

RBWM Borough Local Plan Consultation – Draft or “template” for Representations

Below is a written “Representation” (consultation feedback) to the RBWM draft Borough Local Plan (“BLP”), which anyone is welcome to use to aid their own Representations.

RBWM are encouraging Representations to be made online on the Consultation website (consult.rbwm.gov.uk/portal/blp/blp/blp?tab=files) but this is difficult to use; their suggested alternative is to respond using the paper Representation Form downloadable from their website or available in local libraries. Alternatively, we recommend you make your Representation by letter, emailed or posted.

Representations should be emailed to blp@rbwm.gov.uk (or by post to: FREEPOST RBWM PLANNING POLICY). Closing date is 17.00 on Friday 13 January 2017.

We also suggest you copy your response to your local Ward Councillors; make sure they are aware of how you feel about this BLP. A list of Ward Councillors and their emails is included at the end of this document.

Letter to:
RBWM Planning Policy
By email to: blp@rbwm.gov.uk
cc. Ward Councillors

The RBWM Consultation website is too difficult to use for such a complicated and lengthy consultation so I am sending my Representations to you by emailed letter. I request that you reply, explaining how my Representations have been “reviewed and assessed” and how they have “informed the next stage of the Borough Local Plan”.

Representation No. 1: This plan has not been “positively prepared” (reference paragraph 1.7.2)

The Plan sets out proposals for a massive increase in housing but provides no detail for how the necessary infrastructure (roads, schools, parking, GPs etc) will be funded or delivered. This makes it unsound.

In Ascot and the Sunnings we have considerable experience of new development but have historically seen little evidence of a commitment to spend any money on our roads and schools. Instead the money has gone to Maidenhead.

Representation No. 2: OBJECT to land in Ascot centre being removed from the Green Belt (reference paragraph 5.5.20 and Policy SP1 sub-paragraphs 2, 3(c) and 7; and Policy HO1 Site HA10)

What is being proposed in the BLP for Ascot does NOT reflect what is in the Ascot Neighbourhood Plan. The area shown is much larger, the amount of housing much greater and there are no safeguards regarding requirements to improve the roads and roundabouts or the need for green, open spaces and mature trees to be retained. Ascot High Street is gridlocked now, it can't cope with all this new development.

I totally reject the idea of releasing this Green Belt and allowing landowners and developers to destroy our area.

Representation No. 3: BLP policies must not be allowed to override Neighbourhood Plan policies on Design (reference Policy SP3)

I thought BLP policies on design were supposed to be strategic and overarching, so that NP policies could add the detail. The wording of policy SP3 is far too detailed and it will create confusion and misunderstandings. The Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan was supported by 91% of everyone who voted. We now feel that it's being set aside by this BLP, which is wrong.

Delete all the detail in this policy and delete paragraph 5 completely which introduces borough-wide design guidelines that will end up overriding everything in our NP.

Representation No. 4: Ascot and the Sunnings face a totally disproportionate and unfair share of proposed new housing (reference paragraphs 7.1.10-11 and Table 8 'Housing Supply')

Our area is small and characterised by being semi-rural, green and leafy which is what most of us like about it. But the amount of new housing now being proposed will totally destroy this.

Nothing is going to stop developers continuing to develop some of the large plots in our area for blocks of flats or replacing one house with 2 or 3 or more. The rate of development we've experienced over the last few years is more than 60 new units every year; over 20 years that is 1,200 new homes. Add to these the 991 houses on the allocated sites (which is far too many anyway), and we have nearly 2,200 new homes coming to our area. This is a massive 30% increase on the number we have now. It is totally unrealistic and unacceptable relative.

It will totally destroy the character of our area, our roads can't possibly cope (even if money were to be spent on them), we already need a new primary school, so where is that going to go? Our villages haven't got enough parking now, let alone trying to cope with so many more cars.

I recognise that we need more homes but putting so many into this area is totally unsustainable and leads me to challenge the way in which this BLP has been produced – it is not robust.

Representation No. 5: I OBJECT to Sunningdale Park, Heatherwood Hospital and Englemere Lodge being removed from the Green Belt (reference Policy HO1 sub-paragraph 1 and Site references HA31, HA32 and HA33)

I think the Borough have been very devious in how you've done this. There is no mention in the BLP about these sites coming out of the Green Belt; it's only when you look at the Policy Maps that it becomes clear that this is the case. And I strongly OBJECT.

