

# Cabinet



St Edmundsbury  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Recommendations of the Sustainable Development Working Party: 8 October 2015</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>CAB/SE/15/067</b>	
<b>Report to and dates:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	20 October 2015
	<b>Extraordinary Council</b>	17 November 2015 <i>(where applicable)</i>
<b>Portfolio holder:</b>	Alaric Pugh Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth <b>Tel:</b> 07930 460899 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:alaric.pugh@stedsbc.gov.uk">alaric.pugh@stedsbc.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Chairman of the Working Party:</b>	Alaric Pugh Sustainable Development Working Party <b>Tel:</b> 07930 460899 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:alaric.pugh@stedsbc.gov.uk">alaric.pugh@stedsbc.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Steven Wood Head of Planning and Growth <b>Tel:</b> 01284 757306 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:steven.wood@westsuffolk.gov.uk">steven.wood@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	On 8 October 2015, the Sustainable Development Working Party considered the following substantive items of business:  (1) Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson's Field: Development Brief; and  (2) Park Farm, Ingham: Concept Statement.	

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that:</b>  <b>(1) <u>Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson’s Field: Development Brief</u></b>  <b>subject to the approval of Full Council, the draft Development Brief for the Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson’s Field, as contained in Appendix A to Report No: SDW/SE/15/012, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance.</b>  <b>(2) <u>Park Farm, Ingham: Concept Statement</u></b>  <b>the draft Concept Statement for Park Farm, Ingham, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report SDW/SE/15/013, be approved for public consultation.</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>  <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b>do not</b> apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> As one is a full Council decision, and the other is for consultation only.
<i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within <b>48 hours</b> and cannot be actioned until <b>five clear working days of the publication of the decision</b> have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>	
<b>Consultation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013</li> </ul>
<b>Implications:</b>	
<i>Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i>	See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013
<i>Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i>	See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013
<i>Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i>	See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013
<i>Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i>	See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013
<i>Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? If yes, please give details</i>	See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013

<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
See Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013			
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		(1) Barningham (2) Fornham, Pakenham and Risby	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		<a href="#">Sustainable Development Working Party: 8 October 2015</a> Reports: SDW/SE/15/012 to 013	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		None	

---

## **Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)**

### **1. Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson's Field: Development Brief (Report No: SDW/SE/15/012)**

1.1 Policy RV21 of the adopted Rural Vision 2031 document sets out that 3.25 hectares of land are allocated for residential, community and / or village hall facilities and open space on land to the south of Hopton. The Policy states that applications for planning permission on the site will only be determined once the development brief has been adopted by the local planning authority. Furthermore it sets out that the indicative capacity of the site is for 25 dwellings. However, if the new community and/ or village hall facilities were to be developed on the site of the existing village hall and playing field, a higher level of housing may be feasible, provided that appropriate contributions were secured towards the delivery of the new facilities. The Development Brief should set out the following:

- (i) Final housing numbers
- (ii) Land available for development
- (iii) Location and types of uses on site
- (iv) Access arrangements
- (v) Design and landscaping
- (vi) Proposal for influencing recreation in the surrounding area, to avoid a damaging increase in visitors to the Waveney/Little Ouse Valley Fens SAC.

1.2 The draft Development Brief, incorporating post-public consultation amendments was attached as [Appendix A to Report No: SDW/SE/15/012](#) and has been prepared by consultants acting on behalf of the landowner. It proposes 'around 37 dwellings' which means on face value an amount of development that is significantly in excess of the capacity of the site and contrary to planning policy. However the policy states that;

*'if new community and or village hall facilities were to be developed on the site of the existing village hall and playing field, a higher level of housing may be feasible, provided that appropriate contributions were secured towards the delivery of the new facilities'.*

1.3 The parish have for many years had aspirations to expand village hall provision. In this instance the developers have stated that they are seeking to give the Parish Council a sum of money towards enhanced village facilities with the delivery of 37 residential dwellings (with 30% being affordable). The Parish Council have stated that they feel that this is an appropriate sum of money. The Council's Quantity Surveyors have confirmed that they believe that this sum could provide a community centre extension of circa 125 – 175m<sup>2</sup> which is broadly the size of village hall extension that has been explored. This sum is considered to be an 'appropriate contribution' and satisfies officers that the additional dwellings are acceptable. The Development Brief would not secure this sum and as such no figure is quoted in the Development Brief. It would be for a Section 106 agreement with a future planning application to secure the payment.

