

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Meeting held: 22nd November 2017

Present: Councillor Michael Tebbutt (Chair)
Councillor Linda Adams, Cedwien Brown, Duncan Bain,
Ruth Groome, Ian Jelley, Mark Rowley and Margaret
Talbot.

17.PP.17 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ash Davies and Jan Smith. It was noted that Councillor Margaret Talbot was acting as a substitute for Councillor Smith.

17.PP.18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Margaret Talbot and Ian Jelley and Cedwien Brown declared a personal interest as members of Rothwell Town Council.

Councillor Ruth Groome declared a personal interest as a member of Burton Latimer Town Council.

Councillor Michael Tebbutt declared a personal interest as a member of Desborough Town Council.

17.PP.19 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th October 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Minute No. 17.PP.14

In response to a question regarding progress on the McAlpine's Yard site in Kettering it was noted that there was

nothing further to report but that a report would be brought back to the Committee in due course.

17.PP.20 **SITE SPECIFIC PART 2 LOCAL PLAN – TOWN CENTRES (MARKET TOWNS)**

A report was submitted which updated Members on Retail and Town Centre issues within the Market Towns, and sought to agree a way for taking these issues forward in the emerging Site Specific Part 2 (SSP2) Local Plan

It was noted that the emerging SSP2 Local Plan would also include a standalone section on Town Centres, Retail and Community Facilities, in addition to the separate town centre sections included within each of the market Town Chapters. This area of work was last considered through the Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document Options paper Consultation in March 2012, and needed to be taken forward through the emerging SSP2 Local Plan. Some decisions and discussions had already taken place on matters relating to town centre boundaries and market town health checks, the most recent of which had been included in the July 2016 update.

Each of the recommendations was considered and discussed as follows:-

Recommendation 1

It was noted that health checks on Kettering Town Centre were undertaken on a regular basis, and on the smaller town centres would take place once policies were in place. Currently, such health checks concentrated on where performance was down and responding to that. Officers would ensure that information was as up to date as possible by the time of the examination, with further survey work carried out in 2018, subject to resources. Health checks in the smaller towns would be carried out in conjunction with town councils.

Recommendation 4

Discussion was held on visions for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres.

In Desborough, plans relevant to the Tesco development site were felt to be still relevant to a way forward, although unlikely to generate a similar level of S106 money. Work in connection with

the Neighbourhood Plan and reports of external consultants were also felt to be relevant to the overall vision.

Northamptonshire County Council was currently undertaking work to provide a pedestrian crossing in the High Street in Desborough, funded through the local precept. Other improvement works were also planned for the town centre.

Land to the rear of shops in Burton Latimer High Street was in a mix of private and public ownership, and discussion was held on how this land could be brought into use. It was noted that land in mixed ownership was more difficult to bring forward and in the first instance should be identified for allocation through the Local Plan, with mechanisms to help its development, such as, for example, through compulsory purchase. The government were making this process easier which would be helpful to town centre developments.

It was felt that the Burton Latimer Urban Design Plan, undertaken in 2004, was the most recent document of its kind. It was noted that Burton Latimer Town Council would welcome discussions on the future vision for the town centre.

The most important issue for Rothwell town centre was the provision of a strategic link road to take traffic from Desborough Road through to Rushton and this remained a significant aspiration for the future vision for the town centre. The link road was embedded in the Joint Core Strategy.

It was felt that Rothwell Market Square was very important to the town centre and should be maintained in its present form, including the provision of free parking. It was noted that a few sites had been identified in the town for future development, such as the fire station site, factory site and two areas in Tresham Street, and the town council would continue to identify areas in conjunction with the Town Centre Partnership, which was also currently looking at putting on various speciality markets.

Recommendation 5

Councillor Groome reported on the monthly farmers' markets in Burton Latimer, which it was hoped could be expanded.

It was **Agreed** that the Economic Development team at Kettering Borough Council could give advice regarding marketing, promoting and expanding the farmers' market in Burton Latimer.

It was noted that Rothwell were hoping to develop a farmers' market and this would continue to be looked at through the Town

Centre Partnership.

Although Desborough did not currently have much space for its market, it was felt there were opportunities to extend the area and look at potential enhancements, including easier parking for stallholders and safety for pedestrians, and this could be investigated through the Council's Economic Development team.

