Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Examination

Hearing Day 5

Matter 4 Policies

Note on Policy SCLP12.25 Suffolk Police Headquarters, Portal Avenue, Martlesham Heath

1. This note responds to an action arising from the Matter 3 hearing session (Wednesday 4th September, PM) and the representations submitted by Martlesham Parish Council in relation to Policy SCLP12.25. The Council proposed to put forward modifications reflecting the discussions held during the hearing session and the representations made by Martlesham Parish Council as contained in ‘Representations on the Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan – In Plan Order’ (Document A7, page 1863 – 1873).

2. The relevant Inspector’s questions are set out below:

   • Question 3.28 – Is Policy SCLP12.25 consistent with the policies of the Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan?

   • Question 3.29 – Are there any factors which would mean that the site is not ‘deliverable’ or ‘developable’ as per the definitions in the Framework?

   • Question 3.30 – Is the loss of office floorspace justified in the context of the overall supply of employment land?

   • Question 3.31 – Is the Policy consistent with national policy in respect of open space and recreation as set out in paragraphs 96-97 of the Framework and is it justified?

   • Question 3.32 – Would the Policy be effective in conserving the significance of designated Heritage Assets?


4. Modifications to paragraph 12.230 and the inclusion of an additional criterion m) (now criterion o) were agreed with Historic England through a Statement of Common Ground which was submitted prior to the hearing session.

5. The Council considers that the Policy is sound as submitted in the Final Draft Local Plan, including with the addition of text agreed with Historic England, however would support the modifications set
out below. Modifications are shown in strikethrough for deleted text and in underline for additional text. The modifications agreed through the Statement of Common Ground with Historic England (now criterion o) are also shown below for clarity, along with the typographical error identified paragraph 12.228 as set out in the Council’s response to question 3.28. The Council will include this revised wording in the schedule of modifications that is being collated as part of the Examination.

Modifications to paragraph 12.225:

“Land at Suffolk Police Headquarters, Portal Avenue is allocated for development of 300 dwellings. The Suffolk Police Headquarters site is situated on the northern edge of Martlesham Heath with vehicle access onto the A1214 via Portal Avenue. Suffolk Constabulary have indicated that they intend to vacate the site during the plan period, and thus it is expected that redevelopment of the site would come forward as part of a programme of re-provision of Police facilities. The existing buildings on the site are becoming dated and are unlikely to provide the high quality office space which would meet modern day needs. This provides an opportunity to plan positively to deliver dwellings and community uses on a brownfield site. The site is well connected to the Martlesham Heath District Centre by existing walking and cycling infrastructure that could be enhanced through redevelopment of the site.”

Modifications to paragraph 12.227:

“The Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan was ‘made’ in July 2018. Policy MAR5 identifies a need for bungalows, flats and sheltered accommodation in Martlesham Heath. Due to its physical separation from the lower density parts of the village and its accessible location, it is considered that this site lends itself to incorporating a mix of providing flatted development and small, high density units in a manner which contributes to a high quality of design, due to its physical separation from the lower density parts of the village.”

Modifications to paragraph 12.228:

“In the west of the site there are currently sports pitches. The existing sports facilities on the site provide an opportunity to increase provision of such facilities for all age groups by exploring arrangements to make them available for community use, as supported in Policy SCLP12.17 SCLP12.18. The Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan supports measures to address the lack of sports facilities for all ages and the underuse of the Police Headquarters sports facilities. The Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan identifies a need for additional sports provision in the village and therefore it is expected that provision of sports facilities for use by the community should be provided as part of the proposals. In identifying provision for open space and sports facilities, consideration should also be given to any needs being met by the existing sports provision on site, and any loss of provision, including through the proposed creation of alternative sports uses. Existing open space and sports facilities provision should be assessed in terms of whether it is surplus to requirements, would be replaced elsewhere or redevelopment of the site would incorporate equivalent or better provision in
respect of quantity and quality. Owing to the existing facilities on site, the policy expects that open
space and sports provision would be made available for the community through the redevelopment
of the site.”

Modifications to paragraph 12.230:

“This site affects an area of extremely high archaeological significance and potential, on the former
Martlesham Heath in the area of a series of at least eight Bronze-Age/prehistoric barrows which are
either extant monuments or cropmarks. Three of the aforementioned eight bowl barrows are
Scheduled Monuments and are outside but in close proximity to the site boundary to the north and
west. The centre of the site includes below ground remains of one of these eight bowl barrows. One
of these, a cropmark, lies on the site itself. Anglo-Saxon round barrows are recorded to the east and
Prehistoric and Roman finds are also recorded in the vicinity. There is particular potential for
archaeological remains of the barrow and associated burials to survive on the site, along with
prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon satellite burials and activity. The site is also within the extent of
Martlesham airfield. This site has never been the subject of systematic archaeological investigations
and previously unidentified remains may exist on the site which could be damaged or destroyed by
development. The impact of past land use is not known.”

Modifications to paragraph 12.231:

“The site presents an opportunity to provide outdoor spaces, exercise trails, community facilities and
shared work / meeting space. The natural woodland surroundings, sports facilities and location in
relation to networks of green infrastructure present an opportunity to provide community facilities
such as allotments and sports pitches which would benefit the wider community. Opportunities for
community ownership and/or management of such community facilities could be explored.
Permeability throughout the site and linking into the existing public rights of way network is strongly
couraged, with particular regard to pedestrian and cycle accessibility.”

Modifications to Policy SCLP12.25:

“10.7ha of land at the Suffolk Police Headquarters Site is allocated for the development of
approximately 300 dwellings, which is expected to come forward as part of a programme for the re-
provision of Police facilities. Development will be expected to comply with the following criteria:

a) Delivery of a high quality, high density residential scheme incorporating flats and mix of
residences to meet local needs including provision of properties that would be suitable for
older persons;

b) Delivery of a distinctive scheme in the wider context of the Martlesham Heath hamlets and
the important gaps between them;

c) Provision of affordable housing on-site;

d) If needed at the time of a planning application, 0.1ha of land on the site should be reserved
for a new pre-school setting;
e) An archaeological assessment is required;
f) A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment is required;
g) The mature woodland areas should be retained and be accessible;
h) Provision of open space providing opportunities for all ages;
i) Provision of allotments which are accessible to residents and the wider community;
j) Provision of sports facilities with opportunities for community use;
k) Proposals involving the loss of any existing open space, sports and recreational provision will need to demonstrate that such provision is surplus to requirements, that the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality or that the benefits of alternative sports and recreation provision outweigh any loss;
l) Significantly enhance permeability through the site and linking into adjacent pedestrian and cycle routes; and
m) Provision of an ancillary area of communal workspace supporting social interaction and cohesion;

n) An ecological survey will be required, and any necessary mitigation provided; and
o) Design, layout and landscaping to respect the site’s close proximity to three Scheduled Monuments, and a Bowl Barrow on site.”