

Planning for the future white paper    response to questions    Cllr Scott

Q1. complicated    adversarial    costly

Q2. a Yes    as a statutory consultee

Q2b    n/a

Q3. online/ mobile message/ email

Q4. Building affordable homes for local working people

Infrastructure to ensure organic growth and future health

Creation and protection of special community areas

Q5. No    The Local Plan already contains an assessment of sites suitable for development and sufficient for the lifetime of the Plan. The Local Authority currently has no control over those sites being built out. There needs to be a mechanism either through taxation and or compulsory purchase powers to enable and encourage the local housing needs to be met.

Q6 I agree that there is no need to duplicate NPPF policies and that the language of planning documents should be standardised but local character and distinctiveness can only be achieved through LPs and NPs.

Funding of planning departments should be standardised because the fee system encourages multiple applications and renewals.

Q7a not sure    Plans should take into account the overall cumulative effect of planned development rather than relying on individual reports which invariably show the effect to be minimal .

Basing a Plan on 'deliverability' is flawed because currently Local Authorities are unable to control the delivery of sites. Land owners work to their own agenda and have a vested interest in reducing output to increase demand and thereby house prices.

Q7b not sure

Q8a No. Housing requirements should be separated into 'NEED' and 'DEMAND'. The method of establishing the local need for housing can be standardised but demand will vary considerably from area to area. The objectively assessed need should be a target for the Public Sector to achieve and they would help the private sector to provide for the assessed open market 'demand'.

Q8b. No    House prices are only an indication of aspirational demand. Affordability within the local housing need is linked to local wage levels.

Distance from the settlement centre should be an important sustainability test

Q9a I do not agree that there should be growth areas but it would save time and expense if under the existing LPs, any sites marked as deliverable within the settlement boundary should assume OPP with all matters reserved. That would save the expense and need to renew permissions but the process of submitting details does not need to be reduced. What would be helpful is if the local authority provided overall assessments of environmental impact for distinct

areas rather than multiple site reports. Eg our Town has a declared AQMZ yet each site produces a 'silo' report at great expense which fails to address the cumulative air quality and infrastructure impacts.

9b. it would be helpful to know what sort of development might be permitted in an area as part of the Local Plan

9c. The problems of overstretching infrastructure, damaging heritage, protecting and creating open space, retro fitting green infrastructure and distance from services which limit expansion of existing Towns are avoided with new settlements.

Q10 Yes It is already becoming easier for a TC to look at information. 3D imaging would make plans easier to understand and it may be possible to use technology to reduce time lapses in statutory consultee responses. If more weight and scope is given to NPs it should help to avoid later contentious issues

Q11. Yes. It would make sense to have an access point at the Town Hall or other community building for residents with no computer access.

Q12 Not sure Producing a LP quicker will reduce the flood of applications from developers to benefit from imminent changes from the new plan and reduce confusion. But the aim should be to produce a better plan for the benefit of the community rather than bring forward more land for the benefit of landowners and developers.

Q13a. Yes Much time was wasted in our NP in duplicating policies from LP and NPPF. More detail could be included in NP to cover the local aspects which are missing from the Local Plan. They could then be given more weight because of the public consultation. Funding could come from a subsidy on the precept because it would benefit the whole community

Q14. The emphasis should be on achieving a wide variety of types of development such as self build, custom build, affordable. This would allow far more local involvement. It would work more effectively if Local Authorities were able to prepare a masterplan and design code then provide the infrastructure then sell off the individual plots or multiples as applicable

Q15. Some good contemporary design with well integrated open space and underground drainage systems. Much poorly designed with small living spaces, little garden, bland architecture with no local connection or context. Disjointed and insufficient open spaces and industrial style drainage sumps.

Q16. Building a happy and healthy community for us and our children to live in.

Green Infrastructure

Improvement to the road network to provide alternatives to driving through the market place

Energy efficiency of new buildings should be a national requirement through the building regs not as a local aspiration.

Q17. Yes Much of this work could have been done in the NP process with the production of Character assessments and asking the public for views on preferred designs.

Q18. Yes. This new body would need to be independent and free from the influence of the large national building companies.

Most of what you propose fits with the aims of NPs. When we prepared our NP we were unable to call on any professional help from our local authority due to a lack of resources. The NP process easily highlighted local problems but understanding what the solutions were needed professional guidance.

Q19. Yes Any measures to improve design should be supported as long as they aren't detrimental to local aspirations.

Q20. Not sure If a local design code is established within a NP or LP and it is given sufficient weight, a developer will naturally take it into account in his detailed application. That would be sufficient to speed up the process without stripping away the existing process for local residents to challenge poor design.

Q21. Green Infrastructure./ Open space and long term maintenance of it. / Road congestion and pollution. / Design inc internal sizes, gardens and materials / community facilities

Q22a. Yes Our local authority currently does not use the CIL because of viability issues with sites in their area. The 106 obligations system has proved to lack transparency and difficult for our TC to engage with. It requires us to have projects ready to go and they need to be related to the development. Often the obligation has been negotiated without our input. The agreements themselves rely on good drafting by lawyers and can lead ultimately to a developer challenging it.

Affordable Housing levels are routinely re negotiated down even though the identified need in the LP is actually higher than level set in the plan.

Q22b. The national approach should be taken but should capture more land value. Our Town is at the point where all the sites allocated within the LP will have a collective impact that will require improvements to infrastructure. The sites would not have an increased value without planning permission therefore it is right and fair that the infrastructure necessary to achieve development is paid for out of the uplift in land values.

Q22c. It should aim to capture more value. There are many more infrastructure needs beyond individual sites and currently some developers are unwilling to proceed until someone else pays for the infrastructure solutions to unlock the area. Consequently the easiest sites are cherry picked.

Q22d. Yes local Authorities could be proactive and if given the ability, they could bring forward sites, provide a masterplan and design code then put in the infrastructure for the whole site and sell off ready plots to self builders, custom builders and small speculative developers as well as housing associations.

Q23. Not applicable to our town

Q24a. Yes But the affordable housing need varies from area to area. Our Authority states in the LP a need of 35% but due to viability issues the amount required in the plan is reduced to 26%. There would need to be a mechanism which ensured that areas with high housing needs did not end up with less funding for infrastructure

Q24b. Not sure Swaffhams NP requires that new developments should provide Homes suitable for first time buyers and affordable rent, including social rented. First Homes is likely to reduce the supply of affordable rented properties. Would Local Authority nominated Housing

associations be able to purchase at a discount on behalf of the LA? How would you safeguard the First Home discount from abuse similar to the right to buy abuse by private investors?

Q24c not sure

Q24d not sure

Q25. No The IL represents a once only capture of the uplift in land value and should be used for infrastructure and local housing needs.

Q25a If needed it should be a ring fence set by the local authority, in this case to ensure sufficient affordable rent comes forward. It should be noted that at one time council houses for rent provided half the new housing annually which had the effect of holding down the price of first time properties.