

Chesham Town Council

Bill Richards
Town Clerk



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8th July 2019

Dear Councillor,

Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE to be held in the Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Chesham, on

MONDAY 15th JULY 2019 AT 7.30 PM

when the business set out below is proposed to be transacted:

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. To receive and confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17th June 2019.
4. To receive and consider the Minutes of the Chesham & District Transport Users' Group meeting of 18th June 2019.
5. To receive and consider planning applications received from the Chiltern District Council since the last meeting of the Committee and any planning applications and comments delegated to the Ward Members and Chairman of the Committee and to note previous planning comments submitted. **Plans are available for inspection on Chiltern District Council's website www.chiltern.gov.uk.**
6. To receive and consider decision notices received from Chiltern District Council since the last meeting of the Committee.
7. Draft Response to Local Plan
8. Information Items

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Richards'.

Bill Richards
Town Clerk

Publication Date: 8th July 2019.



Chesham Town Council

continued . . .



<u>Councillor</u> <u>Circulation</u>
Councillor Qaser Chaudhry
Councillor Peter Hudson
Councillor Tony Franks
Councillor Noel Brown
Councillor Roderick McCulloch
Councillor Diana Varley
Councillor Alan Bacon
Councillor Nick Southworth
Councillor Joseph Baum

CESHAM & DISTRICT TRANSPORT USERS' GROUP

Minutes of a Meeting held at
Chesham Town Hall on
Tuesday, 18th June 2019 at 7.30pm

Present:

Chris Emery (Chairman) (CE)
Alan Wallwork (Secretary) (AW)
Cllr. Nick Southworth (CTC rep) (NS)

In Attendance:

Ralph Adam (RA)
Dennis Fordham (DF)
Ralph Hilsdon (RH)
Georgina Lomnitz (GL)
Andrea Polden (AP)
Brian Wright (BW)

19/45 Apologies for Absence and Welcome

Apologies were received from Cllr. Rod McCulloch, Mark Brookes, Janice Gardner, Sandra Milton, Jenny Richardson and Maureen Winders.
The Chairman welcomed NS, DF and BW who were attending for the first time.

Action

19/46 Minutes of the Meeting of 14th May 2019

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th May 2019 were approved and signed.

19/47 Matters Arising

- The proposed visit to Chesham signal box, was still in hand. **AW**
- NS reported that apart from an acknowledgement, the Town Clerk had still not received anything from Redline Buses regarding short workings on certain return journeys on route 55 from Aylesbury. **NS**
- GL was monitoring the rubbish clearance at Jacob's Ladder. **CE**
- CE had submitted FOI requests regarding Chesham trains diverted to Amersham. **CE**
- CE would continue to make representations to TfL about the off-peak all-stations stopping pattern. **AW**
- AW would contact Andy Clarke regarding his attendance at the next Meeting. **AW**
- AW reported that the results of last year's Rural Bus Review were due to be published very soon and would ensure the Group received a copy. **AW**

19/48 Treasury Matters

There was nothing new to report under this heading.

19/49 Federation of Met Line User Committees Association (FOMLUC)

As there had been nothing heard from Anthony Wood about the recent increases in car park charges at Chesham and Chalfont & Latimer station car parks, which are operated by NCP on behalf of TfL, AW was asked to follow up on this. **AW**

19/50 Ongoing Operational Issues

The following issues were discussed:-

- AP reported that recently she was using a Chesham service just after the evening peak when everyone was asked to de-train at Chalfont and wait for a following service which had been turned into a Chesham service. Despite the delay, no reason was given nor any apology. CE reminded the Meeting that

Initials

he would follow up on such incidents provided they were reported to him in good time.

- RA again raised the lack of barriers at Chesham in the evening peak, which led to delays in exiting the station.
- RA suggested that Northbound trains bound for Chesham should not stop at Wembley, as passengers for that station already had an excellent service, whereas any passengers travelling to Chesham had to wait 30mins if they were unable to board due to overcrowding. CE explained that this had been raised on numerous occasions with LU / TfL who remained unsympathetic.
- BW expressed continuing concern at the lack of buses running up Eskdale Avenue to Chesham Grammar School. CE explained the reasoning and suggested the issue be raised again when Andy Clarke attends.
- The Meeting asked whether a local circular bus service could be instituted in Chesham along the lines of that in Princes Risborough. This was another matter worthy of discussion with Andy Clarke.