- 1.4 The Parish Council and many residents within the village are extremely keen for the village to retain its GP Surgery. The draft Development Brief allocates a site for a new GP surgery. This would be located directly to the east of the school playing field and south of the village hall and car park on the existing village playing field. Discussions are ongoing between the GP's, NHS England and the Village Trust on the potential move of the surgery. The decision on this will be made later this year or early next year. The draft Development Brief allocates a site, access arrangements and parking for a new surgery and that is all it is required to do.
- 1.5 The draft Development Brief sets out that the doctor's car park to the south of the village hall site will only be accessible from the new access onto Bury Road. A new car park which would be available to both the doctors surgery, parents for the school and the village hall is proposed to the south of the village hall which would be accessed from the existing Thelnetham Road access and existing car park for the village hall. The only link between the residential site and the village hall site would be a pedestrian cycle link. Cars would not be able to drive directly from one site to the other. This arrangement and the additional car parking is considered acceptable from the Highway Authority's perspective.
- 1.6 The primary purpose for the allocation requiring a Development Brief is because the site is located within 400metres of the Weston Fen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is a component of Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and as such the allocation has the potential to cause harm to this European Designation (SAC). The Council during the drafting of the Rural Vision 2031 document engaged with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Natural England and whilst both these organisations did not object to the allocation, the Policy requirement for a Development Brief was because these two separate bodies highlighted that appropriate mitigation must be understood and secured which would ensure that no material harm to the SSSI or SAC occurred as a result of the residential development. To overcome recreational harm e.g. dog walking the draft Development Brief identifies in detail a walking route away from The Fen. The draft Development Brief sets out that Sustainable Urban Drainage principles will be used to ensure the volume of water entering the SAC is not likely to change and the quality of water leaving the site is still at acceptable standards. The Council has carried out an Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening for the draft Development Brief to assess the mitigation and determine if this is sufficient to protect The Fen. The Council has consulted Natural England on this HRA and they have confirmed that owing to the mitigation measures, as detailed above ,they have no objection to the Council adopting the draft Development Brief as informal planning guidance.
- 1.7 The scheme results in the loss of playing field/ public open space. However the scheme proposes a new significantly larger playing field very close to the existing provision which more than adequately replaces the loss of the existing playing field and creates additional open space which more than serves the proposed residential scheme.
- 1.8 The adopted policy states that a new scheme should allow for the potential expansion of the primary school. This scheme does not do that. However Suffolk County Council at the time of the drafting of the Rural Vision 2031

considered that necessary and that position has now changed. The County Council have confirmed that they do not object to the school not being able to expand as shown in the draft Development Brief.

- 1.9 Lastly, the scheme highlights areas where strategic landscaping is necessary. Of particular note is the southern boundary where strategic landscaping is concerned. This boundary is important because it will become the new edge to the village and views from the countryside into the residential development will be particularly sensitive.
- 1.10 Public consultation on the draft Development Brief was carried out in summer/autumn 2014. A request has been made for the Council to adopt the draft Development Brief as informal planning guidance.
- 1.11 The Development Brief Statement of Community Involvement was attached as [Appendix B to Report No: SDW/SE/15/012](#). Officers are satisfied that the draft Development Brief has broadly been prepared in accordance with the Vision 2031 Development Plan document, Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the Council's Protocol for Preparing Development Briefs.
- 1.12 Hopton is located in the Borough's Barningham Ward and the County Council's Blackthorpe Division. Both the respective Ward Member and the County Councillor were in attendance at the meeting and expressed support for the content of the Development Brief.

## **2. Park Farm, Ingham: Concept Statement (Report No: SDW/SE/15/013)**

- 2.1 The adopted Rural Vision 2031 Local Plan document identifies 86 hectares of land at Park Farm, Ingham for leisure, recreation and tourism development. The site is currently a sand and gravel quarry which has recently completed extraction activities and is being restored to arable farmland, species rich grassland and a series of open water lakes. The Rural Vision 2031 Local Plan document identifies that the restoration has brought forward the opportunity for the creation of recreational, leisure and tourism facilities serving both the locality and the wider area.
- 2.2 The allocation will not only bring economic and community benefits to the area, but it will also help mitigate potential effects on the Breckland Special protection Area (SPA) by providing an alternative visitor attraction that can absorb the pressure of visitors to the area.
- 2.3 The policy requires the prior preparation and adoption of a masterplan for the site before applications for planning permission will be determined. The masterplan will be based upon a Concept Statement approved by the Council.
- 2.4 A draft Concept Statement for the site has been prepared for public consultation by a consultant acting on behalf of the landowner and in partnership with Officers of the Council.
- 2.5 The adopted protocol covering the preparation of Concept Statements requires Cabinet's approval to undertake consultation. The consultation would involve those individuals and organisations normally consulted as part of the planning

application process. At the end of the consultation period, any changes required to the draft would be made prior to the Council formally approving it as planning guidance. At that stage the Concept Statement can be used to inform the preparation of a masterplan for the site.

- 2.6 The site is located to the north of Bury St Edmunds between the villages of Fornham St Martin, Culford and Ingham. It is bound by roads on three sides, with the A134 to the east, the B1106 to the west and an unclassified County Highway to the north. It is a former quarry which was used for the extraction of sand and gravel that is now being restored. Tree belts which were planted within and around the area in the late 1980's to help screen extraction activities have now matured.
- 2.7 Vehicular access to the site is achieved from the unclassified road to the north via a junction with the A134 which was upgraded to accommodate the vehicles associated with mineral extraction activities. There is currently no public access to the land and no footpaths cross the site.
- 2.8 Attached as [Appendix 1 to Report No: SDW/SE/15/013](#) is the draft Concept Statement for the allocated site. The statement sets out the planning issues and constraints and provides guidance as to what will need to be addressed in the subsequent Masterplan.
- 2.9 Subject to the draft Concept statement being approved, public consultation will take place for a four week period. The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. All responses to the consultation exercise will be reported back to the Working Party and, if necessary, a modified version of the document will be put forward for final adoption by the Council as planning guidance.