

# MEDIA RELEASE



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6 January 2020

**This media release is under EMBARGO until 10:30am, Monday 6 January 2020.**

## **New approach to Local Plan**

Wealden District Council is disappointed by the decision of the Planning Inspector to find that it cannot proceed with its current draft Wealden Local Plan.

“Throughout the Local Plan process, we have always tried to find the right balance between the need for growth in housing and employment land, and the need to protect our unique environment,” said Councillor Bob Standley, Leader of Wealden District Council.

“Our approach to protect the environment has been supported by our Councillors and many of our residents.

“Unfortunately, the Planning Inspector, following last summer’s Examination in Public of our Local Plan, has found that we put too great an emphasis on protecting the environment and that we need to do more to build houses in Wealden which our neighbouring councils cannot accommodate.

“Regrettably, this will inevitably have impacts on our communities. We acknowledge that there is already significant pressure on infrastructure; such as roads, doctors, dentists, schools and sports facilities. A requirement to build more homes will only have a greater impact on those facilities, which will require further investment.”

Councillor Ann Newton, Deputy Leader and Planning and Development Portfolio Holder, added, “We are disappointed at the time taken to reach this decision and the resulting uncertainty created since these issues were discussed in May last year.

“In recommending to withdraw our Local Plan and starting afresh, we will continue to do all we can to ensure that extra growth is accommodated in a way that is sensitive to the needs of existing residents. We will continue to strive for sustainable growth that provides infrastructure for our communities and is consistent with our commitment to become a carbon-neutral District.”

A full copy of the Planning Inspector’s findings of the draft Wealden Local Plan can be found on the Local Plan Examination pages of the Wealden website:

[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Planning\\_and\\_Building\\_Control/Planning\\_Policy/Wealden\\_Local\\_Plan/Wealden\\_Local\\_Plan\\_Examination.aspx](http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Planning_and_Building_Control/Planning_Policy/Wealden_Local_Plan/Wealden_Local_Plan_Examination.aspx)

A new timetable for the Local Plan process will be discussed by the Local Plan Sub-Committee. Planning applications to the Council will continue to be decided on their merits, taking account of all material considerations.

**Notes to editors:**

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