

Development Management Document Examination: Wednesday 26 March

1. Examination: Council's Response to Initial Questions and Comments:

Representations: Are there any further comments beyond those in the Consultation Statement which the Council wishes to make in response to the representations from the South East Essex Organic Growers (32678)?

Council response: 'The Council understands and respects the intentions of the organic gardeners association in putting forward a proposal for a policy dealing with sustainable food systems, but this is not considered to be a relevant or appropriate policy for the Development Management Policy Document.'

I would say that any Council who takes this stance does so at their peril. Planning is extremely relevant and necessary for securing sustainable and resilient food systems at any scale. Food is a land use issue and globally, the UN, EU and across the UK people and organisations are making excellent progress in integrating Planning with Food at policy level.

There is much current evidence for this, as well as advice and guidance, which I would like Rochford Council to take into account.

This is a Key link:

<http://www.sustainweb.org/publications/?id=192>

Good planning for good food - using planning policy for local and sustainable food. Spatial planning directly affects the food system, including decisions about protecting land for farming, planning permission for food retailing and waste management facilities, and encouraging urban food production. This report explores how local authorities and communities can use planning policy and decisions to create more local and sustainable food systems.

Here is the UN 2013 Trade and Environment Review entitled: 'Wake up before it's too late'. Everyone in a position of decision making around land use must recognise their responsibility for contributing towards our food security.

http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2012d3_en.pdf

This about the unsurpassed value of soils and why we must protect them:

<http://www.hutton.ac.uk/news/protect-soils-guarantee-future-mankind>

This event has just taken place - you can email them for the slideshow/minutes - **Sustainable Food Cities Webinar: Food Growing and planning: How can planning policy support access to land? 18 March 2014 14:00 - 18 March 2014 15:30**

<http://sustainablefoodcities.org/newsevents/event/articleid/68/sustainable-food-cities-webinar-food-growing-and-planning-how-can-planning-policy-support-access-to>

This event is about to happen on 31st March in Brighton, the **Sustainable Food Cities Conference: Putting food at the heart of local policy.**

<http://sustainablefoodcities.org/newsevents/news/articleid/71/sustainable-food-cities-conference-putting-food-at-the-heart-of-local-policy>

This is happening in Bristol in May: Conference "Food City Region: Cultivating Planning"

<http://sustainablefoodcities.org/newsevents/event/articleid/85/conference-food-city-region-cultivating-planning>

This link even goes back to 1993: Guidelines for land-use planning

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/T0715E/T0715E00.htm>

If the necessary members of Rochford Council enter into what is being said here, there will be the likelihood of creating a robust local policy framework which will steer them safely and productively into the future, ensuring a resilient local food system.

This is an emergent issue which is why Councils may find it difficult to approach. However, all the help you need exists. Food Matters, with Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, are soon to be publishing a Food Systems Policy Guide for Planners. I will forward it to you when I receive it.

Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, Sustain, the Campaign for Real Farming, Food Matters and many more are at the forefront of this agenda. Rochford can be, too.

Peter Kendall featured on BBC1's Countryfile on Sunday (16 February) to discuss the impact that flooding is and will continue to have on farmers.



Presenter, Tom Heap, questioned whether rural areas are being sacrificed so that towns and cities can stay dry.

Peter said: "We have to make a priority of our best agricultural land, we've got figures that show 58 per cent of our very best grade one land sits below a five metre contour. So if we get floods year after year that's going to stop our ability to feed ourselves. "With climate change and extreme weather events we're going to have to think differently. But we've got to put a better value on agricultural land."

~~25 March 2014~~

Decline in UK self-sufficiency is 'alarming', says NFU

The National Farmers' Union is urging the public to help turn around a decline in self-sufficiency that means the UK produces just 62% of its own food. August 14 is the day when British food supplies would run out if all the food produced in Britain in a year was stored and eaten from January 1. The NFU is launching a Charter looking for the public, politicians and food industry to sign, pledging their support. A One Poll survey has revealed that 78% of consumers thought supermarkets should stock more British food and 42% said they were more likely to buy more traceable food produced on British farms. And farmers are ready to rise to the challenge to produce more food sustainably.

Farming UK (14 August)

Read the Soil Association's An Inconvenient Truth About Food report and Rethinking Britain's Food Security

Example: Hall Road, Rochford - ~~Why is~~ ^A agricultural land, described as 'a mixture of 80% Grade 2 (very good quality) and 20% Subgrade 3b (good quality)'

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