Dear Town or Parish Clerk,

RE: Local Plan Update and Second Call for sites

I am writing to provide you with an update on the emerging Fenland Local Plan. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, work on preparing the Local Plan and the proposed Draft Local Plan consultation in summer 2020 has been delayed. On Tuesday 28 July 2020 Cabinet approved a revised timetable (known as a Local Development Scheme (LDS)) to take into account the delays and also to allow the opportunity for a second call for sites exercise to take place.

The revised LDS shows that consultation on the draft Local Plan will now take place in February 2021.

Call for sites

Local Plans must identify a supply of specific and deliverable sites, particularly during the first five years of the plan. This means that the site must be available now with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. Therefore, the availability and deliverability of sites forms an important part of the site assessment process.

In March 2020 the Council published a Viability Report which shows that across the district development is marginal in financial terms. All Local Plan policies, sites and requirements will be assessed to ensure that the emerging Local Plan will not undermine the deliverability of the Plan and that all sites identified are deliverable. The Viability report will be updated as the plan progresses.

Therefore, the outcomes of the viability report could result in policies in the emerging Local Plan that mean that more sites might be available than originally thought, based upon historic requests for developer contributions and affordable housing.

In addition, given the current economic uncertainty resulting from the COVID 19 pandemic we are also asking any promoters of sites submitted in October 2019 to tell us if the sites are no longer available for development.

If you would like to submit new sites to be considered as part of the Local Plan site assessment process please download and fill in the Site Suggestion Form and return to:

Email: localplan@fenland.gov.uk
Post:
Local Plan Team
Fenland District Council
Fenland Hall
County Road
March
PE15 8NQ

The closing date is 11.59pm on Tuesday 8 September 2020
To be clear there is no requirement to resubmit sites, all sites previously suggested will still be included in the assessment process unless informed otherwise. However, this does provide an opportunity to submit any additional information that may help support previously submitted sites, particularly relating to viability and deliverability of sites.

Next Stage

Once all new sites and updated information has been processed a second SHELAA report will be prepared that will list all new sites.

The preferred sites will be included in the draft Local Plan which will be available for public consultation in February 2021.

For further information please see www.fenland.gov.uk/newlocalplan or e-mail localplan@fenland.gov.uk

Yours Sincerely

Gemma Wildman
Local Plan Manager
Local Plan Team
Fenland District Council