

Standard Response to Issues Raised in Consultation on the Revised Draft Adur Local Plan 2013

Impact of the Proposed Allocations on the Landscape

Issues raised through the Recent Consultation Exercise

Respondents to the recent consultation exercise on the Revised Draft Adur Local Plan 2013 raised concerns about the impact of proposed development on Adur's landscape, particularly in relation to Policy RD 5: New Monks Farm; policy RD 6: West Sompting, and RD7: Shoreham Airport.

Assessment of Landscape Impacts of development

A Landscape and Ecology Study was carried out by Sheils Flynn for Adur District Council in 2012 - this may be found on the planning policy pages of the Adur and Worthing Councils website by following this link:

www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/planning-policy/adur-background-studies-and-info/biodiversity-environment/#landscape-and-ecology-study

West Sompting

The Landscape and Ecology Study (referred to above) assessed the section of gap (currently defined as Strategic Gap in the Adur Local Plan 1996, and proposed as Local Green Gap in the Revised Draft Adur Local Plan 2013) south of West Street (where development is proposed) to be of high visual sensitivity and medium-high overall landscape sensitivity due to its exceptionally open arable landscape, expansive scale and long views. However, the study went on to show how the development could be designed to reduce the impact on the landscape and improve the interface between the built development and the countryside through, amongst other things, appropriate landscaping including tree clump islands and off-site planting in hedgerows to the west.

The Landscape and Ecology Study also assessed the section of the gap north of West Street which it concluded was of medium overall landscape sensitivity and that the site is generally shielded from views from the South Downs National Park by the landform on the lower slopes of the Downs. Again, the study identified a number of principles to help reduce the impact of the development on the landscape.

New Monks Farm

The New Monks Farm area of the gap was assessed by the study as having a medium/medium-low overall landscape sensitivity. The study considered that the land west of Mash Barn Lane contributes little to the landscape setting of Lancing or to the integrity of landscapes within the strategic gap, but that the fields to the east of Mash Barn Lane, which form part of the central landscapes of the Gap, make an important contribution to its sense of openness and 'greenness'. The Landscape and Ecology Study identified a number of principles to reduce the impact of development on the landscape visually such as strategically sited blocks of woodland to extend

the existing wooded character of the landscape to the north west of the site and provide a 'green' edge screening views to the new housing from the A27, as well as a 'buffer' landscape between the housing edge and the country park.

Shoreham Airport

Shoreham Airport has been assessed as having a high overall landscape sensitivity. The Landscape and Ecology Study states that the Airport area makes a strong contribution to the impression of open, extensive greenspace in the Lancing-Shoreham Local Green Gap, enhancing the sense of separation between Shoreham and Lancing and providing a striking landscape setting for the lower stretches of the River Adur as it winds towards the sea. It also goes on to state that the inherent open character of the Shoreham Airport landscape means that it is difficult to mitigate the impacts of development without changing its distinctive local landscape character. The landscape study suggests that only two relatively small areas may be appropriate for development within the airport – in the NE corner and the SE corner. For operational reasons, the SE corner is impractical so a development allocation in the north east corner was put forward in the Revised Draft Adur Local Plan 2013, recognising the sensitivity of the area as well as recognising the need for new high quality employment floorspace in the district.

Conclusion

The Revised Draft Adur Local Plan 2013 recognises that a balance needs to be struck between development needs and impacts on the landscape. Taking advice from a landscape study produced for the Council in 2012, a number of design principles have been incorporated into policies in the emerging Local Plan to ensure that the impact of new development in sensitive landscape areas is reduced as much as possible.