Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Examination

Hearing Day 8

Matter 4 Policies

Note on Policy SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside

1. This note responds to an action arising in the hearing session on Matter 4 Policies (Wednesday 18th September, AM) which relates to the provision of a note considering modifications in relation to the requirement in the policy for demonstrating that a scheme for more than three dwellings has the support of the community.

2. Policy SCLP5.4 states that proposals for more than three dwellings (but up to five dwellings) within clusters in the countryside would need to demonstrate that the scheme has the support of the local community. The supporting text, in paragraph 5.26 of the Final Draft Local Plan, explains that it is expected that any planning issues raised by the community are adequately addressed in order for a proposal to be supported.

3. Inspector’s question 4.3 asked whether it is justified that a scheme is supported by the local community and whether the Plan is clear as to how such support should be demonstrated. The Council’s response to the Inspector’s question (Council’s Matter 4 Statement, page 3) explained that the requirement is considered to be consistent with paragraph 77 of the NPPF and that the policy is aiming to support rural communities.

4. During the hearing session discussion was had around whether it is appropriate for the policy to require that applicants must demonstrate that the scheme has the support of the local community and what this would entail in practice. The Inspector has asked that the Council consider a modification to provide clarification in this respect.

5. The requirement for the scheme having the support of the local community is not intended to require unanimous support or to place the decision making process elsewhere, however is intended to ensure that meaningful engagement takes place with the community and that the outputs from this inform any proposal that is submitted. Whilst this is explained in paragraph 5.26, a modification is proposed to provide further guidance and clarity, as set out below.

6. Modifications are shown in strikethrough for deleted text and in underline for additional text. The Council will include this revised wording in the schedule of modifications that is being collated as part of the Examination.
Modifications to Paragraph 5.26:

“For development of four of five dwellings the Council would require applicants to demonstrate that there is community support for the proposal. Proposals should therefore be informed by meaningful and effective engagement has taken place with the community, including with the Parish Council, and that the submitted scheme will be expected to addresses any planning issues raised and to reflect needs identified by the community. To demonstrate support of the local community, applicants should submit a statement describing the consultation and engagement undertaken, the outcomes of the consultation and engagement and how planning matters raised have been addressed and this is reflected in the proposal.”