Sunningdale Park and Heatherwood Hospital are both included in the Ascot and the Sunnings Neighbourhood Plan for appropriate development but that is on the basis of their remaining in the Green Belt, which helps ensure that development is more in keeping with the area and the environment. Removing all constraints from these sites will encourage vastly over-dense development that will ruin the surrounding area and cause even more traffic chaos. Similarly, why remove Englemere Lodge from the Green Belt?

Representation No. 6: There is insufficient evidence that required infrastructure can and will be provided (reference paragraph 15 and Policies IF3 and IF4)

The BLP is full of fine words about how important it is to provide "suitable and appropriate infrastructure" and there are also numerous references to "infrastructure currently near to or at full capacity". But there is nothing in the BLP that sets out what infrastructure will be provided and little to say how it will be funded.

Policy IF4 talks about funding from developers through CIL and S106 contributions. But we have a long history in Ascot and the Sunnings of seeing such contributions allocated to other parts of the Borough. The BLP provides no reassurances that CIL from developments in our area will actually be spent in our area; nor is it clear from the BLP or any evidence supporting it, that there will be sufficient funds for the infrastructure needed.

Representation No. 7: The Local Transport Plan is flawed (reference paragraphs 15.7.3 and 15.7.7 and policy IF3)

The Transport Plan referred to dates back to 2012, which is way before all this development was envisaged and before most of the allocated sites were identified. If this is the evidence base for how transport problems such as acute traffic congestion and lack of parking will be solved through this BLP, it is out of date and unsound.

Representation No. 8: Site allocation proformas undermine Neighbourhood Plan policies and create potential for conflict in interpretation (reference Site Proformas HA10, HA30-37 and Policy HO1)

These site proformas include a lot of detail, which has policy weight in accordance with policy HO1. This means that they will be taken to be the primary, if not the only, guide to development on these sites. Neighbourhood Plan policies will either be disregarded or any perceived conflict or confusion in their interpretation will be biased in favour of the BLP proforma. This is wrong and totally against the principles of Localism.

These site proformas should either include a paragraph stating that the NP policies take precedence OR the proformas should include ALL the detail currently in the NP site policies.

Representation No. 9: Remove Ascot Town Centre site from the list of allocated sites (reference Site Proforma HA10)

As already stated in Representation No. 2, I OBJECT to land in Ascot Centre being removed from the Green Belt. This means that I object to the inclusion of Ascot site HA10 in the list of allocated sites. I do not want to see the land south of Ascot High Street turned over to development. Forget about a two-sided High Street – just keep this open space with its mature trees as it is.

I would support the inclusion of the area of the Shorts Recycling site in the BLP for development (but only if it stayed in the Green Belt so that development was modest).

Representation No. 10: Scale of development proposed for Silwood Park too high (reference Site Proforma HA33)

I accept that there may be a case for some modest development at Silwood Park, as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan, but I OBJECT to the site being allocated for 75 homes. Where are they going to go?! Unless they are all going to be flats – and we've had enough of those.

Silwood Park should have no more than 25 houses allocated against it.

Representation No. 11: Scale of development proposed for Sunningdale Park totally unacceptable (reference Site Proforma HA34)

The BLP proposes taking Sunningdale Park out of Green Belt so that 230 units can be built there. Where did this come from? This has never been consulted on and local people would never have supported it if it had been. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates Sunningdale Park as a site ideally for employment. Failing that, it allows for residential development that would be in keeping with the local area, meaning 'Villas in a Woodland Setting' or 'Leafy Residential Suburbs'. So maybe 25 houses? Not 230! Not to mention the traffic implications of all this.

I totally OBJECT to Sunningdale Park being redeveloped for this number of dwellings.

Yours sincerely

Name, full address with postcode; and email (if emailing letter)

List of Ward Councillors Ascot and the Sunnings

Ascot & Cheapside

Cllr Lilly Evans cldr.l.evans@rbwm.gov.uk

Cllr David Hilton cldr.hilton@rbwm.gov.uk

Sunninghill and South Ascot

Cllr Julian Sharpe cldr.sharpe@rbwm.gov.uk

Cllr John Story cldr.story@rbwm.gov.uk

Cllr Lynda Yong cldr.yong@rbwm.gov.uk

Sunningdale

Cllr Christine Bateson cldr.bateson@rbwm.gov.uk

Cllr Sayonara Luxton cldr.luxton@rbwm.gov.uk