BW

AW

19/51 Local Bus Services

AW tabled an article from Cllr.Fayyaz in the June edition of "Your Chesham" in which he suggested that people write to him if they had any issues with local bus services as he had the ability to "sort them out".

AW had contacted him to point out that that was exactly the sort of thing which the Town Council set up Chesham TUG to do and it was unhelpful for him to publish articles and make promises of that kind without having any idea of the complexities of funding local bus services and timetabling issues.

AW had suggested that if he was so interested in local transport issues, he should attend our meetings, but given his failure to appear, members should draw their own conclusions.

RH indicated that we were lagging behind other countries in not having Apps providing detailed information on local bus services.

19/52 Step-Free Access at Amersham Station

The Meeting considered a Plan and Elevations recently obtained from LU / TfL and given the lack of clarity as to exactly what was proposed, AW would write to them again.

AW

It was noted that works appeared to be progressing now and RA indicated that if funding became a problem going forward, there was scope for an application to be made for funding from the EU.

19/53 Local Plan / Chesham Masterplan

CE gave a resume of the matters he had discussed at a meeting with Geoff Hobbs, TfL's Director of Public Transport Service Planning on 13th June 2019 with Tony Molesworth and Roger Smith from Chesham Masterplan in attendance. One of the suggestions Chesham Masterplan had was to have a transport hub on the Moor where an additional new station could be built, to allow easier interchanges with local bus services. The idea was being followed up with LU / TfL and a further meeting would be arranged with Peter Elliott the Head of TfL's Property Dept.

CE

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS 15TH JULY 2019

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|----|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) | PL/18/4819/HB | 18 Germain Street Chesham | ST MARY'S * |
|----|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
- Description:** Listed Building consent for: Replacement of rear sash window and installation of French doors, rendering of brickwork and blockwork garden boundary wall and replacement of boundary fence.
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- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|---|--------------------|
| 2) | PL/19/1882/OA | Land South of Woodley Hill Chesham | WATERSIDE * |
|----|----------------------|---|--------------------|
- Description:** Outline application for the erection of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with parking.
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- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 3) | PL/19/1915/SA | 14 Lansdowne Road Chesham | VALE * |
|----|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
- Description:** Application for certificate of lawfulness for proposed: Vehicular access
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- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 4) | PL/19/1918/FA | 23A Alma Road Chesham | VALE * |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
- Description:** Single storey side and rear extension
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- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 5) | PL/19/1926/FA | 5 The Spinney Chesham | HILLTOP * |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
- Description:** Loft conversion incorporating rear dormer window and front rooflights, replacement single storey side extension and garage conversion.
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- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 6) | PL/19/1930/SA | 166 Bois Moor Road Chesham | WATERSIDE * |
|----|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
- Description:** Application for certificate of lawfulness for proposed : Loft conversion incorporating rear dormer, front roof lights and internal alterations.
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- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| 7) | PL/19/1106/FA | Land Adj to Mapletree Farm, Botley Road Chesham | TOWNSEND * |
|----|----------------------|--|-------------------|
- Description:** Vehicular access and gate
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CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS 15TH JULY 2019

8)	PL/19/1880/FA	58 Church Street Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: Erection of Pergola			
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9)	PL/19/2014/FA	7 Chesterton Close Chesham	VALE *
Description: Single storey rear and side extension.			
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10)	PL/19/2026/FA	1 Crabbe Crescent Chesham	HILLTOP *
Description: Demolition of existing garage and conservatory, single storey rear extension including roof lantern. Loft conversion incorporating front and rear roof lights			
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11)	PL/19/20144/VRC	128 High Street Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: Variation of condition 2 of planning permission PL/19/1093/FA (change of use to tuition centre(Use Class D1)with ancillary retail use (Use Class A1) to allow amended opening hours			
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12)	PL/19/2046/FA	Unit 1, Esprit, 17 Asheridge Road Chesham	ASHERIDGE VALE
Description: Change of use of one commercial office (use class B1) to a single residential dwelling (Use Class C3) with off street parking and amenity space. The proposal is to create a two storey, two bedroom residential property. No external modifications or change			
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13)	PL/19/2018/FA	24A Red Lion Street (former Zion Hall) Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: Installation of solar panels to the south facing roof (retrospective)			
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14)	PL/19/2092/FA	17 High Street Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: Change of use of first floor to residential flat (Use Class C3) and enlargement of front windows			
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CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS 15TH JULY 2019

15)	PL/19/1906/KA	Botley House, East Street Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: 25% crown reduction of conifers and a linden tree within a conservation area			
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16)	PL/19/1984/FA	94 Sunnyside Road Chesham	TOWNSEND *
Description: Single storey side infill extension and additional window to rear elevation			
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17)	PL/19/2152/FA	Electrical Services Ltd, Misbourne Works, Chesham	WATERSIDE*
Description: Vehicular access along width of plot			
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18)	PL/19/2144/VRC	Springfield Road Industrial Estate Chesham	WATERSIDE *
Description: Variation of Condition 17 of planning permission CH/2018/0240/DE (Application for reserved matters following outline planning permission CH/2015/2020/OA for 55 dwellings with associated access, infrastructure and landscaping.) to allow amended entrance height and porch canopy to Block K, and submission of corrected plans of Block F and the site			
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19)	PL/19/2175/FA	126 High Street Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: Change of Use from office to Gym (Use class D2) and exterior signage.			
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20)	PL/19/2222/FA	Broadway Baptist Church Chesham	ST MARY'S *
Description: Single storey side extension, reconfiguration of the forecourt to allow for steps, seating planting and an arch with light, new access ramp and replacing the main entrance doors.			

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING DECISIONS 15th JULY 2019

1)	PL/18/3736/FA	The Meades 32, Germain Street Chesham	ST MARY'S
Description: Repair work to existing wall, introduction of opening with wooden access gates.			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect of this application			
Decision: Refuse Permission			
2)	PL/19/0977/FA	3 Cooks Yard, Watermeadow Chesham	ST MARY'S
Description: Roof light in vaulted ceiling above.			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
3)	PL/19/1055/FA	2 Nutkins Way Chesham	VALE
Description: Extending the existing vehicular access			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
4)	PL/19/1072/FA	7 Lowndes Avenue Chesham	LOWNDES
Description: Two storey rear extension, additional side windows and rooflights. Removal of chimney. New vehicular access			
Comments: The Committee raises its concern on the bulk of the extension and the possibility of the additional windows being overlooking to nearby properties			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
5)	PL/19/1098/FA	6 Pheasant Rise Chesham	WATERSIDE
Description: Single storey rear extension			
Comments: The Committee has NO OBJECTIONS to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
6)	PL/19/1061/FA	30 Upper Bellingdon Road Chesham	RIDGEWAY
Description: Two storey side extension			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING DECISIONS 15th JULY 2019

7)	PL/19/1341/FA	6 The Briad Chesham	HILLTOP
Description: Single storey rear infill extension with rooflights and additional side window			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
8)	PL/19/1376/FA	4 Chestnut Avenue Chesham	HILLTOP
Description: Single storey rear extension with a pitched roof with roof lights. Alteration of adjacent existing roof at rear. Garage conversion into habitable accommodation.			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
9)	PL/19/1398/FA	20 Hivings Park Chesham	RIDGEWAY
Description: Erection of a new dwelling			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Refuse Permission			
10)	PL/19/1412/FA	Hairdressing Salon, 2 High Street Chesham	ST MARY'S
Description: Change of use to mixed-use (Use class A1 and A4) (part retrospective)			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
11)	PL/19/1406/FA	Paradigm Housing Group Garages at William Moulder Court Chesham	RIDGEWAY
Description: Demolition of existing garages and erection of 3 dwellings with parking area and associated landscaping			
Comments: The Committee has NO OBJECTIONS to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			
12)	PL/19/1495/FA	The Clubhouse, East Street Chesham	ST MARY'S
Description: Infill single storey extension at side of building to form a self contained flat.			
Comments: The Committee has no comments to make in respect to this application			
Decision: Conditional Permission			

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING DECISIONS 15th JULY 2019

13)	PL/19/1865/SA	Electrical Services Ltd, Misbourne Works, Chesham	WATERSIDE
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Description: Application of certificate of lawfulness for proposed: Vehicular access

Comments: The Committee has no additional information in respect to this application.

Decision: Withdrawn

Report of the Officers to a meeting of the **PLANNING** Committee on
Monday 15th July 2019

AGENDA ITEM NO : 7 – RESPONSE TO LOCAL PLAN

Reporting Officer: Bill Richards (01494 583824)

Summary

1. To consider the draft response to the consultation in respect to the Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils on their joint Local Plan.

Background Information

2. At the Planning Committee meeting of the 17th June 2019, it was resolved that '*the Local Plan Working Party be delegated to submit the final response to the Local Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) consultation if so required by the Planning Authority's deadline for submissions.*' (Min No. 7)

Financial Implications

3. None pertinent to this report.

Strategic Objectives

4. Accords with the Council's strategic objective 4 - '*To consult with and represent the views and wishes of the citizens of Chesham*'.

Equality Act Implications

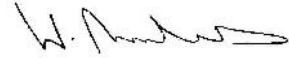
5. Non applicable.

Detailed Consideration

6. Notes of the meeting of the Local Plan Working Party on the 20th June (and initial meeting of the 14th June) are duly **attached**. As can be seen, the working party voiced several issues to be raised in terms of a possible Schedule of Amendments to be forwarded to Chiltern District Council and then onto the Planning Inspector. Officers were charged with compiling these suggestions and these were circulated to the working party. Following this, further amendments and revisions were proposed and included with the current version as **attached**.
7. Councillor Mrs MacBean has subsequently met a senior planning officer who suggested it would be advisable to complete the official response form as well as providing a supplementary letter as it may carry more weight with the Inspector.
8. The closing date for consultation responses is the 19th July 2019 and this Committee has already delegated the Local Plan Working Party to determine the final submission. However this is an opportunity for Members to add any additional comments they may feel appropriate to the consultation before the deadline.

Recommendation

That the Committee decides notes the proposed Local Plan consultation response and is invited to make any additional observations.



Bill Richards
Town Clerk

The town council is not objecting to the Local Plan as a whole, but we are concerned that we were not involved in discussions on the development of the plan prior to the public consultation period. As a result, we have severe reservations about particular parts of the Local Plan. Our key areas of concern are:

- The decision to identify a large Green Belt site for development, rather than higher density housing in the town centre, in line with the Chesham Masterplan.
- Key Economic Sites continue to be located in the town centre, as opposed to the Masterplan's vision of sites on the periphery of the town.
- Inadequate car parking provision in the town centre, which will damage the sustainability of the High Street.
- Retail allocation for Star Yard car park, which we are not confident will come forward.
- A weak policy for sustainable drainage which will fail to protect Chesham from flooding and pollution.
- That the Sustainability Appraisal identifies that the Local Plan will reduce local water quality and increase pressure on water resources.
- Inadequate planning for the increased demand for wastewater services.

We detail our concerns below:

Green Belt Site to the North East of Chesham

The town council does not believe that the identification of the site to the North East of Chesham is justified. It does not accord with the Government's own National Guidance on Green Belt development, namely that it needs to be sustainable; should not have an unacceptable effect on the Green Belt and should only be considered in 'exceptional circumstances':

The town council would challenge the suitability of the site in terms of sustainability and viability for the following reasons:

- The increased housing and residents would lead to a projected 400% increase in traffic delays at the White Hill roundabout already deemed at full capacity. These figures do not yet include the inevitable additional traffic increases caused by the services and sub-contractors supporting the construction of HS2, which will further exacerbate our traffic congestion. This is particularly pertinent due to the proximity of the depot servicing the end of the tunnel near the site of the former Annie Bailey's restaurant. Moreover, Berkhamstead Road and Broad Street are already designated an Air Quality Management Area and it is incumbent on all authorities under national law, including the District Council, to actively promote measures that will decrease pollution levels rather than increase them.
- The increase in housing would lead to a projected 200% increase in traffic delays at the Blucher Street roundabout already deemed at full capacity. Again, as a lead authority campaigning against HS2, it is vital that the District Council factor in the inevitable traffic servicing HS2.
- The lengthy queues and delays caused by the above (exacerbated by limited public transport and additional traffic trying to access the Metropolitan Line station in the town centre for trains to London) would discourage people from visiting the town centre. This in turn would have a direct impact on the economic well-being of many small businesses and undermine a lot of good historic and ongoing work designed to revitalise the High Street.

- The development would lead to the real possibility of potential flooding - Brushwood Road and The Spinney nearby already have a history of flooding issues - and the Chesham Flood Action Group is a key partner of the Bucks Strategic Flood Team and the Environment Agency, both of which are currently investigating flood risks attached to over 100 local properties.
- The fact that the capacity of Chesham Sewage Treatments Works can already be exceeded during intense rainfall or high groundwater events suggesting the additional housing stock would exacerbate this problem. It was confirmed by Thames Water at a public meeting in 2018 that they would need to potentially build an additional 20 waste storage tanks costing circa £20m in order to protect our chalk stream and natural environment, but there are no plans to increase capacity.
- Local abstraction for the public water supply is already near the licensed limits, with water having to be pumped into the area to meet demand. Multi-agency investigations have identified that the current level of abstraction from the local aquifer is having a detrimental impact on the River Chess. The Chess, an internationally rare chalk stream, now runs dry for extended periods of time over a significant portion of its Chesham stretch.
- The location of this site would result in the unacceptable absorption of the historic hamlet of Lye Green into Chesham. Lye Green includes three listed buildings, a historic farm and a pub of historic interest, which is also a community facility. Such absorption is in direct contravention of Green Belt policy.
- The type of housing that Chesham needs includes small starter units, affordable housing and smaller homes for the elderly where people are typically less mobile. None of these are suitable or appropriate on a site such as this on the edge of town and isolated from crucial support facilities.
- The lack of a complimentary employment or mixed use development in Chesham will result in the likelihood of more residents working out of town, thus adding to the pressures on existing transportation provision and being of no material economic benefit to Chesham.
- Releasing this land from the Green Belt would encroach on the countryside, leading to urban sprawl.
- The development would undoubtedly have an effect on local wildlife, specifically the nesting bird population, some of which are on the endangered species list. Those on the RSPB 'Red' List spotted at the site include: Cuckoo, Fieldfare, Grey Wagtail, House Sparrow, Mistle Thrush, Redwing, Song Thrush, Starling and Yellow Hammer. Moreover, other protected species such as the Red Kite and bats are to be found there and there is also long-established woodland, supporting a range of wildlife on the site.
- This development would dramatically and negatively affect the setting of the AONB which is immediately adjacent to the proposed site. The detrimental impact on the setting of the AONB is acknowledged within the evidence base.

In general terms, it is self-evident that such a development would also need massive infrastructure investment in services, including increased parking provision in the town centre; road improvements on all access routes where currently restricted; enhanced public transport; improved drainage and increased capacity of the sewage treatment works and new and enhanced health service provision. Moreover, in this Council's view, the proposal is inconsistent with national planning guidance as there being no "exceptional circumstances" to warrant its removal from Green Belt designation.

Rather than siting developments on the Green Belt, we propose as a deliverable alternative, increased housing density in the town centre, in line with the Chesham Masterplan produced by the Chesham Renaissance Community Interest Company (CRCIC). CRCIC's Masterplan consultation (November 2017 to January 2018) demonstrated that protection of the Green Belt was of key importance to the local community with 73% of consultees being opposed to development on Green Belt and in support of new dwellings in the centre of town. The town council is a founding member of CRCIC and strongly supports the principle of higher density housing in the town centre, as opposed to Green Belt Development.

Car Parking and Retail in the town centre:

The town council does not believe that the proposals for car parking and retail space are sound. In 2017, the SWOT analysis of Chesham town centre in Chiltern District Council's Retail and Leisure Study stated that Chesham is oversupplied with retail space. Retail floorspace projections in the Local Plan comes from the Town Centre Retail and Leisure Study (TCRLS) which is based on 2016 data. The 2019 Peer Review and Update of the TCRLS states that there is a limited need to allocate sites for comparison goods retail and food/beverage floorspace. It also says that January 2019 observations suggest the vacancy rate in Chesham town centre units has increased since the study was done. As vacant units can help to accommodate future growth, we believe that the amount of new floorspace should be revised downwards accordingly.

The 2017 SWOT analysis stated that there was inadequate parking for the centre and the railway station. The town council was in agreement with this analysis at the time and the problem will have become more severe over the last two years, particularly as Chesham Station is one of the top three fastest growing tube stations in terms of entry and exit figures. Back in 2017, the town council responded to the SWOT analysis that "Chesham is beginning to reach capacity at certain times and periods in its car parks and this needs consideration with the expected population". Whilst Policy SP EP3 refers to re-provisioning the car parks at Star Yard and the Station, there appears to be no plan to increase capacity, which would be even more essential should this additional retail space become occupied. We are very concerned at the loss of any town centre car parking and the impact that this will have on the viability of the High Street.

In line with our support for higher density housing in Chesham town centre, the town council questions the proposal for mixed retail and housing in the town centre as specified within the Local Plan. We believe that the proposed enterprise/retail allocations for Chesham will severely limit possible housing development and will impact on the town centre's independent retail sector, with no guarantee that large scale retailers will come forward.

Sustainability

The town council believes that Policy DMN8 on Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS) does not do enough to protect Chesham from flooding and water pollution. The Policy only requires management and maintenance plans for large scale SuDS. In Chesham, it is likely that many developments will be small scale, with similarly small-scale SuDS. If these aren't maintained and managed, it will lead to a build up of unmanaged (and very quickly non-functioning) SuDS across the town. As the town is in a steeply-sided valley, the majority of this will end up as polluted run-off at the valley bottom (the town centre) contributing to flooding of the town and pollution of the River Chess. Under Blue and Green Infrastructure, the Local Plan is committed to legal agreements for public space maintenance. The town council believes that similar agreements should be stipulated for management of SuDS.

The Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan appears to identify that the plan is unsound with respect to Policy DM NP6. This Policy states that development will only be permitted if it does not adversely affect the character, flow potential and water quality of rivers. The Sustainable Appraisal says that “The Local Plan would likely lead to a reduction in local water quality” and that “The large quantity of development proposed in the Local Plan would be likely to increase pressures on water resources”. This indicates that insufficient protection measures have been put in place within the plan to facilitate development without damage to our water environment.

Infrastructure Delivery

The town council is very concerned as to how Chesham Sewage Treatment Works (CSTW) will cope with the increased population in the area that it serves (which goes beyond Chesham). The Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (DIDP) published in June 2019 seems to rely on the Chesham Drainage Strategy Stage One. Stage One only refers up to 2017. This document states that the (then proposed) 2018 upgrade to the CSTW will cater for the projected population growth in the catchment to a 2026 design horizon, indicating that insufficient plans are included with the Local Plan to provide capacity for the whole duration of the Local Plan. The DIDP says that CSTW may need improvements to cope with the strategic allocation for Chesham, but is not definitive about this. It should also be borne in mind that CSTW does not just deal with wastewater from Chesham, but from a broader catchment including the villages of Bellingdon, Botley, Buckland Common, Chartridge, Chesham Bois, Cholesbury, Bovington and Flaunden. What plans are in place to cope with increased housing at these sites? The town council is concerned that there is no reference to wastewater in policy BP SP2 dealing with the site at the north-east of Chesham, whereas flooding, air quality, roads and health provision are included.

Economic Sites

The Key Economic Sites for Chesham are all town centre based, which will exacerbate problems with traffic and air quality; all three are located just off the Air Quality Management Area. The Higham Mead site is particularly unsuited for employment use as it is bounded by high density housing, with poor access. The Strategic Economic Sites are also problematic; Chess Business Park is at capacity and the Asheridge Road site will lose a very large chunk of its area to housing as a result of planning consent already granted on the old Alcan site. The town council is supportive of the CRIC’s position in the Masterplan that employment sites should be located at the edge of town and the Council understands that deliverable sites have been identified.

Social Housing

The town council is supportive of social housing as well as affordable housing, but would like to take the opportunity to emphasise that within a district-wide plan, such housing should be spread across Chiltern and South Bucks and not simply located in urban areas like Chesham.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The town council is supportive of the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Local Plan Working Party Meeting – 14 June 2019

Held at Chesham Town Council Offices at 14.30

Present: Cllrs Alan Bacon (AB), Noel Brown (NB), Jane MacBean (JM), Roderick McCulloch (RM) and Nick Southworth (NSo) - Chesham Town Council.

Bill Richards (BR) - Town Clerk.

Kathryn Graves (KG) – Policy and Projects Officer.

Roger Smith (RS) – Chesham Renaissance Community Interest Company.

Neil Salisbury (NSa) – CPRE.

Apologies: Cllrs Joseph Baum and Diana Varley

1. Election of Chairman

It was agreed that NB, as Chairman of the Council's Planning Committee, be Chair of this and future Local Plan Working Party meeting

2. Declarations of Interest

AB, JM and NS declared personal interests as Members of Chiltern District Council

3. Purpose of Meeting

It was noted that the purpose of the Local Plan WP reconvening was to recommend a response from the Council to the revised Local Plan consultation running until the 19th July 2019.

4. Revised Local Plan

BR opened the discussion by advising that he had had a meeting with two officers from Chiltern and South Bucks Planning team who had emphasised the need for the response to be focussed on the 'legality' and 'soundness' of the revised Local Plan rather than a general response. They had also suggested that any objections should be complimented with alternative practical proposals rather a flat rejection of potential sites within the plan.

The Local Plan WP agreed that it would probably be unhelpful and potentially self-defeating to flatly object to the Plan as the lack of such a framework would potentially allow for unfettered development (though NSa suggested that, in terms of the Green Belt, the current National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF – offered more protection currently than the draft plan). It was also agreed that the 'Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan reg19' Response Form for soundness and compliance, was somewhat prescriptive and, while, needing to be completed, the Local Plan WP should also submit additional comments.

With this in mind, the following was put forward as discussion points:

- RS questioned the soundness in terms of consultation and, particularly, the consultation process with CTC a statutory consultee.
- RS also reminded the other members that the NPPF has stated that a Local Plan has to ensure '*sufficient provision for:*
a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;

*b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure);
and
d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.'*

He suggested that these topics be the focus for the response

- Following on from this, the Working Party agreed to raise concerns on the proposed Greenbelt development set against the Council's original position to support high density town centre development
- To raise concerns on the lack of infrastructure
- To query the allocation for retail sites and its potential not to allow suitable housing/mixed use development here
- To consider the desirability of retaining current and having additional off-street parking provision
- The loss or employment sites and the appropriateness of sites proposed.

It was agreed engaging CDC officers was essential and JM advised that officers have informed her that material changes could be incorporated even at this stage as they had admitted certain basic information such as flood alleviation proposals had been omitted due to recent developments.

NB asked whether officers could gather and circulate as much pertinent information as possible in relation to Chesham in respect of the Plan both historically and from the revised Plan itself as not all the members of this group may be privy to it.

It was proposed and agreed that it would be sensible to request from the Council's Planning Committee that this Working Party be granted delegated authority to respond directly to the consultation if necessary in light of the tight timetable.

5. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Consultation

All agreed that the Council should support this though RS suggested that with widely differing house prices across the district, it would be advantageous to have a differential rate applied. JM said she thought this may be happening/had happened and would check.

6. Neighbourhood Plan

The Working Party briefly discussed the desirability of the Council developing a Neighbourhood Plan. There was general consensus that this would be a positive step to take but it was agreed that the response to the Local Plan was the priority at the moment.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the Working Party ought to meet swiftly to begin drafting a response so it was agreed to meet on **Thursday 20th June at 7pm**. The Clerk was requested to invite a CDC officer along to the meeting if possible.

Bill Richards - Town Clerk

Local Plan Working Party Meeting – 20 June 2019

Held at Chesham Town Council Offices at 19.00

Present: Cllrs Alan Bacon (AB), Joseph Baum (JB), Jane MacBean (JM), Roderick McCulloch (RM) and Nick Southworth (NSo) - Chesham Town Council.

Bill Richards (BR) - Town Clerk.

Kathryn Graves (KG) - Policy and Projects Officer.

Roger Smith (RS) - Chesham Renaissance Community Interest Company.

Neil Salisbury (NSa) - CPRE.

Apologies: Cllrs Noel Brown and Diana Varley

1. Purpose of Meeting

To begin formulating a response to the Local Plan consultation based on the main themes emanating from the initial meeting held on the 14th June.

2. Revised Local Plan

The Working Party agreed on a two-fold response to the Local Plan consultation, firstly by completing the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan reg19 Response Form without formally stating that the Plan itself was unsound (**though the necessity to undertake this tbc**) and, more importantly, to devise an additional response which would hopefully be accepted by CDC Planning Officers as additional schedules of amendments for the Planning Inspector.

General Responses for Additional Schedule of Amendments

- **GREENBELT**

Revisit the Council's response to the Green Belt Preferred Options consultation and re-emphasise the salient points made there. Also highlight the proximity of AONB. Specifically in respect to the proposed allocation north-west of Chesham, state that the Masterplan (supported by Council and the public) has proposed that the housing allocation could and should be accommodated in the town centre. There was broad agreement on the need to oppose this development though JM advised that if the Plan was rejected purely on reasons of the Green Belt, the town may be vulnerable to developers in other areas.

(RS asked JM to check whether the proposed 500 houses for the Botley Road area were additional to or instead of the possible 450 homes for the town centre)

- **HOUSING**

As above, emphasise the work that has gone into the Masterplan and the public support that has gone behind the concept of high density, town centre housing provision. Highlight that, while the CDC planners' original lack of enthusiasm of the Masterplan was that it was 'not tested', the same could largely be applied to the Local Plan itself in terms of housing and its failure to address many infrastructure issues, particularly in respect to the proposed Botley Road site.

If the high density town centre housing plan is to become a reality, the proposal for mixed retail and housing in the Plan needs to be questioned. The idea of building residential flats on retail outlets is likely to be less than attractive for developers.

Reiterate the Council's support for social housing as well as 'affordable' housing but remind CDC that this is a districtwide plan and such housing should be spread across Chiltern and South Bucks and not simply located in urban areas like Chesham.

Seek clarification on the District Council's powers to undertake Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) through its own 'property company'. (JM to seek clarification with CDC officers).

- **RETAIL**

Highlight that in 2017 CDC produced a Retail and Leisure Study. The analysis stated that Chesham is oversupplied with retail space. Retail floorspace projections in the Local Plan come from the Town Centre Retail and Leisure Study (TCRLS) which is based on 2016 data. The 2019 Peer Review and Update of the TCRLS stated that there is a limited need to allocate sites for comparison goods retail and food/beverage floorspace in the short/medium term – particularly allowing for the reoccupation of vacant floorspace. It also says that January 2019 observations suggest the vacancy rate in Chesham town centre units has increased since the study was done. As vacant units can help to accommodate future growth, should the amount of new floorspace be revised downwards?

Question particularly the suitability of the proposed enterprise/retail allocations for Chesham. As well as severely limiting possible housing development for reasons outlined above, will impact on the town centre's independent retail sector with no guarantee that large scale retailers will come forward.

The matter of car-parking remains very important to the town centre's profitability and sustainability. The Plan talks of the 'reprovision of both Star Yard and Coal Yard/Station Car Park' but without any further detail. The commitment to a multi-storey car-park is essential.

- **STRATEGIC ECONOMIC SITES**

Emphasise the unsuitability of town centre sites listed. Mention the traffic problems and the air Quality issues.

Mention the Chess Business Park is to all intents and purposes at capacity and the Asheridge Road site a concern due to housing development.

Return to the stated position in the Masterplan of the desirability of employment sites at the edge of the town.

- **SUSTAINABILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Highlight that the Sustainable Drainage solutions SuDS - Policy DMNP8 (p. 142) - states that management and maintenance plans are required for large scale SuDS only. It's likely that in Chesham many developments will be small scale, with similarly small SuDS; if these aren't maintained and managed, it will lead to a build-up of unmanaged surface water across the town. As the town is in a steeply-sided valley, the majority of this will end up at the valley bottom (town centre) contributing to flooding. Under Blue and Green Infrastructure it states that legal agreements should be in place for public space maintenance – why aren't legal agreements required to ensure proper maintenance of SuDS?

Highlight that within the Sustainability Appraisal of the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan, it is stated on page 126 that: “*The Local Plan would likely lead to a reduction in local water quality*” and “*The large quantity of development proposed in the Local Plan would be likely to increase pressures on water resources*”. This contradicts Policy DM NP6 (p. 139 of main document) that development will only be permitted if it does not adversely affect the character, flow potential and water quality of rivers. This leads to concerns about the soundness of the plan if Policy DM NP6 has been identified as being unachievable.

Raise concerns that for Chesham Sewage Treatment Works (CSTW) the Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (**June 2019**) refers to the Chesham Drainage Strategy Stage One, but this only refers up to 2017. The Stage One document states that the proposed 2018 upgrade to the CSTW will cater for the projected population growth in the catchment to a 2026 design horizon. Indicating that more work is required to provide capacity for the duration of the Local Plan. The DIDP (June 2019) says that CSTW MAY need improvements to cope with the strategic allocation (Lye Green) for Chesham, but is not definitive about this.

Reiterate the infrastructure issues mentioned in the Green Belt consultation response which remain pertinent for much of the town.

3. Date of Next Meeting

Following JMs clarification with CDC planning officers on queries raised above, BR and KG to devise a draft response to encapsulate the points and circulate to all. In the interim, working party members encouraged to forward any other thoughts to officers. While it is hoped much could be agreed electronically, the evening of **Monday 1st July (7pm)** was agreed to be reserved in case the working party felt it needed to meet.

Bill Richards
Town Clerk