

Appendix 5

Supplementary Consultation – New/Amended sites for Allocation Spring 2012

SDC conducted a consultation in spring 2010 on draft site allocations. There is one additional site proposed that was not included within the February 2010 consultation, and eight sites that were previously allocated for a different use within the draft document. Further information on each of these sites is included in this consultation, together with information about why they have been added or amended since the previous consultation round in 2010.

This consultation on new/amended sites can take place in April/May 2012, before the pre-submission version is finalised. This fits with the adopted Local Development Scheme, which outlines that the finalised DPD is to be submitted for committee approval in July 2012 and Pre-submission publication in September-October 2012. This supplementary consultation is considered necessary to ensure that the pre-submission publication version is a “sound” plan.

New site:

Site Location	Current Use	Proposed Allocated Use
Bovis Manor House site, New Ash Green	Office	Residential

Sites where a different use is proposed (from the 2010 consultation):

Site Location	2010 Draft Allocation	Proposed Allocated Use
Currant Hill Allotments, Westerham	Allotments (with reference that any future development would require replacement allotments)	Residential, with allotment re-provision
Leigh’s Builders Yard, Edenbridge	Employment (vacant builders yard)	Residential
Station Approach, Edenbridge	Employment (builders merchants)	Mixed use – employment and residential
GSK, Leigh	‘Major Developed Site’ (Vacant employment site)	Residential with limited retained employment
Warren Court Farm, Halstead	Employment (offices and workshops)	Residential (including Green Belt amendment)
Land rear of Premier Inn, Swanley	Allocated for Residential	Employment site
Broom Hill, Swanley	Allocated for Employment and open space	Employment, open space and residential
United House, Swanley	Allocated for mixed-use– employment & residential	Residential

The supplementary consultation on the above nine sites is intended to ensure that relevant consultees are fully aware of the new proposals on these allocated sites. The pro forma outline the draft site allocations and design guidance for each of these sites, including maps and aerial photographs. The information below indicates why these additional/amended sites have been proposed.

1 Bovis Manor House site, New Ash Green

The Council was approached by Bovis in December 2011 who are intending to relocate their operations elsewhere within the District, in a more sustainable location. The site contains the existing Bovis office which incorporates a listed buildings ('The Manor House'), open space and trees. It is surrounded by residential development and is in close proximity to the village centre. The site has not been identified as a protected employment site in the Council's Employment Land Review (ELR) 2007. The site is therefore considered to be more suitable to be allocated for residential development, due to its location and surrounding uses. Small scale employment space will be re-provided in New Ash Green village centre as part of the wider regeneration scheme, which is considered a more appropriate location for business use. The proposal is to allocate the Manor House site for residential development, including restoring the listed building to its original residential use.

2 Currant Hill Allotments, Westerham

The 2010 consultation proposed that this site (previously allocated as Safeguarded Land in the 2000 Local Plan) be allocated for allotments but noted that any future development of the site would require replacement allotments within Westerham. The Council has been working with Westerham Parish Council (who own the site) to identify suitable replacement allotment land and an number of options were proposed. The replacement allotments need to be of equivalent or greater value, in terms of their size, location, accessibility and quality, in order to maintain the supply of allotments for the local community. The most suitable site for the replacement allotments is considered to be the field immediately to the north of the site, which is currently leased to Churchill School. The school is aware of this proposal and has confirmed that it can accommodate the loss of the field without prejudicing its activities. The proposal is to re-allocate the lower southern portion of the allotment site for a small residential development and to re-provide equivalent allotments on the land to the north of the existing site.

3 Leigh's Builders Yard, Edenbridge

This site was previously allocated for employment use in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan (2000) and was carried forward in the 2010 Allocations consultation, which proposed the continued allocation of this site for protected employment use in conjunction with the Edenbridge Trading Centre/Warsop Trading Centre, as recommended by the Council's ELR. Representations were made that the builders yard site is separate to the trading centre operations and should not be considered as forming the same business area. The owner has submitted evidence that demonstrates to our satisfaction that the site, which has been vacant for a long period of time, is not viable for employment use during the Core Strategy period. As such the removal of the site from protected employment use

complies with Core Strategy policy SP8. Therefore the proposal is to re-designate the site as a residential allocation.

4 Station Approach, Edenbridge

This site was previously allocated for employment use in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan (2000) and was carried forward in the 2010 Allocations consultation, which proposed the continued allocation of this site for protected employment use, as recommended by the Council's ELR. Representations were made by the site owners, Network Rail, to promote a residential-led mixed use development on the site. The Council's ELR highlighted this as a poor quality employment site. The site is currently occupied by a builder's merchants, with a large area of open storage/under-used land. Core Strategy Policy SP8 states that redevelopment for mixed use of business sites in urban areas may exceptionally be permitted where such development would facilitate the regeneration of the site to more effectively meet the needs of modern business, where the employment capacity of the site, represented by the commercial floorspace, is maintained and where a mixed use development would represent a sustainable approach consistent with the general distribution of development. The Council considers that a mixed use scheme is an appropriate and more efficient use of this site, retaining employment space on the north-western half of the site, with residential on the south-eastern half of the site. Therefore the proposal is to re-designate the site for mixed use development, comprising employment and residential uses.

