

Adopted Local Plan - General principles

General Principles for Development

2.1

In considering the pattern of future development within the District the Council supports a sustainable form of land-use. The District Council wishes to enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents, and seeks to achieve a pattern of development which reduces the need to travel by private car and encourages increased use of public transport, cycling and walking. It must however be recognised that Salisbury District is a large rural area with a number of small communities. It is important to ensure that the vitality and viability of these communities are maintained, or if possible enhanced, within the overall context of conserving the natural environment and cultural heritage of the District. The re-use of previously developed sites in urban areas can help reduce the need to release greenfield land and make more effective use of land. However, with the high quality of the environment in Salisbury and a lack of derelict land within the urban areas, the amount of urban land which is likely to be available for redevelopment is extremely limited.

Policy G1

2.2

The Local Plan contains a range of policies, both general and specific, which are designed to meet the aims listed in paragraph 1.6. These policies do not stand in isolation and are intended to be read together. It is important that in considering applications for new development account is taken of all relevant policies. The plan is set out by topic area with the policies laid out at the end of each chapter. Reference to the relevant policy is included within the supporting text.

General Criteria for Development

2.3

The high environmental quality to be found in both the countryside and settlements of Salisbury District is mentioned in the introduction to this Local Plan. The operation of the Local Plan's policies is intended to secure the maintenance of this quality, whilst allowing for necessary development. The Local Planning Authority is aware that failure to guide the detailed aspects of development proposals can lead to incremental erosion of the current environmental standard. For this reason, the Local Planning Authority believes it is justified in putting forward policy G2 as a checklist of the factors routinely taken into account in the determination of

planning applications in the District. In addition, emphasis on the design of new development has been incorporated into this Local Plan in Chapter 3.

2.4

Highway issues are material considerations in the determination of a planning application. Factors such as the effect new development will have on the local road network, off-street car parking, the suitability of the proposed access and where appropriate turning space within the site are all issues which will need to be addressed.

2.5

In accordance with Government guidance, the Local Planning Authority will take into account such factors as the need to protect landscape, wildlife habitats and historic features and the best and most versatile agricultural land. Open areas and features, such as hedges and walls, should be retained where they contribute to the character of the area.

2.6

A number of existing forms of development can create environmental problems, for example, accommodation for livestock. In order to minimise the potential for future conflicts between neighbouring land uses, care will be taken to ensure that new development is not situated where such problems could arise. Environmental concerns are becoming increasingly important planning considerations and new proposals should not lead to pollution of the environment by, for example, excessive light or noise levels, or have a detrimental effect on public health.

2.7

It is hoped the policy will assist both developers and members of the public. The policy is intended to have a general applicability and all other policies in the Local Plan should be read in conjunction with it. Sufficient information will be requested with an application to enable an assessment to be made of whether the criteria listed in Policy G2 have been fully taken into account.

Policy G2

The Water Environment

2.8

The supply of water to a new development is a critical factor. Development in locations where water resources are scarce may result in detriment to the amenity, water quality and nature conservation interests of watercourses. Development will not therefore be permitted unless existing water supplies are adequate or they can be augmented to serve

the development without adversely affecting the water environment and groundwater systems.

Policy G3

2.9

New development, redevelopment and land raising can have significant implications for flood risk. This may be either due to the site's location in a floodplain or an area at risk from flash flooding due to underground springs and a high water table. In addition, development on a floodplain may reduce the amount of land available for floodwater storage thereby increasing upstream and downstream flood risks. Information on some areas liable to flood is included in Section 105 Maps produced by the Environment Agency and will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. There are however areas not included on these maps which may be subject to flood risk and to which policy G4 will equally apply.

Policy G4

2.10

The provision of water supply and drainage on the plan area is currently the responsibility of Wessex Water, Southern Water, the West Hampshire Water Co. and the Cholderton Water Co. The provision of mains drainage for rural areas has been a main aim of the District Council for many years. Where mains drainage is available it would be a retrograde step to allow private forms of drainage in any new development. Developers will thus be expected to connect to the sewerage system and to construct sewers to a standard adoptable by the sewage undertaker.

Policy G5

2.11

In some parts of the area problems associated with water services (i.e. water supply, foul and surface water disposal and sewage treatment) provide a serious constraint to the location of additional development. Examples are the problems associated with the combined sewer at Wilton, restrictions on the level of surface water discharge to the River Bourne, and sewage treatment works which each have only limited capacity to absorb further development. Developers must therefore ensure that adequate services are available for any proposed development. The Water Industry Act 1991 enables a water or sewerage undertaker to require developers to make a contribution towards providing

the necessary infrastructure to meet the increased demands imposed by development.

2.12

Careful consideration needs to be given to surface water disposal when considering development proposals as it is important to ensure that additional surface water run off does not create or exacerbate flooding problems, or adversely affect the flora and fauna of the watercourse. With the transfer of the former water authorities land drainage powers and responsibilities to the Environment Agency, there is an even greater need for liaison between all parties concerned when considering how surface water run off from new developments, direct to water courses, should be dealt with.

2.13

Where ground conditions permit, clean surface water disposal should be to soakaways. However, in some areas ground conditions will be unsuitable for soakaway disposal and, in these circumstances, new development should employ source control techniques also known as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to alleviate the effects of increased run off, the risk of pollution and reduced groundwater discharge. The Local Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Environment Agency, will assess the surface water run off implications of development proposals.

