



Hackbridge & Beddington Corner  
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September 2024

## **SUTTON COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

Hackbridge and Beddington Corner Neighbourhood Development Group (NDG) was formally constituted in September 2012 and more recently renewed in October 2022. The group is made up of volunteers who wrote our Neighbourhood Plan which was formally adopted in November 2018.

Below are our comments:-

### **Page 16 - Local Plan Objectives**

9. We do not support decentralised energy network expansion that requires connection to the Viridor incinerator and thereby increases its longevity nor do we support locking residents into only one energy provider.

### **Page 31 – Spatial Strategy**

We support a Town Centre first approach which protects the green spaces and district centres from being over developed with inappropriate tall buildings. It should also be noted that to have the density of homes required does not always mean high rise development and should take BedZED as an example.

### **Page 34 – 3.C Draft Policy 3 on Net Zero Carbon**

(b) We do not support decentralised energy network expansion that requires connection to the Viridor incinerator and thereby increases its longevity nor do we support locking residents into only one energy provider.

### **Issue 4 – Flood Risk Management**

As a district centre that has witnessed many issues from surface water and more recently flooding of Mullards Close flats and Watercress allotments, emphasis needs to be made on maintenance of the gulleys and the river. A lot of the surface water could have been avoided

had the gulleys been maintained to a fit standard over the years. It is also noted that many river project improvements do not have maintenance factored in, which can lead to issues.

The use of rain gardens / bioswales should be used in appropriate places to help alleviate flood risk. Sadly they were put in the wrong places in Hackbridge.

### **Issue 5 – Urban Greening & Climate Change Adaptation**

We welcome the creation of new green infrastructure, especially in Hackbridge where more is needed to combat pollution. Maintenance and access to water however is the key issue and how will this be addressed? Drought tolerant plants still need to be watered until established.

### **Issue 6 – Biodiversity and Habitats**

We agree with the general policy but would like to see more detailed information of when Beddington Farmlands will be open to the public as the end date keeps moving.

Due to the thousands of new homes built in Hackbridge and a high majority being flats in the last few years, access to green space is limited and we would like to see the Land North of BedZED to be formally designated as public access. Mock ups of potential improvements were done at the time Hackbridge Primary School was built and would like to see this progressed with community influence.

The official opening up of this land will enable the connectivity of the surrounding green spaces as part of the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

The de-culvert of the effluent channel on Mill Green would visually enhance the area as well as creating a more natural environment for improving biodiversity, with the possibility of putting some sort of safeguarding to stop pollution running so quickly into the River Wandle.

### **Issue 7 – Strategic Transport Infrastructure**

Hackbridge is an area of intensification, but the infrastructure has not improved to reflect the additional residents but has got worse with the loss of the direct London Bridge train service. With no gated entrance/exit, it is impossible to get the true numbers of commuters, like you can at Carshalton which currently has more trains per hour.

Likewise, the bus service that was to be rerouted through New Mill Quarter didn't happen and the talks of a night bus service has never come forward.

### **Issue 10 – District Centres Strategy**

Hackbridge delivered 15% of Sutton's housing quota during the current Local Plan. This has resulted in good and negative changes.

The lack of parking spaces for residents on New Mill Quarter and miscommunication from Barratt Homes to buyers resulted in a huge uplift of on road parking outside the

development. Parking permit areas have now been created meaning existing residents are now having to pay to park, which doesn't seem reasonable and the parking issue has moved to other areas of Hackbridge and into The Wrythe Ward.

The new development has provided a tall wall of buildings that are not best design practice and create a wind tunnel especially by the shops.

#### Draft Policy 10.C

l. This area has the potential to be something unique in Hackbridge, supporting it becoming a major gateway to the Wandle Valley Regional Park. It should factor in visitors as well as existing residents and their actual needs.

m. We do not agree with this policy and ask for the site allocation for the station and land north of to be changed. Previous planning application for the Land North of Hackbridge Station has seen inappropriately tall blocks of flats proposed that will change the character of Hackbridge further and have a potentially negative impact on Beddington Farmlands wildlife.