5 Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK) site, Leigh

This site was previously designated as a 'Major Developed Site' (MDS) in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan (2000) and was carried forward in the Core Strategy (adopted February 2011). This designation was applied because of the built-up form of the commercial site, located in the Green Belt. GSK recently ceased their pharmaceutical operations and have closed the site. The Council commissioned independent consultants URS, who had previously carried out the Council's Employment Land Review, to consider the potential for re-use of the site in employment use. The report concluded that complete take-up of the site in employment use is very unlikely to be achievable or viable, and that residential redevelopment with the retention of a smaller portion of the site for employment would be the most sound option based on current and future employment trends. The key constraint that makes the site unattractive to future commercial occupiers is the remote location and poor transport network. Other uses were also considered, but URS did not identify a viable alternative other than residential. Therefore the proposal is to re-designate the site for mixed use development, retaining the modern laboratory block (known as building 12) in employment use and replacing the footprint of the remaining employment buildings with new residential development. This is consistent with the preferred option presented in the URS report. Accessibility improvements will be required as part of any planning application, to improve the sustainability of the site.

6 Warren Court Farm, Halstead

This site was previously allocated for employment use in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan (2000) and was carried forward in the 2010 Allocations consultation,

which proposed the continued allocation of this site for employment use, as recommended by the Council's ELR. Warren Court Farm is an unusual site in planning policy terms, in that it is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, but it is also an identified employment site with an allocation that allows for further employment development. It is the only identified employment site in the district (other than the Major Developed Sites) that is within the Green Belt, and is therefore a historic anomaly. The site is one of five identified in the ELR as being of poor/very poor quality. Warren Court is the only one of the five poor/very poor quality employment sites that has not been redeveloped or re-allocated for residential/mixed-use. The Council's recent ELR update (2011) indicates that there is no requirement for additional office space and a reduction in the need for industrial space (-2.3ha). Therefore, there is not now considered to be a need to continue to safeguard this remaining poor quality employment site.

The Council has proposed that this site be reallocated for residential development, with a concurrent amendment of the green belt boundary to bring this site within the village envelope. The recommendation is based on the fact that the revised allocation would result in the regeneration of an existing poor quality commercial site without having an adverse impact upon the character and openness of the Green belt. The level of built development on the site, its location adjacent to the village envelope and its poor environmental quality, combined with the fact that the site is an anomaly being the only allocated employment site in the greenbelt (except for designated Major Developed Sites), all contribute to the exceptional circumstances that justify an amendment to the settlement boundary.

7 Land rear of Premier Inn, Swanley

The 2010 consultation proposed the allocation of the former Déjà vu site and employment area to the rear for a residential development. Since this consultation, a Premier Inn hotel and Beefeater restaurant have been built on the site of the former Déjà vu nightclub and therefore this area has been removed from the allocation. The employment area to the rear of the hotel was not identified as a protected employment site in the ELR and there is no other existing land use designation on the site. However, the site is considered to be functioning well as an employment site, with several businesses successfully trading on the site (Birchwood nurseries, aquatics, garden centre, pine furniture/doors), with buildings in good condition. In addition, since the hotel/restaurant has been built out, it is considered that the site to the rear would be a less suitable environment for residential development. Therefore the allocation for the remainder of the site has been revised to protect existing employment site.

8 Broom Hill, Swanley

This site was previously allocated for employment use in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan (2000) and established for future allocation through the adopted Core Strategy (February 2011). The 2010 Allocations consultation proposed that this site be allocated for employment use, as recommended by the Council's ELR. The site area is 8.1ha but the Council's draft Development Brief for Broom Hill (1996) proposed that only 4.1ha of the site be developed. The Council's Employment Land Review (2007) found that only this 4.1ha of the site needed to be developed

to meet the District's need for employment land to 2026. The Inspector's Report on the Core Strategy supports this conclusion. The characteristics of the site have been reviewed, and the south-eastern side of the site is considered to be the most appropriate location for employment uses, adjacent to the existing commercial uses and the M25 road corridor. The western side of the site is not considered to be suitable for employment uses, due to the proximity of the residential uses on Beechenlea Lane. The topography of the site includes a ridge of higher land which in visual terms is best kept open, and therefore is not suitable for development. The Council has recently commissioned an ELR update (2011), which outlines a different forecast from that presented in the 2007 ELR. Looking at the medium scenario to 2026, there is no requirement for additional office space. In relation to warehousing, there is likely to be a 5.2 ha requirement (which could be largely met by the development of the 4.1ha on this employment allocation) and a reduction in the need for factory space (-2.3ha). Therefore, the allocation has been revised to seek to address what other uses are appropriate on the remainder of the site (4ha). The allocation now includes retention of open space, including the brow of the hill which curves through the site. The previously developed land towards the north of the site is considered to be suitable for a small residential development. In addition, land to the west of the site is considered to have the potential for residential development, subject to access, amenity, biodiversity considerations and the visual impact of any proposal. Therefore the proposal is to designate the site for mixed use development, comprising employment (4.1ha), open space and residential.

9 United House, Goldsel Road, Swanley

This site was previously allocated for employment use in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan (2000). The ELR Addendum Report (2010) noted the site was being promoted for residential-led mixed use development, and therefore recommended excluding the area from the employment land to be protected (the adjacent Swantex site on Goldsel Road remains a protected employment site). The 2010 consultation proposed the allocation of the United House site for a mixed use (residential and commercial) development. Since this consultation, the site owner (United House) has indicated that they wish to promote the site for purely residential development as they intend to relocate their offices to a different site within Swanley and therefore no longer have a requirement for offices on the site. The site is currently under-used and the existing occupier is planning to leave the site. The site is considered to be more suitable for residential use, due to the adjacent housing estate and the primary school. There is also limited access to the site, which would constrain additional commercial development on the site. The 2010 allocation suggested 116 residential units could be accommodated on the site (at a density of 75 dph). The site capacity has been increased to 250 units as a result of the boundary amendment, the proposal to allocate the site purely for residential (rather than mixed use) and works/evidence presented by the owner to show how key constraints have been overcome. Therefore the proposal is to designate the site as a residential allocation with increased capacity.