

Secondary School for Clandon in new Local Plan

The latest draft of the Guildford Local Plan includes the surprise announcement of the proposals for a new Secondary School on the site behind Cuckoo Farm, first identified as a possible development site in the Issues and Options document published last Autumn. The surprise is all the greater as it appears to have come out of the blue with developments on the three sites previously identified in West Clandon thought to be on the back burner as attention was focussed on Gosden Hill.

The School is described as a new (minimum five-form entry) secondary school at land to the south of Clandon station and north of Meadowlands, West Clandon. The proximity to the railway station makes the site particularly attractive with the possibility of the school servicing a wide catchment area, including the proposed new development at Gosdon Hill with its new station at Merrow Park.

The impact on the village whoever is likely to be considerable with the inevitability of additional traffic at peak times and pressure for additional development, particularly if the school becomes popular. Promoters of the scheme will point to the increasing attractiveness of the village to families to young children and the increased viability of new village services, particularly close to the School site which will attract in excess of 1000 staff and students daily effectively doubling the day-time population of the village.

Unlike East Horsely, West Clandon remains in the Green Belt but some of the developments proposed nearby would have an impact on the Parish. These include major developments at Gosden Hill and Wisley Airfield, each over 2000 homes when complete, significant expansions at Send and Burnt Common, a proposal to take Send Prison out of green belt and allow development, and moves to allow more infill within the village itself.

The total number of homes in the Guildford plan has been set at 652 per year, at the lower end of the range proposed in the initial consultation but well above the numbers identified in previous plans.

The Plan is supported by a number of other studies including the updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which indicates what development could be accommodated in the town centre, urban areas and identified villages and the Settlement Hierarchy which is designed to help Guildford Borough Council assess the suitability of each settlement to accommodate future development. This document concludes,

“West Clandon is an identified Green Belt settlement and as such development is limited to infilling within the existing settlement boundary provided the development is in keeping with the character of the village. If we were to remove the settlement boundary within the new Local Plan then we would remove the scope for future infill development.

West Clandon contains few key community services and facilities (small village); however, its key benefit is its excellent connectivity via Clandon Railway Station providing direct access to the wider employment market including Guildford and London. This raises the question as to whether an extension to the village could enable service improvements through future mixed use development and improve access to key services for local residents. Therefore if suitable sites are found this area could benefit from additional mixed use development in the future through an extension. There would also be scope for a rural

exception site to provide affordable housing for residents. The implications of this conclusion do not appear to have been reflected in the Draft Local Plan itself but remain part of the evidence base.”

The Local Plan is still a draft and after a further period of consultation will lead to the production of a Submission Local Plan in Early 2015. This will lead to submission to the Secretary of State followed by independent examination by an inspector. The Final Plan with any amendments recommended by the Inspector will be published in late 2015.

The full document can be seen at

http://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/16966/Item-32---Appendix-2-Draft-Local-Planpdf/pdf/pdf214_1.pdf

Other relevant document recently published includes:

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

A partial update to the SHLAA was published on 1 May 2014. The SHLAA is part of the evidence that informs the preparation of the new Local Plan. It identifies land with potential for housing use, the possible number of new homes and the potential time-frame for development. This update indicates what development could be accommodated in the town centre, urban areas and identified villages. GBC plan to complete a full SHLAA update for the whole borough in due course. The document is available to view at www.guildford.gov.uk/shlaa.

Traveller Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (Traveller SHLAA)

A Traveller Accommodation Assessment was published last year, which identifies the need for new accommodation for the local Traveller community now and in the years to come. Following on from this GBC published their Traveller Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment on 7 May to help identify land that could be used to provide traveller accommodation. You can view the Traveller SHLAA at www.guildford.gov.uk/travellershlaa.

Settlement Hierarchy

The Settlement Hierarchy groups together those settlements that have similar functions and characteristics. This will help us decide the location of future development across the borough by directing growth towards those settlements which are the most sustainable, or can be made more sustainable through additional growth. GBC have updated the Settlement Hierarchy to take account of any changes. The document is available to view at www.guildford.gov.uk/settlementhierarchy.

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A number of local organisation are campaigning against the proposals including the Guildford Residents' Association. See <http://www.westclandon.org.uk/docs/Don'tWreckGuildford2014fv.pdf>