Policy G6

2.14

Development in close proximity to sewage treatment works is liable to suffer occasional odour nuisance as a result of the processes carried out at the sewage works. In order to minimise the risk of environmental problems an area of Development Restraint around each of the sewage treatment works has been defined by the relevant Water Company. Within these areas, development likely to result in the regular occupation of premises, including office and commercial developments as well as housing, will not be permitted. Where existing development is already in place within a 400m radius of a sewage treatment facility, such properties will remain subject to occasional odour.

Policy G7

2.15

During the plan period, Wessex Water and Southern Water, the statutory sewage undertakers in the district, will be developing improved modeling techniques to define site specific odour dispersion areas as defined under

policy G7. When this modeling exercise has been completed the District Council will seek to adopt these boundaries as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2.16

Groundwater resources are an invaluable source of water for public supply, industry and agriculture as well as sustaining the base flow of rivers. In order to protect water resources in the area, the Environment Agency has identified a number of Groundwater Source Protection Areas. The Local Planning Authority is concerned that within these areas there shall be no demonstrable risk of pollution to watercourses and groundwater or indeed elsewhere where water resources could be at risk. In some areas, for example Mere, the percolation rate of surface water is likely to place a severe restriction on further development. The Environment Agency is the statutory body which has the responsibility for ensuring that no such pollution occurs, and it is the Local Planning Authority's intention, therefore, to refer all planning applications within Groundwater Source Protection Areas (and elsewhere where it is considered likely that a proposal would give rise to a risk of pollution) to the Environment Agency for their advice, guidance and recommendations. Developers with sites in these areas are recommended to contact the Environment Agency at the earliest stage. Developers' attention is also drawn to the Environment Agency's policy document "Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater" copies of which are available from the regional offices of the Environment Agency. It should also be noted that the boundaries of Groundwater Source Protection Areas are updated on a biennial basis meaning that the shown boundaries are subject to occasional change. The Environment Agency and the Planning Department will keep updated maps available for inspection.

Policy G8

Planning Obligations

2.17

Planning obligations have a role to play in the planning system and, in addition to overcoming problems, can help to ensure a higher quality development. Department of the Environment Circular 1/97 provides guidance on the proper use of planning obligations made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Policy G9 reflects the advice contained in the Circular and seeks to ensure that development proposals provide the infrastructure and facilities, such as education, recreation and public transport which are needed for the development to go ahead, or will meet or contribute towards the cost of providing such

facilities in the near future. Planning permission will normally be refused for any development that does not make adequate provision for such matters.

2.18

In negotiating with developers, the Local Planning Authority will be guided by the provisions of Circular 1/97 and related advice. In no circumstances will the Local Planning Authority be prepared to set aside the policies and standards incorporated in this Local Plan simply in order to avail itself of the offer of a locally needed facility or service.

Policy G9

Enabling Development

2.19

The Local Planning Authority is occasionally requested to entertain proposals involving so called “enabling development”. In proposals of this sort it is suggested that in order to maintain nationally important listed buildings, or other “heritage” resources such as historic parklands, the Local Planning Authority may consider granting planning permission for commercial development, the profit of which will be used to fund major repair work to the resource which is important to preserve or restore. The commercial development would generally not be permitted, for example, because the site is outside a Housing Policy Boundary or in the open countryside where new build is contrary to Government guidance and other Local Plan policies. An example would be the restoration of an important listed building in the countryside (i.e. Grade I or II*) using capital derived from the construction of houses in the grounds.

2.20

The Local Planning Authority is prepared to consider such proposals only in very exceptional circumstances, where they can be fully justified. The applicant will be expected to submit a viability analysis to demonstrate that the benefit to be derived is significant and worthwhile in the national interest, and that the scale of the proposed development does not exceed, both in monetary and planning terms, that needed to fund the necessary repairs. The Local Planning Authority will normally employ specialist consultants when considering development proposals of this type. Where listed buildings are involved, it must also be shown that the proposed enabling development does not detract from their fabric or setting. Since it is possible for planning permissions to be only partially implemented, the Local Planning Authority will seek an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure that the proposal to be subsidised by the enabling development is carried out within an acceptable period following the implementation of the whole or part (as appropriate) of the enabling development itself.

Policy G10

Advertisements

2.21

Outdoor advertising plays an important role in the economy, promoting businesses, communicating information and providing directions to the public. Policy G11 sets out the factors against which an advertisement's impact on the locality will be considered. The size, colour and materials of a sign can either add interest to an area or lead to a proliferation of unattractive clutter. Particular care will be taken in assessing applications within the countryside, in Conservation Areas and on listed buildings to ensure that there is no unacceptable impact on the area or local landscape.

Policy G11

Ministry of Defence Land

2.22

Within the Local Plan area there are military establishments under the control of the Ministry of Defence. It is accepted that there will be continuing need for further essential military developments within these establishments. Such proposals are governed by separate procedures under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and described in Circular 18/84, and are not subject to normal planning controls. The Ministry of Defence does however consult the Local Planning Authority about proposed developments.

2.23

Although it is accepted that there will be continuing need for further essential military developments, land outside built up areas which becomes surplus to defence requirements will be expected to remain undeveloped. Proposals for development, whether within or outside built-up areas, will be considered against the policies of this Local Plan, particularly any special designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Conservation Area or the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. Where surplus land is to be disposed of, a formal application may be submitted by the Ministry or by a potential purchaser.

Policies G12 & G13