

Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan Review 2019 – 2037

Policy SB6 Using Scarce Employment Land Efficiently

Supporting Evidence SB6.EV4

Employment – Meeting with CDC 5 July 2019

Note of Meeting 09:30, 5th July 2019, CDC Offices

Present: Karen Neglia, Economic Development Officer CDC – Inward Investment & Growth

Sue Talbot, Volunteer Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan Review

Geoff Talbot, Volunteer Southbourne Neighbourhood Plan Review

Draft Agenda

1. The background to the meeting was the Chichester Local Plan Review 2035 (Preferred Approach) and the consequent review of the Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The meeting had been requested by the NP volunteers to discuss employment land allocation.
2. Brief resume of past CDC economic/employment studies and findings in respect of Southbourne Parish prior to 2018.
3. General nature of employment activities within Southbourne Parish; the relationship of the Parish to Chichester and Havant employment centres; brief conclusions of the Southbourne Business Survey 2013; changes 2013/2015 to 2018.
4. Chichester Local Plan Review – Supporting evidence: CDC HEDNA; update of the HEDNA?; Parish level interpretation of Policies AL 13 and DM10?
5. CDC's approach to changing employment trends and working conditions; possible application Southbourne e.g home working, provision of centralised co working facilities.
6. Next stages.

Discussion

1. A note on the Evidence Base documents relevant to the Review of both the Chichester Local Plan Preferred Approach and the consequent review of the Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan had been provided to Karen prior to the meeting. Referring to the note Geoff gave a brief resume of past CDC economic/employment studies and findings in respect of Southbourne Parish prior to 2018.
2. Geoff explained that the major part of employment was the Clovelly Rd/Park Rd area; apart from a few recently constructed units the remainder comprised older units which commanded lower rents or were owner occupied. A number of units had been demolished but as yet were to be redeveloped. The general appearance of the area belied

the fact that there were a number of high skilled activities taking place. There were several marinas and associated activities located in the Parish. Drawing on results of Southbourne Business Survey 2013 together with the geographic relationship of the Parish to the Chichester and Havant employment centres meant that the majority of local firms tended to employ around 10 employees with most commuting into the area to work whilst most residents travelled to the main centres of Portsmouth, Havant, Chichester and beyond. The 2011 census indicated that there was a high level of professional and skilled residents as well as a high level of self-employed craftsmen together with anecdotal evidence of an increasing level of home working. Reference was made to recent data published by ONS regarding the continuing rise in the employed population made up of home workers and the self-employed. There appeared to be little change in the local situation between 2013/2015 and the publication of the Preferred Approach 2018.

3. Referring to the Chichester Local Plan Review – Supporting Evidence Geoff indicated that the CDC HEDNA analysis/proposals did not relate to parish level and some of the assumptions adopted may not reflect the situation locally. It was noted that an update of the HEDNA might be undertaken. It was not known when the results might be available and whether they might be at Parish level in order to provide an estimate of the requirements of Policies AL 13 and DM10? It appeared to the Neighbourhood Plan Review team that employment land allocation would best be related to reflect the changing employment trends and working conditions with possible allocations related solely to home working, the provision of centralised co working facilities and easy start up facilities.
4. Karen agreed that the location of Southbourne relative to the main employment centres of Chichester, Havant and Portsmouth meant that the thrust of employment land allocation remained in these centres and she advised that a review of CDC's inward investment strategy/policy was being undertaken in order to support this approach. In addition, she was aware that a review of the HEDNA might be undertaken but did not believe that it would provide information at Parish level. She supported the suggestion that future provision of employment facilities within Southbourne Parish should reflect the changes in working habits. In addition to the list of hot desk/co working facilities in Chichester, Karen suggested the addition of the Fernhurst Community Centre, as an example of small scale provision, and that an attempt to arrange meetings with the respective providers would be useful. As an example of the change in working practice/employment facility she provided the example of the relocation of the Chichester Observer newspaper in rented offices at Freedom Works, Metro House.
5. It was agreed that meetings between the Neighbourhood Plan Review team and the various facilities would be undertaken and Karen would supply some contact details.

Post Meeting Note

The Economic Development Department confirmed in an email dated 13th November 2019 that:-

“The current requirement for Southbourne for commercial space is relatively low. The Clovelly Road and Park Road estates are generally doing well, despite their age. Total vacancy rates as of August this year for commercial space in Southbourne was 11% (this does not include retail, only those in the B use classes).

Given that large sites have been allocated in the Local Plan and Local Plan Review, I would expect anything allocated within Southbourne itself wouldn't need to be any more than 800-1000m² of additional commercial space. I would expect this to act as ancillary to the commercial space in both Chichester District Council and Havant Borough Councils Local Plans. Anything larger than that would, in my opinion, be very likely to **not** come forward for commercial space due to viability constraints as the costs of infrastructure requirements would outweigh the value of the land for commercial purposes.

Currently, commercial space within a community area is doing well in smaller settlements, I know you have spoken to Fernhurst and this is a good example of community space with commercial uses alongside community uses. Operations such as Rume 2 and Freedom Works have shown that “hot desk” space is required in the general area, I am aware that Rume 2 have plans to expand their offer.”

This view was re-affirmed in a further email from CDC dated 21st July 2020 which added that:-

“Initial reports on B use space post covid-19 are veering more towards the likes of Rume2 and FreedomWorks as larger companies are less likely to want to commit to long term leases for space that they use infrequently.”

end

