

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

EXAMINATION HEARINGS

HOMEWORK NOTE 26

MATTER 15: PLACES AND SITES (POLICIES P1 – P15)

ISSUE 2: ARE THE PLAN'S POLICIES FOR THE SPECIFIC PLACES AND SITES WITHIN THE DISTRICT JUSTIFIED, EFFECTIVE AND CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL POLICY; AND ARE THE SPECIFIC SITE ALLOCATIONS THEY INCLUDE JUSTIFIED AND EFFECTIVE

HW26: POLICY P 4 ONGAR

FOUR WANTZ ROUNDABOUT

1. The Council provides this note which concerns Matter 15, Issue 2 (Policy P 4 – Ongar) and the Inspector's request that the Council consider the implications of Essex County Council's decision not to take forward the A414 Chelmsford to Harlow Route Based Strategy ("A414 RBS") highways improvement scheme, which included the junction improvements at the Four Wantz roundabout.
2. At the Examination hearing on 15 May 2019, Mr David Sprunt from Essex County Council ("ECC") advised the Inspector that, following a review of its budget, ECC had "*recently*" decided that the A414 RBS was one of a number of highway schemes that "*are no longer being taken forward at this time. So developments within Ongar would have to now contribute to the funding of a scheme at the Four Wantz roundabout*". In the interests of

fairness, the Inspector did not pursue the matter further at hearing and asked the Council to address the matter in writing.

3. Following the hearing on 15 May 2019, the Council has confirmed that the 'Essex County Council Organisational Plan and Budget 2019/20' was approved at a Full Council meeting held on 12 February 2019. The review of the County Council's budget resulting in the A414 RBS and other major highway scheme being removed from its Capital Programme was undertaken in the months prior to the County Council formally approving its annual budget.
4. That being said, for the reasons explained below, the Council does not consider ECC's decision not to progress the A414 RBS at this time will have any implications for the delivery of the site allocations within LPSV Policy P 4 Ongar. As the LPSV makes clear, the promoters of sites ONG.R1, ONG.R2, and ONG.R4 are responsible for the delivery of the necessary improvement works to the Four Wantz roundabout and funding the cost of those works in any event. The LPSV does not mention the A414 RBS and the completion of that particular scheme is not necessary to deliver the residential development on allocated sites in Ongar.
5. Part D of LPSV Policy P 4 (EB114, page 135) states that infrastructure requirements must be delivered at a rate and scale to meet the needs that arise from proposed development in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan ("IDP"), and that development in Ongar will be expected to contribute proportionately towards the infrastructure items identified, which includes highway and junction upgrades.
6. In addition, site-specific requirements for the West Ongar Concept Framework Plan (LPSV, Appendix 6 (EB114A), pages 107 to 109) include, under the heading 'Infrastructure', a "movement strategy" that takes account of the requirements of the sites within the area of the concept framework (i.e., ONG.R1 and ONG.R2), and site allocation ONG.R4. The site-specific requirements state (at page 109) that the "movement strategy", which should address both highways and active travel (walking and cycling) requirements, must be developed and agreed with the promoters of ONG.R4. Specifically, the "movement strategy" should address the three matters identified, which include "the need for any highway upgrades to the A414 Four Wantz Junction, which should be agreed with Essex County Council".

7. Importantly, in respect of those site-specific infrastructure requirements, the Plan states that:

"Any planning application should make provision for the delivery of any works identified in the movement strategy as part of the development or make contributions to the Council or the highways authority (Essex County Council) in lieu. The costs borne in implementing the movement strategy should be shared by the promoters of these sites and residential allocation ONG.R4 with appropriate measures being put in place to equalise the contributions. Through implementation of the movement strategy, the Council (Essex County Council) and the site promoters should work collaboratively and proactively to ensure that any on-site and off-site infrastructure is provided, subject to viability considerations, ahead of or in tandem with the development it supports to mitigate any impacts of the development proposals, meets the needs of new/existing residents and establishes sustainable movement patterns." (emphasis added by underlining)

8. That "movement strategy" requirement is also included, *mutatis mutandis*, within the site-specific requirements for site allocation ONG.R4 (LPSV, Appendix 6 (EB114), pages 95 to 96).
12. Accordingly, the Council does not consider that Essex County Council's decision not to proceed with the A414 RBS undermines the relevant site allocations for Ongar, in terms of their deliverability, or the projected delivery of new homes on sites ONG.R1, ONG.R2 and ONG.R4, included in the Council's housing trajectory (EB410A/B).