.
- 5.2 There is no additional financial implications for preparing the IDP.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 5.3 There are no equalities or human resource implications.

Legal

- 5.4 National Planning Policy (NPPF) requires local plans to make provision for infrastructure to support planned development. The IDP revised fulfils this requirement.
- 5.5 Paragraph 5.139 of the Core Strategy commits the Council to review the IDP bi-annually. The latest IDP was reviewed in 2018. The revised IDP fulfils this policy commitment.

6.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 6.1 See Section 3 of the report for details.

REPORT ENDS