

Agenda Item IMD1

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD 2016/01

TITLE	Considering the response of Wokingham Borough Council to the consultation on the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning & Highways
ON	04 January 2016
TIME	2pm
WARD	Shinfield North, Shinfield South and Swallowfield
DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment
VENUE	FF4B, Shute End Offices

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That development proposed through the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) produced by West Berkshire Council has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Planning and Highways:

- 1) approves the comments outlined in the report; and
- 2) that they be submitted as a formal response to the consultation on West Berkshire Council's Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

West Berkshire Council has published the Proposed Submission for their Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document. The Proposed Submission details sites which West Berkshire considers suitable for housing and as gypsy, traveller and travelling show people sites.

Since some of the sites are close to Wokingham Borough, it is important to respond so that any issues for Wokingham Borough Council associated with their development can be addressed.

Background:

West Berkshire Council is consulting on the Proposed Submission of their Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) from 9 November until 24 December 2015. A draft response based upon the contents of this report will be forwarded to West Berkshire Council as the Council's provisional position prior to 24 December 2015. This will be subject to confirmation once the Executive member has considered the item.

The Proposed Submission document details how the remaining homes will be allocated to meet the outstanding need to 2026 of their Core Strategy together with relevant development management policies for residential development. This includes sites for gypsy pitches and around 2,200 dwellings taking account of the spatial approach of their Core Strategy.

It is important to provide a response to the consultation so that those factors which could concern Wokingham Borough can be resolved. This includes addressing the impacts of housing and gypsy sites in West Berkshire close to Wokingham Borough's boundary for issues such as school place planning, transport, flood risk, etc.

Analysis of Issues:

The West Berkshire Core Strategy indicates that in the part of their district adjoining Wokingham Borough, sites for around 320 dwellings would need to be found between 2011 and 2026. Area Delivery Policy 6 of their Core Strategy (for the Kennet Valley between Thatcham and Reading/Grazeley) indicates that the two rural service centres of Burghfield Common and Mortimer (lying around 3km from the borough boundary) would be the focus of development in this part of their authority. The joint work of the local authorities (West Berks, Wokingham, Reading and Basingstoke & Deane) around the AWE (Atomic Weapons Establishment) sites with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) which informed West Berkshire Core Strategy (Policy CS8) indicates that the development then envisaged could be accommodated whilst complying with the ONR's advice regarding proposals near nuclear installations.

The Proposed Submission document suggests that homes in the Kennet Valley could be delivered in the following locations:

- a) two sites at Burghfield Common for approximately 160 dwellings
- b) 110 dwellings in Stratfield Mortimer to be identified through a Neighbourhood Plan
- c) One site at Woolhampton (11km from Wokingham) for approximately 30 dwellings.

This response is only concerned with the sites proposed in Burghfield Common. It is considered that further information on transport impacts should be provided to ensure that any issues associated with their development upon the borough can be resolved. Due to the distance of Woolhampton from the borough, it is not considered that this development is likely to affect the borough.

The consultation for the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan has just been received. Therefore, any comments will be made through the separate consultation.

The West Berkshire Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) set out the future need for Gypsy & Traveller site provisions within West Berkshire. The Housing

Site Allocations DPD allocates three sites, one of which is to meet the longer term needs.

The three sites are:

- a) New Stocks Farm, Paices Hill, Aldermaston for 8 permanent pitches
- b) Long Copse Farm, Enborne for 24 plots
- c) Clappers Farm, Beech Hill for up to 9 permanent plots.

The site proposed at Clappers Farm, Beech Hill directly adjoins the Wokingham Borough boundary at Shinfield parish. Some of the services and facilities discussed in the DPD that are near to the site, including shops and schools, are within Wokingham Borough. Wokingham Borough Council would welcome discussions in order to gain clarification on the following areas:

- The nearby school and its capacity, to ensure this has been taken into account.
- Where within the site plan the site is likely to be, as it is a large area (referred to as a 'broad area of search')

Wokingham Borough Council would therefore welcome clarification on the issues associated with development at Burghfield Common and Gypsy & Traveller allocation at Clappers Farm, Beech Hill.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Nil	Nil

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None anticipated

Cross-Council Implications

Decisions in West Berkshire on the location of sites for residential development and gypsy pitches could affect how the authority needs to resolve impacts on services such as transport, education, etc. within the borough.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Director – Finance and Resources	No comments
Monitoring Officer	No comments

Leader of the Council	I agree with the recommendations in this document. With developments so close to WBC boundaries it is vital that both councils work together.
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List of Background Papers
West Berkshire Proposed Submission Housing Site Allocations DPD
West Berkshire Core Strategy (2012)

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