

**Agenda**

**Headcorn Neighbourhood Development Plan – Examination**

**Hearing**

**Commencing 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 10:00am**

**At  
The Village Hall  
Church Lane  
Headcorn  
Kent  
TN27 9NR**

**Independent Examiner  
Jeremy J Edge BSc FRICS MRTPI**

## Agenda

### Headcorn Neighbourhood Development Plan Examination

- 1) Introductions and welcome
- 2) Hearing Procedure
- 3) Questions

#### Shared Vision

Q1. The NPPG (at Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 41-001-20140306), advises that Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Does the draft HNDP represent a "shared vision" of the future of Headcorn as identified in the NPPF at paragraph 183 of the NPPF and the NPPG?

Q2. 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010, Maidstone Borough Council designated Headcorn together with certain other settlements, as Rural Service Centres (RSC). Is this designation relevant, if at all, in connection with extant planning policy? Does this designation carry any weight for development management purposes?

#### Water management and dealing with the risk of flooding.

Q3. Has there been further Flood Risk Assessment to alter or augment the advice within Maidstone BC's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, (SFRA) May 2008 in the context of Policy HNP3?

Q4. The SFRA is said to be an evolving document. When published, the guidance referred for the need for sequential testing, the use of SUDs as a mitigation measure and for proposals for development in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 to be accompanied by Flood Risk Assessments. To what extent is the prohibition of development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the HNDP compatible with the SFRA May 2008 assessment?

Q5. Should the use of flood risk mitigation by SUDs be included in Policy HDNP3 and if so might this affect the housing delivery policies?

Q6. What progress if any has been made between the authorities in seeking to develop a waste water solution to existing issues in Headcorn? If progress been made, how might this alter Southern Water's Regulation 16 representations?

Q7. To what extent should the Regulation 16 representations made by Southern Water be reflected in the draft policies HNP3, HNP11 and HNP27 of the draft neighbourhood plan?

Q8. If the policy amendments proposed by Southern Water were to be adopted, would this overcome Southern Water's contention that as drafted, the Plan fails to meet the basic conditions test?

## Local Green Spaces

Q9. Local Green Spaces (LGS) are referred to in draft policy HNPD4 and a plan identifying these is provided in Figure 18. However, there is no express LGS policy, or justification for each component of LGS, in the draft NDP. Should there be a LGS policy in the Plan?

Q10. If so, is there evidence sufficient to justify LGS designation in accordance with NPPF guidance at paragraph 77?<sup>1</sup>

## Housing Policies

**Housing Need** - The NPPG advises (at paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 3-040-20140306) that where “..a neighbourhood plan comes forward before an up to date Local Plan is in place, the local planning authority should work constructively with a qualifying body to enable a neighbourhood plan to make timely progress and to share evidence used to prepare their plan. Neighbourhood plans should deliver against the objectively assessed evidence of needs.”

Q11. To what extent should the Headcorn evidence of need be regarded as being an “objective assessment of need” (OAN) and why?

Q12. Is there common ground between the Borough Council and Parish Council regarding the extent to which Headcorn may have delivered a previous over-supply of housing, in relation to need in previous years? If so, has this been assessed in the draft Headcorn NDP?

## Housing Supply

Q13. In relation to draft Policy HNPD6 is there sufficient reason, related to the provision of sustainable development in Headcorn, to limit development to 30 dwellings on any one large site? How can this policy element be reconciled with the third of the core planning principles in the NPPF at paragraph 17 which states:

- *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;*

Q14. Policy HNPD7 seeks to limit housing development other than micro development being development consisting of up to two dwellings, to 45 dwellings in the period up to 2026 and a further 45 dwellings between 2027 and 2031. Notwithstanding the opportunity to review the phased supply of housing in the parish, does

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<sup>1</sup> 77 The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

this draft policy offer sufficient flexibility in the event that housing supply fails to be delivered in the early part of the Plan period?

Q15. How would this policy satisfy the expectations of the NPPF at paragraph 17, core planning principles, to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes the country needs?

Q16. Is there express justification in the NPPF or adopted local planning policy to support housing policy which constrains housing delivery?

Q17. Is the density restriction in draft Policy HN13, no greater than 30 dpha, appropriate in the context of NPPF paragraph 47, in terms of boosting significantly the supply of housing land and ensuring choice and competition in the market for land?

### **Affordable homes**

Q18. Maidstone Borough Council's adopted affordable housing policy is contained within the Affordable Housing Development Plan Document (DPD), December 2006. Policy AH 1, states that on sites of 15 units or more, or 0.5 ha and greater, the Council will seek 40% of the dwellings to be affordable dwellings, other than in exceptional circumstances and on allocated greenfield sites, the Council may seek more than 40%. In relation to draft Policy HNP9, would a target rate of only 20% affordable housing in Larger Village Developments on sites delivering in excess of 15 dwellings, or being more than 0.5 ha in size be compatible with meeting the Basic Conditions?

### **School site expansion**

Q19. Does the draft NP adequately reflect existing planning permissions for development and related infrastructure improvements, such as for example the need for school provision associated with the development of 220 dwellings at Ulcombe Road permitted in 2015?

Q20. Draft Policy HDNP11, provides for preconditions to be met in relation to the village sewer system and school expansion. In relation to school expansion is there agreement with Kent County Council that the existing Headcorn Primary School be expanded on its present site to meet future need? Does the education authority support the land identified in HN13, figure 26? If so, is the land sufficient and capable of being delivered?

Q21. In other circumstances within the County, does the education authority provide temporary education facilities to meet need for primary school provision and would this be a feasible and realistic solution at Headcorn? Were this to be the case would the Education Authority expect the delivery of permanent school expansion to be a precondition before either Small Village Developments or Larger Village Developments as defined in Policy HN13, be granted planning permission?

### **Employment development**

Q21. Draft Policy HNP21 seeks to promote employment development at Barradale Farm during the Plan period (2011-2031) with planning permission for up to an additional 5500m<sup>2</sup> of B1; B2 and B8 development. Would it be too prescriptive to limited development of individual units to no more than 500m<sup>2</sup> each? What evidence exists that would justify this restriction? Would such a policy restriction be consistent with NPPF Core Principles contained in paragraph 17?

4) Any other business

5) Close of Hearing.

