

# HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

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### **BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN: RESPONSES TO THE 2022 CONSULTATION**

#### **FOR NOTING**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Elizabeth Lloyd

**Key Decision:** No

**Report number:** [Completed by Democratic Services]

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#### **1. Purpose**

- a. This paper is submitted to the Planning Policy Committee for information.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- a. Members are requested to note:
  - i. The comments received through the consultation on the Building a Better Future Plan held between October and November 2022, set out in Appendix 1; and
  - ii. The sites submitted as part of the Call for Sites, set out in appendix 2;

#### **3. Executive Summary**

- a. On 16 March 2022, the Full Council authorised the preparation of a new local plan for the Borough. This is to be known as the Building a Better Future Plan.
- b. The first substantive stage in the preparation of the plan is engagement with stakeholders on the issues which the plan needs to grapple with, the proposed approach to this and the prioritisation of areas the plan could particularly focus on.

- c. This consultation took place between 3 October and 14 November 2022. This report feeds back the comments received.

#### **4. Additional Budgetary Implications**

- a. None.

#### **5. Background and relationship to Corporate Strategy and supporting strategies and policies**

- a. Havant Borough Council has prepared a new Corporate Strategy as part of moving forward as a standalone local authority. This has three principal objectives:
  - Wellbeing
  - Pride of Place
  - Growth
- b. The Local Plan has a direct impact on achieving all three of these objectives. The Local Plan is the key delivery vehicle and the link between the Council's aspirations as articulated in the Corporate Strategy and their physical development in bricks and mortar on the ground.
- c. Equally, the Local Plan has a close reciprocal relationship with a number of other supporting strategies, principally the Climate Change and Environment Strategy, the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy.
- d. The development of a new local plan was initiated by the Full Council decision of 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022<sup>1</sup>. Following this, the first substantive stage of the plan's preparation was consultation on the issues the plan faces and the options for addressing them. This took place between 3 October and 14 November 2022<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://havant.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MId=11316&Ver=4>

<sup>2</sup> The consultation was authorised by the Full council on 21 September 2022

<https://havant.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MId=12606&Ver=4>

## **Consultation and Communications**

- e. A Consultation and Communication Plan was prepared to support the consultation, which was part of the papers approved on 21 September 2022. This set out the approach to the consultation and how it would be run with the aim of maximising the response rate from all sectors of the community and stakeholders in the local plan.
- f. The consultation itself was well publicised within the community. The ways in which the consultation was publicised along with level of uptake is set out in table 1 below.
  - A mailout to all who have requested notifications on the local plan<sup>3</sup>
  - The Council's website was updated with all of the consultation material and a prominent 'click through' button on the homepage
  - Feedback survey – available both online and on paper. Paper copies available at exhibitions, at libraries and community centres, restocked as necessary.
  - Face to face exhibitions:
    - Hayling Island United Reform Church (11 October 3pm to 7pm)
    - Meridian Centre (15 October 10am to 4pm)
    - St George's Church Hall, Waterlooville (20 October 3pm to 7pm)
    - Park Community School, Leigh Park (27 October 3pm to 7pm)
    - Havant Public Service Plaza (1 November 10am to 4pm)
    - Emsworth Baptist Church (3 November 3pm to 7pm)
  - Online community engagement platform – this hosted all of the local plan consultation material and enabled stakeholders to directly comment on the proposals publicly to feed into the consultation.

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<sup>3</sup> This is principally through an email bulletin, a small amount of residents received postal notifications as their preferred notification method.

- Networks and Forums – officers made extensive use of existing community networks and forums to further disseminate and engage with groups and their residents, promoting the consultation.
  - Targeted approaches – specific contact with statutory consultees.
  - Static materials at Hayling Island Coastal Defence Strategy consultation exhibitions – the start of the consultation was specifically planned to align with the start of the consultation on the Coastal Defence Strategy. The exhibitions were planned between teams and static displays for the Coastal Defence Strategy consultation were displayed in the Local Plan exhibitions and vice versa.
- g.** The number of attendees at each exhibition is set out in the consultation report (appendix 1) - it is considered that this represents a series of well-attended exhibitions.
- h.** Stakeholders were able to comment on the consultation in a number of ways:
- Online survey – promoted widely and the best way to provide detailed feedback. The questions asked were based on the content within the full consultation document.
  - Paper survey – a paper version of the online survey was available for those unable to access it online. Paper versions were available on request and copies were available to collect from community centres and libraries (as well as The Spring in Havant), with the ability to do so publicised using online and offline methods. In addition, paper copies of the survey were available to collect at the face-to-face exhibition events. A phone number was also provided for those without internet access to contact the council.
  - Digital engagement tool - The Council utilised the Citizenlab digital engagement tool to invite comments on the proposals. Anyone was able to create an account on the Citizenlab site

