

## CASTLE POINT PLAN BOARD

### Note of Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024

#### **Present:**

Councillors: Gibson, Copsey, Lillis, Mountford, Palmer, and Fuller.

Officers in attendance: Gavin Ball (Principal Planning Officer), Maria Hennessy (Senior Planning Policy Officer), Matt Amner (Planning Policy Officer), Amanda Parrott (Assistant Director of Climate and Growth).

Apologies: Councillors Blackwell and Savage, Angela Hutchings (Chief Executive), Dominic Chessum (Communications), Ian Butt (Director of Place and Communities), Neil Gale (Community Engagement Officer)

#### Agenda

Members considered the infrastructure and transport elements of the Castle Point Plan, covering the following matters:

##### **1. General Comment**

The need to ensure that charities are covered by community infrastructure policies was identified as a need, and officers were asked to review the policies for community buildings to support the charitable sector.

##### **2. Health and Social Care provision**

Members support proposals to improve provision.

Members support proposals regarding securing developer contributions.

Members support including a policy hook for allocating uses on sites.

##### **3. Open Spaces**

Members want to ensure Public Open Spaces are designated on the policies map.

Members support policies that restrict loss of publicly accessible open spaces unless it falls under three conditions:

Unless surplus, It will be replaced elsewhere, Development is for sports / recreation

Members support policies that will improve access to open space as well as improving facilities and ensuring new open spaces in large developments where there is existing deficiency.

##### **4. Indoor Leisure and Sports**

This includes community buildings, indoor and outdoor sports

Members support policies that supports protection and enhancement of existing facilities.

Members support policies that support making wider use of other spaces for indoor leisure and sport.

Members support policies to secure contributions to provide additional spaces.

**5. Telecommunications**

Members support policies to ensure all new homes will have superfast connection.

Members support policies to manage construction and operation of new masts, as well as the design and location of new masts to reduce visual and amenity impacts on nearby residents.

**6. Public Houses**

Members considered whether there was a need to protect public houses. Whilst their status within the community was noted, there was a concern about trying to protect unviable businesses. Following extensive discussion, it was agreed that there is a need to incorporate the protection of older public house buildings in terms of their contribution to local character. This is therefore a heritage matter, and officers will look to address this in relevant section of the plan.

**7. Utilities**

Members support the view that existing development should not be worsened by new development.

Members support policies that ensure utility provision is sufficient at the time of application. Officers advised that a policy of this nature had been included for drainage within the withdrawn local plan, and that they could review and incorporate a similar policy in the CP Plan.

**8. Cultural environment**

Members agreed that community buildings used for cultural activities would be incorporated into the policy seeking to protect community buildings.

**9. Off-site renewables**

Members reviewed consultation responses in respect of this matter. It is clear that there is some support for off-site renewables, but also concern about harm to the green belt. Overall, Members felt a policy supporting on-site renewables would be preferable to large scale off-site provision.

However, they also requested the call for sites outcomes in relation to large scale energy renewable sites for evaluation, in case there are potentially suitable sites outside the Green Belt.

**10. Blue light services**

Members considered a joint representation from the blue light organisations for specific policy consideration in the CP Plan. Members indicated support for the inclusion of policy requirements in this regard.

## **11. Transport**

Members support policies for new movement patterns that reduce congestion.

Members support policies enabling more movement by active and public transport.

Members support policies to improve accessibility to and through green spaces. The existing cycling network is poor, and Members were of the view that on-street provision would be difficult due to limited highway space in many locations. Officers were asked to explore off-street opportunities through parks and open spaces. Through this discussion, Members recognised that active travel could have health benefits to local residents.

Members recognise that congestion is an issue and there is limited scope to widen carriageways and there are limited routes in and out of the borough and off Canvey.

Members also recognise that currently the bus services primarily serve Basildon & Southend not Castle Point.

## **12. Transport Strategy – Approach**

Members support the goals of these policies including: managing congestion on key routes and at key junctions, improving the range and reliability of buses to encourage use and to provide greater opportunities to walk & cycle. Members support policies that secure local infrastructure improvements through S106.

## **13. Linked Policies**

Members discussed how the transport strategy could support the Urban First spatial strategy and the Town Centre mixed use development policy.

## **14. Development Management Policies**

Members discussed and reviewed policy options in relation to the requirements for transport assessments and travel plans, in relation to the requirements for safe and sustainable access, in relation to parking and in relation to HGV servicing. As part of this discussion reasonable alternatives were discussed.