

Local Plan Examination

Notes from the 4th and 5th July sessions

The Public Sessions have now concluded and the Inspector has given a verbal summary of his emerging conclusion. He believes that the Plan is Sound.

This is based on the four tests of soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework

1. Positive preparation

The Plan has set out to meet the Objectively Assessed Needs.

The general balance of the spatial strategy is acceptable subject to greater emphasis on the town centre and increased early delivery. The onus is on the Council to find and justify additional provision

2. Justified

The inspector commented that it is easy to criticise the methodology adopted but in this case he thinks the evidence base is good and sound and site selection is justified.

3. Effective

There are a lot of 'what ifs' but you have to work on the best info available at the time and the Plan should be deliverable over its period.

4. Consistent with national policy

It is.

Other comments made by the inspector

Transport

"Always difficult at the strategic level"

Concerns can be dealt with at planning application level – this will be our final opportunity to challenge the Burnt Common Slips

Key Modifications requested (include)

Reserving Land at in the Gosden Hill Development for Highways (the Burnt Common-Burpham link road?)

Need for transport modelling on the sites (This should include the impact on West Clandon A247)

A New Town centre policy (promoted by Guildford Vision)

Send March and Garlicks Arch - a note on mitigation of transport issues required- West Clandon should also be included here.

GBC must now complete their main list of modifications (July) The inspector will comment on them

Modifications will be subject to consultation by the Council (6weeks). They are hoping to start in September.

Any Additional sites for early delivery will be subject to consultation. Small sites could be dealt with by written representations.

There are population changes and mid-year projections to be considered at some stage so the overall housing number may change (but not much)

New NPPF issued shortly - will need to consider any changes which are relevant

The Inspectors report with final modifications will be finalised and considered by the Council after any final consultations. The Council must accept the report for the plan to be sound.

Comments made on behalf of West Clandon Parish Council

4th July Session on Bunt Common and Garlick's Arch

5th July session on Wisley Airfield Development

The Burnt Common Slip roads which will be funded by Wisley with the aim of mitigating traffic from the development through Ripley. The land will be sold by the Owners of Garlicks Arch 'at a nominal rate'.

Comments made on behalf of West Clandon Parish Council

We believe Burnt Common slip roads were not included when the Ripley By-Pass when it was constructed in 1975/6 as Highway Engineers at the time did not want to dump traffic onto unsuitable roads

I emphasised the characteristics of the road through Clandon and the problems it experiences (as supplied in our written submission. I also referred to the potential alternative via Park Lane/Merrow Lane.

The Strategic Highway Assessment (SHA) suggest that the greatest volume of traffic into Burnt Common will be from the South (through West Clandon). The SHA indicated an increase in traffic volume of 30%-40%. The SHA shows the road through West Clandon is inappropriate for such traffic volumes with a high Ratio to Flow Capacity and poor Level of Service. We also established that the road is too narrow for heavy vehicles to pass and there is a lack of diversionary routes. Guildford admitted they have ignored this problem and in response made a knee jerk suggestion of introducing alternate single line traffic on the narrow sections. Experience shows this will cause unacceptable traffic jams (The Inspector would not allow me to develop this point but said he would require the Council to undertake an assessment of the impact on local traffic)

Traffic impact in the SHA is underplayed as the increase will not only come from local diversions as GBC suggest. At peak times it will become a de facto Eastern Bypass of Guildford with traffic rerouting to the South, bypassing Guildford to the South via Albury and into the town via Epsom Rd. Increasing use of intelligent satnavs will exacerbate this problem. Southbound traffic will increasingly leave the A3 at Clandon rather than join tailbacks at Burpham and the A3 at Stoke. The Burnt Common slips are set to be operational by 2022 but A3 widening is not now expected until 2027. The slips should be delayed until this date at least.

Clandon is a linear village two miles from end to end. It has to work hard to be a community. It has only one street for both cars and pedestrians. A huge increase in traffic and induced traffic jams would rip the heart out of the village. There are only two options (1) No slip road and (2) To do some actual transport planning on the wider area. Current scheme proposals an incoherent series of knee jerk reactions to whatever development opportunity comes along. We should take a holistic view and draw up a proper plan drawing on the opportunities presented by the SW Quadrant Study.

As it stands the slip roads are presented as so-called mitigation for a development at Wisley. It is mitigation than none of the local communities want It comes at the expense of substantial harm to at least one existing successful green belt community of 1200 people 5miles away from the Wisley development. It needs a serious rethink.

What have we gained

An admission by Guildford that there may be a problem and they have not investigated it or proposed any mitigation

A directive from the Inspector to undertake an assessment and provide a written note on mitigation on transport issues around Burnt Common

An offer by the Inspector to undertake site visits (I will follow his up)

We are more likely to get a mitigation package- traffic calming

But

The Plan is emerging relatively unscathed

The Council are pressing for Wisley to proceed and deliver early

Burnt Common Slips are seen as essential to the delivery of Wisley and contributes to the plans at Garlicks Arch and Burnt Common

There is no discernible interest in the alternative route via Merrow/Park Lane

Possible Strategies

Lobby Guildford on mitigation/route alternatives

Prepare to oppose planning applications

Join forces with other groups/councils opposing Wisley/Burnt Common/Garlick's Arch

Retail transport consultants to undertake our own impact analysis

John Stone

5th July 2018