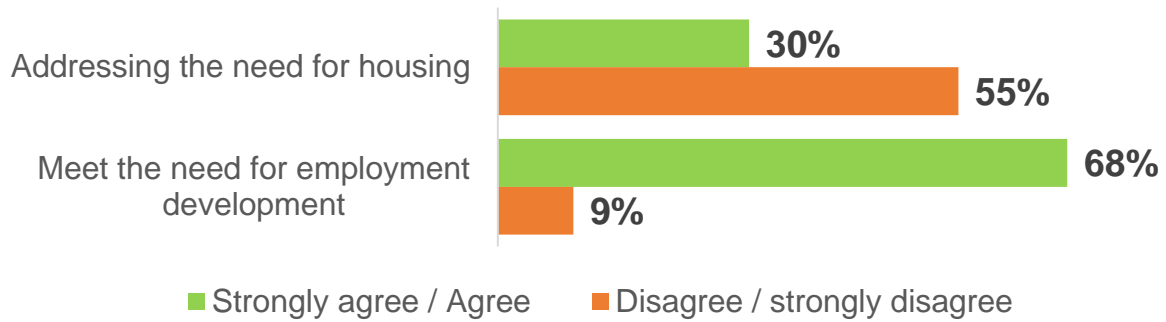
and submit qualitative comments in relation to the proposals, as well as view comments submitted by other users.

- Through the exhibitions – as well as discussing the consultation material with Council officers, residents were able to complete comment cards

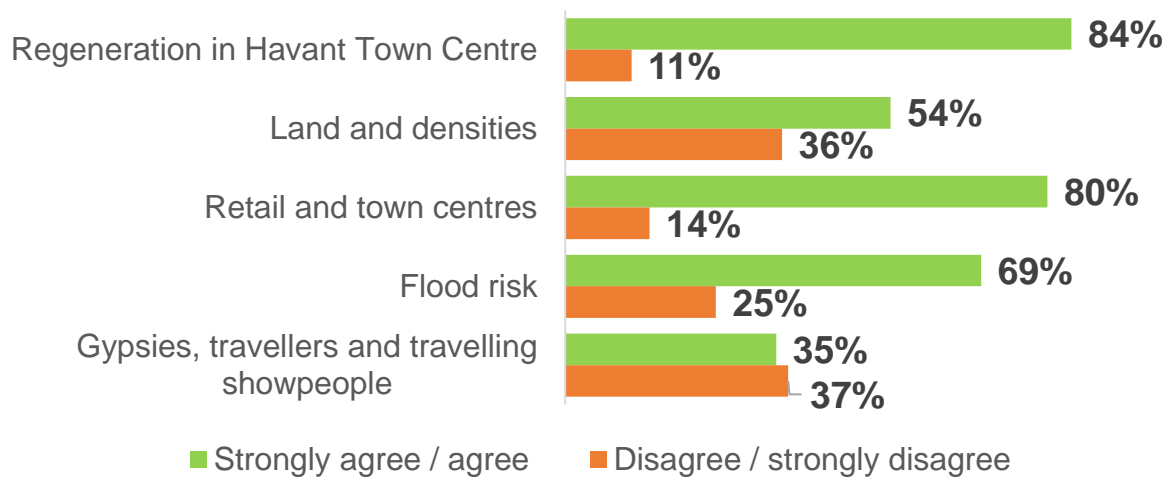
### **Findings of the consultation**

- i. A detailed analysis of the comments received during the consultation is the Consultation Findings Report, at appendix A of this report.
- j. The graphs below provide a snapshot of views expressed within the Consultation Document.
- k. There was broad support for most of the approaches detailed within the Document, with higher levels of agreement from respondents for the majority of the themes.
- l. There was more disagreement with the proposed approach to 'addressing the need for housing' (55% of respondents disagreed) and 'landscape and loss of agricultural land' (47% disagreed).
- m. This is similarly reflected in higher levels of respondents disagreeing with the approaches to transport and communications (35%), pollution (34%) and infrastructure (30%).
- n. However, respondents were more supportive of the overall approach to the impact on the natural environment, infrastructure and climate change..

