
EXTRORDINARY LOCAL PLAN PANEL

MINUTES of the Extraordinary Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 5 September 2019 from 7.00pm - 8.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Chairman), Alastair Gould, James Hunt, Benjamin Martin, Richard Palmer, Eddie Thomas, Roger Truelove and Ghlin Whelan.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Philippa Davies, Andrew Jeffers and Alison Peters.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Tim Gibson.

Hannah Atkins and Paul Lulham (DHA Consultancy).

198 **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

199 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

Part B Minutes for Information

200 **DRAFT VEHICLE PARKING STANDARDS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Chairman introduced the report which invited Members to consider and comment on the revised draft version of the Vehicle Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which had been amended in light of Members' comments at the Local Plan Panel meeting on 25 July 2019, and included comments from some Parish Councils, and to agree the way forward for formal public consultation.

Members were invited to make comments on the revised draft version, and a summary of the points made are set out below:

Page 10 – Layout and Design

A Member considered that as well as charging points being set-out under Section 4, Parking for Electric Vehicles, they should also be included within the Layout and Design section. Mr Lulham explained that mention of charging points could be cross referenced to the design section. Members agreed with this amendment.

Page 16 – Car Barns, Car Ports and Garages

A Member suggested the wording in paragraph 60 be strengthened to read: 'Consideration **must** also be given.....'. Members agreed.

Page 24 – paragraph 98

A Member requested that paragraph 98 be amended to provide charging for **all** electric vehicles. Mr Lulham suggested that this be moved to paragraph 99 and the end of that sentence include ‘...and the necessary power supply’. He added that Table 2 could be amended so that it included a Passive Charging Point for each extra space for dwellings with on-plot parking. Mr Lulham added that extra detail could be included to make it clearer that there would be one active charging point per dwelling, but this would be a multi-point so that more than one vehicle could be charged at a time. Members agreed with this.

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A Member thanked DHA Consultancy for the work that had been done, and welcomed the table to the back of the report. He referred to paragraph 43 and wanted developers to put more thought into the type of materials that could be installed in parking areas. There was some discussion on the wording and Members agreed that the word ‘tarmac’ be removed, with the use of high quality materials encouraged and that they be permeable.

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A Member referred to paragraph 58 and considered **all** car barns, car ports and garages should be of a good design. Mr Lulham explained that Table 6 in the report was cross-referenced with paragraph 58, and he suggested the wording could be changed to reduce any ambiguity. Members agreed with this.

The Member highlighted the problems caused by commuter parking and considered this needed to be thought about when developments were designed, and the developer provide a car park for this. Mr Lulham suggested that a section be added regarding commuter parking in new developments. Members agreed with this.

Appendix A

A Member considered the use of ‘maximum’ parking standards for residential development in Town Centre and some Edge of Town Centre locations, as detailed on page 34 to be unreasonable. Mr Lulham outlined the reasons for the figures and explained that where it was not possible to park on the street, maximum standards could be justified. He added that there were very few 3 and 4 bedroom houses in town centres, and so this was a very rare situation. The Member considered two spaces were needed for a two bedroom property. The Development Manager advised that this was a case of ‘buyer beware’.

A Member suggested that smaller houses be built, with more parking spaces, and suggested ‘maximum’ be changed to ‘advisory’, and there be two spaces per 4 bedroom unit in town centres. Another Member considered ‘advisory’ to be too vague, and that the limited amount of parking was acceptable in London where there were good public transport systems, but not in Swale.

A Member suggested that the document went out to consultation to see what residents’ comments were in relation to the maximum/minimum figures.

In response to a question, Mr Lulham explained that in cases where there was a conversion of a large premises to dwellings, that residents not be given permits by default. This was another case of 'buyer beware', and many of these types of buildings were within walking distance from the town centre in any case.

A Member requested that there be electric charging points for bicycles in cycle stores. Members agreed with this.

The Chairman moved the following motion: That 'maximum' be changed to 'advisory', and there be two spaces per 4 bedroom unit in town centres (Appendix A – Residential Car Parking Standards). This was seconded by Councillor Benjamin Martin, and on being put to the vote was agreed by Members.

Resolved:

(1) That the SPD document as attached to the report, subject to the inclusion of changes set out in the above minute, be agreed for consultation purposes.

(2) That the timetable for formal adoption of the SPD as set out in the report be agreed.

201 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK PLAN

The Chairman invited Members to make suggestions for items for the Future Work Plan. A Member made the following suggestions:

- To look at a Borough-wide study of endangered species, with a register to indicate where their habitats were;
- To adopt a policy to ensure native species were specified and planting seasons were defined;
- To have a policy or statement to protect existing hedgerows, in the same way that individual trees were protected;
- To carry out desktop studies in order to protect the Borough's heritage assets;
- Developments that failed to deliver employment should be required to have additional parking for commuters;
- There should be a policy and conditions to ensure building standards were complied with; and
- Affordable homes in rural areas needed to be enhanced.

The Development Manager explained that there were already affordable housing policies in the Local Plan, and Parish Councils were involved with this work which included a housing needs study. These schemes took time, but the Parish Councils were at the forefront of the process.

A Member considered it would be beneficial to have a Member Training session on the Local Plan, and the Chairman suggested questions were submitted to officers prior to the training session. Other training topics were landscape design, and heritage.

Resolved:

- (1) That the suggestions above be noted.**

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel