



Document Reference
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East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Policies for Swaffham Bulbeck

November 2017

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1. Introduction and Policy Context

Introduction

- 1.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council is reviewing its Local Plan, which was last adopted in April 2015. The new Local Plan, which is hoped to be adopted in 2018, will provide a framework for development in the district until 2036 and beyond.
- 1.2 This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for policies relating specifically to the village of Swaffham Bulbeck, including:
 - Swaffham Bulbeck1: Swaffham Bulbeck’s Local Character and Facilities
 - Swaffham Bulbeck2: Infrastructure and Community Facilities
 - Swaffham Bulbeck3: Preferred allocation sites
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide justification for the inclusion of specific policies relating to an individual settlement, and should be read alongside other Local Plan evidence documents. For example, a detailed reasoning of the settlement’s position in the Settlement Hierarchy is contained in the Settlement Hierarchy report. For the findings of the assessment of individual sites, please refer to the Site Assessment Evidence Report Update 2017.
- 1.4 Collectively, the policies attempt to provide a coherent strategy for the settlement, over the plan period, which meets the area’s needs and reflects the views of the community.

National policy

- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was introduced in 2014 which offers ‘live’ government guidance.
- 1.6 Through its Core Planning Principles, the NPPF indicates that planning should:

“...take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it...”
- 1.7 The emerging Local Plan recognises the differing roles and characters of different areas through providing a suite of bespoke policies, specific to each settlement in the district. These policies are set out in individual settlement chapters, in Section 7: Policies for Places.
- 1.8 In paragraph 157, the NPPF sets out a series of requirements which Local Plans should fulfil. The following requirements are considered relevant to the settlement chapters contained within Section 7:

“...Crucially, Local Plans should:

...be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area...

...not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives...

...plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of this Framework...

...be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date...

...allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land, bringing forward new land where necessary, and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate...”

- 1.9 In response to these requirements, Section 7 proposes the inclusion of policies relating to each settlement’s local character, infrastructure and facilities. Site allocations for a range of land uses are proposed for many settlements.

2 Swaffham Bulbeck in context

- 2.1 Swaffham Bulbeck is located between Cambridge and Newmarket. Due to its population size and good range of services, the Settlement Hierarchy identifies Swaffham Bulbeck as a ‘medium’ village.
- 2.2 As a medium village, it is considered that Swaffham Bulbeck offers the potential to accommodate growth, thereby contributing to meeting the development needs of the area. The overall scale of growth is influenced by the village’s position in the Settlement Hierarchy, the availability of suitable sites, and the presence of environmental and/or infrastructure constraints.

3 Local Plan Policy: Further Draft

- 3.1 A Call for Sites exercise was held as part of the Preliminary Draft Local Plan consultation, during which a number of site submissions were received for Swaffham Bulbeck. The site submissions were assessed and sites considered suitable for development were proposed for allocation.
- 3.2 The Swaffham Bulbeck chapter of the Further Draft Local Plan proposed five draft policies:
- 3.3 Policy *Swaffham Bulbeck1: Swaffham Bulbeck’s Local Character and Facilities* seeks to ensure development proposals maintain Swaffham Bulbeck’s built character and maintain the village’s facilities expanding on them where possible.
- 3.4 Policy *Swaffham Bulbeck2: Infrastructure and Community Facilities* sets out the settlement’s priorities in terms of infrastructure and facilities.

- 3.5 The content of the policies was informed by the Local Plan 2015, engagement with the Parish Council (in 2016), and responses to the Preliminary Draft Local Plan consultation (where applicable).
- 3.6 Policy *Swaffham Bulbeck3: Preferred Allocation Sites* identified two site allocations:
- SWB.H1 – Heath Road and Quarry Lane (38 dwellings);
 - SWB.H2 – Heath Road (18 dwellings);
- 3.7 A number of other site submissions were assessed, but each was found to be not suitable for allocation. The results of the site assessment are presented in the *Site Assessment Report Update 2017*.
- 3.8 Swaffham Bulbeck has a Development Envelope to define the boundary of the built up area and extent of the countryside. A change to Swaffham Bulbeck's Development Envelope was proposed during the Preliminary Draft Local Plan consultation. This change was in connection with site allocation SWB.H1. The village boundary will be changed when this site is allocated in the adopted Local Plan.
- 3.9 In summary, the following comments were received during the Further Draft Local Plan consultation (January – February 2017) in response Swaffham Bulbeck draft policies:

Overarching Issues/Concerns

- The village is in part bounded by the Cambridge Green belt.
- The policy should clearly state what direct impacts a development is likely to have and make clear which infrastructure should be funded from CIL payments.
- The draft plan does not use the results of the hierarchy to distribute growth.
- The requirements to enhance the conservation area and listed buildings and their settings should be included in Policy Swaffham Bulbeck 3 and Swaffham Bulbeck 4.

Infrastructure and Other constraints

- Support to improvement of cycle paths and any improvements to access across the river Cam to Waterbeach areas.
- Swaffham Bulbeck1 policy should include the village green known as The Denny.
- Swaffham Bulbeck2 policy should include cemetery extension. A pedestrian crossing from The Denny to Station Road has now been provided, negating this requirement.
- The junction between High Street and Quarry Lane should be improved to enable sensible sight lines.
- Speed limit should be reduced to 20mph in High Street.
- The primary school cannot be expanded.
- Bottisham VC secondary school is being expanded.
- The necessary surface water accommodation should be put in place prior to the development of the site to protect lands and properties from increased flood risk.

Site Specific Comments

SWB.H1 Land off Heath Rd and Quarry Lane

- Development will have impact on green corridor, listed buildings, adjoining Conservation areas the Denny Scheduled Monument site. Limit to 40 dwellings.
- Not suitable for development- considered as an area of best landscape value, site too large, and development will affect key views of the village.

- Vehicle access via Quarry Lane and protect major open corridor space.
- The site is available for immediate development, will come forward as CLT development, could provide extension to cemetery, additional village car parking and provide affordable housing.

SWB.H2 Land fronting Heath Rd

- Support for development on site, should improve pedestrian and cycle access.
- There are two grade II listed buildings (Hillside Cottage and Hillside House) to the east of the site. Any development of this site will need to conserve and where opportunities arise enhance listed buildings and their settings.

New Site(s) suggested

- Site/27/06 Hillside Mill
- Site/27/07 Land north of Station Rd
- Site/27/08 Land north of Green Bank Rd

4 Local Plan Policy: Proposed Submission

- 4.1 Policy Swaffham Bulbeck2 has been amended for the Proposed Submission Local Plan by deleting pedestrian crossing from the Denny to the High Street as it has been implemented. The request for an extension to the cemetery can be included in the response to the planning application when submitted. Surface water treatment and any other site specific requirements can be discussed when the concept plan is prepared for the site. Concept plan is one of the requirements for this site listed in policy Swaffham Bulbeck4.
- 4.2 Policy Swaffham Bulbeck3 has been amended as follows:
- SWB.H3 – Hillside Mill, Quarry Lane, has been added, for reasons set out in the Site Assessment Report. .
- 4.3 All comments relating to new and previously rejected sites were carefully considered, with full details as to the assessment of such sites available in the Site Assessment Report.
- 4.4 Policy Swaffham Bulbeck4 has been amended with an additional bullet point to enhance the conservation area and settings of nearby listed buildings. The comments and concerns expressed about the development of this are addressed in the policy and no further modifications are considered necessary.
- 4.5 Policy Swaffham Bulbeck5 has been amended with an additional bullet point to protect settings of nearby listed buildings in light of the comments made about the development of this site.
- 4.6 Policy Swaffham Bulbeck6 has been introduced for the Proposed Submission Local Plan, linked to the inclusion of the new site at Hillside Mill, Quarry Lane. The bespoke policy is needed due to the particular circumstances and issues relating to this site.

5 Alternative Reasonable Options

- 5.1 Option 1 is the preferred policy approach for Swaffham Bulbeck, comprising the five policies as set out.
- 5.2 Option 2 would be to not include either Policies Swaffham Bulbeck1 or 2, but these are rejected on the basis that they both give locally specific policy matters for the settlement, which would be lacking without such a policy.
- 5.3 Option 3 would be to include alternative site allocations. Such alternatives are assessed in both the Sustainability Appraisal report and the Site Assessment Report.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed Swaffham Bulbeck related policies as contained in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan (November 2017). It is hoped that this report helps demonstrate how we have responded to comments received during the previous Draft consultations, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.