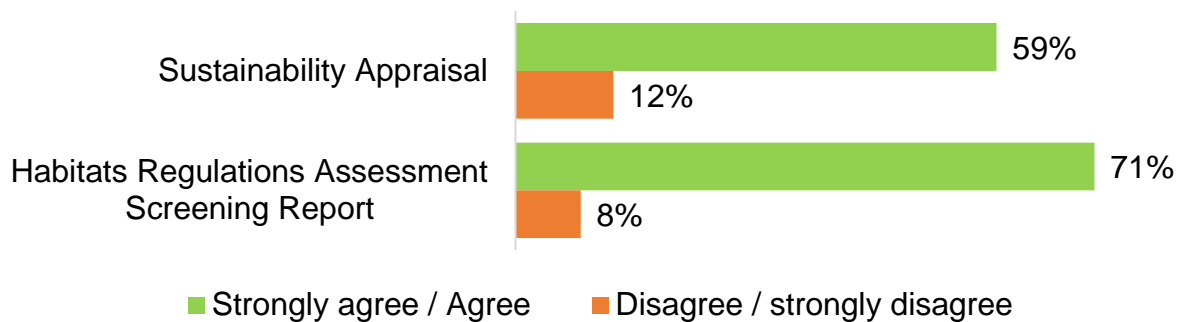
## How much development



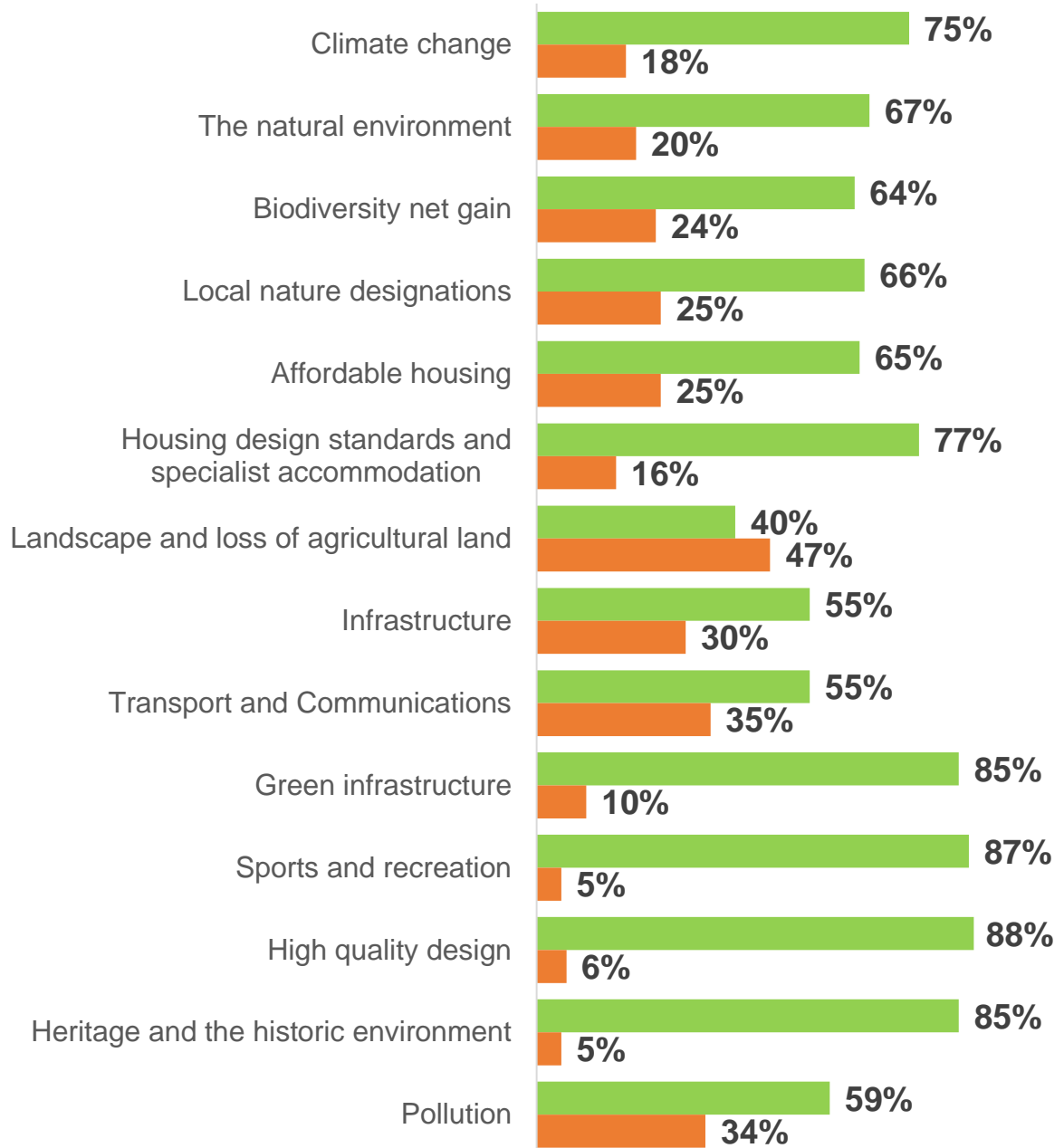
## Pattern of development



## Statutory Assessments



## Quality of development



- o.** The consultation survey asked respondents to rank, in order, the top 5 priorities that they think the Plan should place greater emphasis upon. The top themes chosen at this question also reflected key findings throughout the consultation and across consultation methods. These were as follows:
- The natural environment,
  - Local nature designations,
  - Open spaces, and
  - Designated landscapes
- p.** Across the consultation (including all methods), the four above themes were very strong, particularly in terms of how often they were discussed, the inter-locking relationship they have as four themes, and their influence and impact upon other themes in the consultation.
- q.** Reducing the impact of development on the natural environment was chosen as the top priority by survey respondents (52% chose this amongst their top five priorities) for the Plan to place greater emphasis upon. Protecting, conserving, and enhancing the borough's local nature designation was chosen as the second highest priority by survey respondents (39%). Retaining and enhancing open spaces ranked third, with 35% of survey respondents choosing this within their top five priorities. Recognising, protecting, and enhancing designated landscapes although not in the top five themes overall, was ranked fifth in themes chosen as the most important priority.
- r.** Securing the timely provision of infrastructure was also highlighted as a priority for respondents throughout the survey. For the top themes chosen as being important within the Plan, infrastructure was ranked as the fourth highest priority by survey respondents (34% chose this amongst their top five priorities). Additionally, when asked for what areas the Plan could focus on, it was also chosen as the top theme (out of five options) by survey respondents (29% chose this as the most important).
- s.** Across the consultation (including all methods), the infrastructure theme was strong, particularly in terms of how often it was discussed and its cross-cutting relationship with some other themes in the



consultation. When consultation respondents were discussing infrastructure, this was in relation to:

- Transport: particularly the road network, but also mentioned regarding public transport and active travel routes
  - Water: particularly sewage and wastewater
  - Health: such as GP surgeries, hospitals, and pharmacies
  - Education: particularly schools (primary and secondary)
- t. Infrastructure capacity and pollution concerns often meant either respondents were against development unless infrastructure provision was planned for or considered alongside new housing developments, upgraded or expanded beforehand (and therefore meet demand and address pollution concerns), or it meant that respondents opposed development generally (particularly if they felt that upgrades or expansion to infrastructure provision was not achievable.)