It should be noted it is possible to deliver high density housing without the need for tall buildings. Take BedZED for example. Developers should be pushed for innovative design that is specific for the area, not their standard package that gets delivered anywhere.

o. We agree for opportunities to improve public realm, especially the path outside Saxon House. This should never have been signed off by the planning inspector and has resulted in the section of the path belonging to Saxon House to be sloped and hard for residents to walk on / push prams / wheelchairs. The side belonging to the council has service boxes and tree pits, so the flat space of the path is actually very narrow.

Major Improvements should be made from Mile Road to the permissive path making it ready for future visitors to Beddington Farmland.

### **Issue 11 – Wandle Valley Area Strategy p91**

#### Draft Policy 11.C

##### New Housing

It is important as noted above that site allocations for Hackbridge Station and Land North of are amended to reflect concerns of high-rise and associated negative impacts for the environment. The words 'appropriate redevelopment' is too ambiguous. Any new development should reflect its unique position opposite Beddington Farmlands and the ambition for Hackbridge becoming a major gateway to the Wandle Valley Regional Park and infrastructure to support that ie visitors' centre.

### New Shops

While new shops would be welcome, Hackbridge should not be allowed any further takeaways or newsagents/general stores and be guided by resident needs, not who is able to rent a shop. In our Neighbourhood Plan, we have list of shops proposed by residents.

### New Employment

Since Covid and hybrid working become the 'new norm', we would like to be involved in discussions whether the 'Business Forest' is still the most appropriate use for this land.

We do not agree with the de-designation of Metropolitan Open Land adjacent to Beddington Lane. More information needs to be provided regarding what the land would be used for and why it couldn't be located elsewhere.

### New Infrastructure

As mentioned earlier, we do not support decentralised energy network expansion that requires connection to the Viridor incinerator and thereby increases its longevity. It has yet to been seen as a success. Nor do we support locking residents into only one energy provider.

We agree about improving foot and cycle routes. Existing developments in Hackbridge have either failed to deliver or deliver on small sections of cycle routes that do not connect to each other. A map should be created to show all areas that need to be joined up. The development at Willow Lane and the creation of a new junction at Goat Road should provide options for both LBS and LBM to work together to create a joined up cycle route from Hackbridge to Mitcham Junction and beyond.

### New Open Space

The Council has already failed to ensure that Beddington Farmlands is restored according to the relevant planning permissions etc, so what changes will be made to ensure delivery and when?

Hackbridge should become a major gateway to the Wandle Valley Regional Park due to its strategic position within a matrix of green spaces. It has the ability to provide future visitor facilities and shops could diversify to incorporate the increase in economy this would bring.

The Land north of BedZED should formally become public access with the required changes to make safe and improvements to biodiversity.

The ambitions to connect the matrix of land needs a multiple borough/stakeholder approach and should be put into the Local Plan. Connecting the Land North of BedZED, Mill Green, Mitcham Common, Beddington Farmlands, Beddington Park, part of Day and Son's would provide the largest contiguous green space in London with benefits to people and wildlife.

Any de-designation of Metropolitan Open Land, should be used to fund this, along with CIL.

### Better Transport

The council should work to reinstate the London Bridge train service as part of infrastructure improvements needed for increased housing in Hackbridge. Cycle lanes also need to be linked up and made fit for purpose.

### Better Environment

Since the changes known as Heart of Hackbridge, traffic light junction at Hackbridge Station and generally an increase of traffic due to new developments, traffic is often at a standstill by the shops at all times during the day. Improvements need to be made to reduce air pollution.

Policy MP3 of our Neighbourhood Plan states independent monitoring needs to be installed to monitor traffic pollution and particulates from the Beddington ERF and any outages that occur.

### The River Wandle

The Wandle Valley Forum should be part of the deliver body to help expand the network of the Wandle Trail, having already worked with developers to secure signage improvements in two areas.

We agree with expanding the network of walking and cycling, including connection from Beddington Farmlands to the River Wandle and connecting the matrix of green spaces.

We agree that the Beddington Effluent Carrier should be improved and is currently a suggested project in our Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Issue 13 – Housing Density and Intensification**

### 13.6 – Current approach to Housing Density

We do not agree with District Centres having a high-density criteria unless the development can be sensitive to the surrounding and not typically high-rise.