Recommendation 6

Following discussion on the wording of the recommendation in respect of giving priority to redevelopment of historic buildings and buildings of local significance in town centres, it was agreed that the wording of the that sentence be changed to refer to retention and re-use of historic buildings, rather than redevelopment, which would add clarity to the recommendation (see *resolution on recommendation 6*).

A property at the corner of Havelock Street with Station Road in Desborough, owned by Kettering Borough Council, could provide a redevelopment opportunity for the town.

Recommendation 8

Discussion was held on Local Impact Assessment floorspace thresholds for each of the towns within Kettering Borough, and it was noted that different smaller scale thresholds for each of the towns had been included in the SSPLDD Options Consultation in March 2012.

Following debate on whether the thresholds should be different, or a blanket approach adopted, it was felt that, as each of the towns had different scales and sizes in relation to the retail offer, there was enough evidence to support the proposed 10% approach as being appropriate.

Recommendation 9

Debate on Recommendation 9 was centred around the Committee's previously stated preference for residential development above shops, rather than the space being used for storage. It was noted that there was an opportunity to promote this preference in the policy, which also had additional security and surveillance benefits for town centres. Additional wording to reflect this preference was added to the recommendation (see *resolution*.)

Recommendation 10

It was noted that Desborough had no public toilets and a request

was made to remove the word "clean" in paragraph 4.40 of the report.

Discussion was also held on secure parking in Rothwell town centre, and it was noted that this could be an indication of feedback from visitors. Meetings had been held with Northamptonshire County Council on decriminalised parking and with the police in relation to crime.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the contents of the report be noted and officer recommendations be endorsed as set out below;

1. Vitality and Viability:

That market town health checks are regularly updated and reviewed in order to identify weakness in town centre health, and plan positively in order to support their vitality and viability.

2. Hierarchy of Centres:

No further work required.

3. Extent of Town Centres:

To progress the draft SSP2 Local Plan relying on single town centre boundary for the market towns of Burton Latimer, Desborough, and Rothwell as endorsed by Members on 21st July 2016.

4. Promoting Town Centres:

That officers prepare visions for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres; identifying key sites for development and/or enhancement; and prepare a strategy of economic development that promotes the town centres as destinations in their own rights.

5. Markets:

In consultation with the Town Councils of Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell, prepare a policy which identifies/designates sites suitable for hosting local markets, and which sets criteria in support of development

proposals which seek to establish or enhance market provision within the town.

6. Site Allocations in Town Centres:

To include within the draft Local Plan a policy which identifies opportunity sites for development within each of the Market Towns (Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell) and set out uses for these sites. The policy would include primarily town centre uses at ground floor level with residential and/or employment above. The policy would give priority to retention and re-use of historic buildings and buildings of local significance through a series of tests; the retention of existing business uses unless demonstrated unviable; and meet design out crime standards.

7. Outside of Town Centres Pt 1:

To include within the draft Local Plan a call for sites seeking a suitable location for a medium sized supermarket, together with draft policy criteria to be used if a call for sites is unsuccessful, which ensures that any future supermarket proposal is located in an accessible location that is well connected to the town centres of either Rothwell or Desborough.

8. Outside of Town Centres Pt 2:

(a) To include within the draft Local Plan a policy which clarifies the circumstances under which a sequential test would apply, and not to progress with a locally set Sequential Test threshold.

(b) To include locally set Impact Assessment floorspace thresholds set out in paragraph 4.33 within the draft Local Plan.

9. Residential Development in Town Centres:

To develop policy criteria to encourage and support the delivery of residential development within town centres and above ground-floor level, and on sites which have both already been identified as opportunity development sites, and those which have not yet been

identified.

10. Addressing Town Centre Decline:

To identify those areas of the town centres showing signs of decline, and plan positively allocating sites for development where necessary, and areas for environmental enhancement where it is considered it will be beneficial. In doing so, officers will explore ways of improving issues expressed to be of concern to visitors.

- (ii) that the Market Town Centres Chapter be brought back to a future meeting of the Planning Policy Committee to be agreed for public consultation.

17.PP.21 VERBAL UPDATES

Verbal Updates on progress with the Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Broughton Neighbourhood Plan were given.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.47 pm)

Signed
Chair

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