- u. Across the consultation, climate change, flood risk and low carbon design themes were also strong, particularly in terms of how often they were discussed, the relationship between the themes and their influence and impact upon other themes in the consultation.
- v. Managing the flood risk to the borough was chosen as the fifth top priority by survey respondents (31% chose this amongst their top five priorities) for the Plan to place greater emphasis upon. The council meeting climate change targets, although not in the top five themes overall, was ranked as fourth amongst the most important priorities for survey respondents. Just under half (47%) of survey respondents selected low carbon design either as first or second choice for further focus in the Plan (out of five options), making this score rank second highest.

## **Moving forwards**

- w.** This report solely reports what has been said through the 2022 consultation. The Council is not yet proposing a course of action in response at this stage. One of the key reasons for this is the uncertainty surrounding proposed reforms to the planning system recently consulted on. Once it becomes clear the final extent of reforms the Council will be in a position to set out its next steps.
- x.** As the Local Plan is developed, the results of the consultation will be considered alongside emerging evidence base studies.
- y.** Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the protection and enhancement of the Borough's natural environment scored particularly highly in terms of feedback through this consultation.
- z.** For this area in particular, there are a great deal of initiatives which are in train – most notably the implementation of the Environment Act and the requirement for all development to achieve biodiversity net gain. This will be brought in as a legal requirement, starting in November 2023. As such, biodiversity net gain will be introduced regardless of what the Building a Better Future Plan says regarding this matter or the speed of the plan's development.
- aa.** However there is also an opportunity for the local plan to explore going above and beyond the statutory minimum for these initiatives in order to reflect the strong sentiment for the local plan to address these matters. However as was highlighted within the consultation document, this will need to be managed in terms of the viability impact with other areas, notably, infrastructure provision, affordable housing, low carbon design and housing quality standards.

## **6. Options considered**

- a.** This report feeds back factually on the comments which were received to the consultation and thus there are no alternative options.