Hackbridge should no longer be an area of intensification having delivered 15% of Sutton's housing already. The sites left for development need to be sensitive to the surrounds of Beddington Farmlands and the ambitions of Hackbridge being a gateway to the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

## **Issue 14 – Affordable Housing**

Whilst not commenting specifically on the ratio of affordable housing, we would like it noted that the housing should be 'pepper potted' throughout a development and not made from cheaper materials to differentiate between tenures. At the time we wrote our Neighbourhood Plan, larger affordable family homes would be welcome in Hackbridge & Beddington Corner.

### **Issue 15 – Small Sites**

We disagree with the map showing Hackbridge as an area of intensification allowing high rise development.

### **Issue 16 – Housing Mix**

Site allocations should come with an allocated housing mix that is area specific. Whilst noted this is difficult to be kept current, it provides the best opportunity to get housing that is actually needed in the correct area.

### **Issue 20 – Houses in Multiple Occupation**

In Hackbridge we have found issues with litter, bins overfilling and not knowing whose responsibility it is to cut hedging growing over public realm.

### **Issue 32 – Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land**

We agree with the potential additions to Green Belt / MOL

We disagree with the de-designation of the land north of Goat Road, which should be used as a buffer for the residents opposite, especially with the redevelopment of Willow Lane Industrial Estate and potential increase of pollution be it vehicle or industrial.

We disagree with the de-designation of Land at Jessops Way, Beddington.

Any de-designation of MOL should be highly compensated within the current area and help the joining up of the matrix of green spaces.

### **Issue 34 – Open Spaces**

We are pleased to see the Wandle Valley Regional Park and the network of green spaces in this policy, but there is no mention of how it will be delivered.

As an area of deficiency, we ask that the Land north of BedZED is made formally into a public open space.

### **Issue 35 – Blue & Green Infrastructure**

The Blue and Green Infrastructure should be extended that developments impacting or adjacent to the River Wandle or Wandle Trail and green matrix of land should contribute to improvements.

We agree with preferred Option 1.

### **Issue 37 – Biodiversity Net Gain**

We agree to set a target for 20% BNG for all development sites.

### **Issue 38 – Character and Design**

Whilst agreeing to the majority of this, the delivery against planning application is the test and thereafter once permission is granted that amendments to applications that have a negative impact are not approved. In the past, this has failed, resulting in monolithic developments not taking the existing character into respect.

### **Issue 39 – Tall Buildings**

We disagree with the tall buildings proposal for Hackbridge.

### **Issue 47 – Air Quality**

Whilst agreeing with the majority of the policy it does not give enough detail on how current air quality will be improved. The writing of a strategy and other documents is not a demonstrable action of change. School Streets have been known to cause more pollution on other roads and the encouragement to get people to walk and cycle is often mentioned, but without actual facts on how, is dismissible.

We would like Hackbridge to have an automatic monitoring site due to the increased levels of pollution and particulates from the Beddington ERF. Independent monitoring is imperative.

### **Issue 50 – Light Pollution**

We agree with the majority of this, especially knowing there will be a development at some stage by the Land North of Hackbridge Station which will need to be sensitive to light because of Beddington Farmlands.

### **Issue 52/53/54 – Transport & Parking**

It is important that all developers contribute towards the connection of cycle routes and no new route should be delivered without connecting to another. This obviously shouldn't be a get out clause for developers!

As seen in Hackbridge, unless a proper infrastructure is provided for walking and cycling and good quality public transport, residents will have no choice but to use a car. Developments with limited car spaces do not deter new residents from bringing their cars unless this infrastructure is implemented. Until there is an actual plan, developments should provide adequate parking spaces or existing residents will suffer and literally end up paying for it.

### **Issue 55 – Infrastructure**

A policy should be added how CIL works with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Issue 58 – Potential Site Allocations**

H3 - Vulcan House has been completed and should be removed

H5 – BedZED community field - Although shown as a community space, this has added confusion and should be removed from the list of site allocations, so residents don't think it will be built on.

H6 – Hackbridge Primary School has been completed and should be removed from the list