

Comments on Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Local Plan, submitted 3 Oct 2013

I cannot see enough detail on the preservation of water quality, particularly groundwater protection and storm runoff in the major new developments; also there is an air of despair about improving the Borough sewage works to cope with the new developments. If you cannot prevent the discharge from worsening from its already unacceptable quality, no development at all can take place.

A grey water re-use scheme should be built into all the self-contained developments. Storm water should not be mixed with foul water but stored for use or, if clean enough, directed to re-charge the aquifers. A community action plan to reduce phosphates and other pollutants from domestic washing and cleaning agents should be incorporated. Natural technology, i.e. a reed bed, might be interposed between the sewage works and its discharge into the river (land needs to be acquired).

Affordable housing is a mixed blessing if the occupants suffer from fuel poverty or transport poverty as a consequence of inadequate planning. Affordable housing must include HMOs otherwise a whole section of the community (single impoverished under-35s) cannot occupy the new developments.

Affordable housing should be build to "passivhaus" standards (by cross-subsidy if necessary and possible) so that the occupants need spend the minimum on heating, and it should be planned into the developments so that the occupants can get to public transport, shops and schools without having to run cars or spend money on taxis (particularly elderly and disabled residents). It is also necessary to consider single under-35s whose housing benefit forces them to live in single rooms in houses-in-multiple-occupation. Purpose-built HMOs with the highest standards of soundproofing as well as insulation and the delivery of the shared services should be a required part of the new developments. Otherwise there will be a whole section of the community that will be excluded from living there.

While national policy is a bit on-and-off, it is generally in favour of electric vehicles. Provision for these should be included locally. This includes cars and disabled-scooters/buggies.

Fast charging points in communal places, and access to mains electricity in residential parking areas, should be designed into the new developments. Also there should be provision of accommodation, with charging points, for electric disabled-scooters/buggies, either within the (purpose-built) homes of non-ambulant people or handy for them, and designed to be secure against theft and vandalism. It might be possible to combine the charging points with solar and/or wind power generators to minimise the cost of mains electricity use in vehicle charging.

I don't see a mention of preventing fire (raising or spreading) on the heathlands.

The council could work with developers and community educators and the police and fire agencies to reduce the risk of fire and make it easier for citizens to put out or report heath fires. Ensuring a

sound scheme for bulky waste disposal to discourage flytipping should help. Involving local people more in fire prevention and extinguishing might reduce the incidence of arson and carelessness.

I see no specific targets for reducing the use of fossil fuels or cars in any of the new developments.

I think you should set specific targets, such as proportion of two-car households (low), proportion of electric cars (high), percentage time that central heating should be needed to keep house temperatures above 16 deg C (say), proportion of children who can walk to the new schools (a large majority) and frequency and capacity of public-transport services (e.g. what proportion of the working residents can be conveyed to Basingstoke Station by bus (or tram!) in the mornings to catch commuter services to London - and can local jobs be provided for the remainder so they don't need to take their cars into town?). It should be possible to work out such targets on the basis of existing information on employment destinations of borough residents.

Policies for broadband access need to extend to the design of individual houses.

The houses should be designed to include "smart metering" and the possibility of remote control of utilities by absent occupants. This should allow fuel use to be minimised. Also some thought should be given to purpose-built units for disabled people to incorporate mechanisation/remote control of household equipment e.g. power supplies for stairlifts (if stairlifts are unavoidable); remote control of blinds/curtains, movement-sensitive lighting in key areas, and "panic" systems for summoning help