## **7. Resource implications**

### **a. Financial implications**

- i. As was set out in paragraph 7.1 of the Full Council report of 16 March 2022, the preparation of a new local plan has financial implications across the medium term which will need to feed into the budget setting process.
- ii. There will clearly be costs, both direct and internal, of the preparation of the Building a Better Future Plan. Costs in the last financial year were accommodated within the 2022/23 budget, which was largely prepared prior to the plan's withdrawal.
- iii. Projected costs for the period to submission have fed into the preparation of the 2023/24 budget.

#### **Section 151 Officer comments**

16 December 2022

Temporary increases will need to be made to the Planning Service base revenue budget in order to facilitate the implementation of the 'Building a Better Future Plan'. The impact on the 2023/24 budget, and revised Medium Term Financial Strategy, will be incorporated within the budget setting papers considered by Council in February 2023.

### **b. Human resources implications**

- i. None.

### **c. Information governance implications**

- i. The consultation on the Building a Better Future Plan was undertaken in line with the Privacy Notice for Planning Policy. A specific privacy notice was prepared for the survey itself, specific to its needs.

### **d. Climate and environment implications**

- i. The preparation of the new local plan represents a key element both in the Council's response to climate change and its role in managing the Borough's natural environment. This was noted by the Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022.
- ii. These were two elements which were specifically consulted on and scored highly. This will be considered as the local plan is prepared with policies on low carbon design, materials, water use, biodiversity net gain and various matters related to the Habitats Regulations likely needed.

#### **e. Other resources implications**

- i. Whilst the UK's is a plan-led planning system, the circumstances where a planning application can be refused on the grounds of prematurity are very specific and unlikely to apply to schemes outside of the key regeneration areas and Southleigh. As such, planning applications for new housing will continue to come forward and will need to be determined.
- ii. It should be noted that due to the twin pressures of not having an up-to-date local plan and not having a five year housing land supply, the number and scale of speculative planning applications will continue and potentially increase. This will further increase pressure on many of the Council's services. This is most notable in terms of the Development Management Team, however is also relevant to those teams which feed in specialist advice to considering planning applications.

### **8. Legal implications**

- a. The preparation, examination and adoption of a Local Plan is governed by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the NPPF and The Planning Practice Guidance. The 2022 consultation was

a consultation under Regulations 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulation 2012.

- b. Councils are required to review their Local Plans every five years. Failure to progress a new Local Plan for the Borough would fall foul of this requirement, resulting in reliance on the existing Local Plan which would lead to appeals against decisions made by Planning Committee with the likelihood of successful appeals being high.
- c. Preparation of a new Local Plan is a legislative process, with the final adopted Local Plan being subject to a legal challenge period. The Council will should take all necessary steps to ensure a sound Local Plan is in place as soon as possible.

### **Monitoring Officer comments**

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

The matter of consultation with the public is an implicit part of formulating any council's local plan. In the case of Havant Borough Council, formulation of this document is a power reserved to the Planning Policy Committee under the Constitution (Part 2 Section E1A paragraph 2.1). Accordingly, it's appropriate for the Committee to note those matters being raised in this report.

## **9. Risks and mitigations**

- a. This report is factual in nature and feeds back on the comments received from the 2022 consultation. As such, there are no risks specifically to this report. Nonetheless, there are risks entailed in the development of the Building a Better Future Plan. A project risk register is maintained and risks are monitored as the plan is prepared.

## **10. Consultation**

- a. This report feeds back on the consultation which took place in late 2022. If endorsed by the Planning Policy Committee, a link will be

provided on the local plan section of the website and notifications will be sent to all who have signed up through the website.

## **11. Communications**

- a. As set out within the body of the report and appendix 1, a great deal of resource was put into the communications regarding the consultation in order to ensure that anyone who wished to, is aware of the consultation.
- b. Moving forwards, it is important that communications on the local plan continue, although will inevitably be less than during a consultation.

## **12. Appendices**

- a. Appendix 1 – Consultation Report

## **13. Background papers**

- a. Full Council Report 16 March 2022 - UPDATE ON THE EXAMINATION OF THE HAVANT BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN, WITHDRAWAL OF THE HAVANT BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN FROM EXAMINATION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE HOUSING DELIVERY POSITION STATEMENT
- b. Full Council Report 21 September 2022 – CONSULTATION ON THE BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN – THE NEW LOCAL PLAN FOR HAVANT BOROUGH

**Agreed and signed off by:**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Elizabeth Lloyd, 28 February 2023

**Executive Head:** Alex Robinson, 3 May 2023

**Monitoring Officer:** Mark Watkins, 23 March 2023

**Section 151 Officer:** Malcolm Coe, 16 December 2022

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