

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**9 OCTOBER 2008**

**REPORT OF  
CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET DECISION/COUNCIL DECISION**

**Regeneration and Transport – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Cook**

#### **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLANNING THE FUTURE OF RURAL VILLAGES IN STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH**

1. Summary

This report informs Members of the completion of the 'Planning the Future of Rural Villages'. The study will form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF).

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

1. Endorse the recommendations of the study outlined at paragraph 6
2. Accept the study as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

Local planning authorities must prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF) which comprises a folder of Local Development Documents (LDDs) for delivering the spatial strategy for the area (as opposed to the old single plan covering the whole of the authority's area). LDDs comprise Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents, which expand policies set out in development plan documents or provide additional detail.

The documents produced as part of the LDF must be founded on a robust and credible evidence base. The Rural Villages Study is part of the evidence base to underpin and support policy development within the Local Development Framework (LDF). It will also give clarity in the implementation of Core Strategy Policy 1 (CS1) point 5; *'In catering for rural housing needs, priority will be given to the provision of affordable housing in sustainable locations, to meet identified need. This will be provided through a rural exception site policy'*.

4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**)

and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

**Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.**

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**CABINET DECISION**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK -  
PLANNING THE FUTURE OF RURAL VILLAGES IN STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH**

**SUMMARY**

This report informs Members of the completion of the 'Planning the Future of Rural Villages'. The study will form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

1. Endorse the recommendations of the study outlined at paragraph 6
2. Accept the study as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

**DETAIL**

1. A study of the rural villages within Stockton-on-Tees Borough has been undertaken, to underpin and support policy development within the Local Development Framework (LDF) and to give clarity in the implementation of Core Strategy Policy 1 (CS1) point 5; *'In catering for rural housing needs, priority will be given to the provision of affordable housing in sustainable locations, to meet identified need. This will be provided through a rural exception site policy'*.
2. In order to establish the levels of facilities available within the Borough's rural villages, an audit was carried out followed by extensive consultation in all villages included in the study and included an LDF training event for Ward Members and Parish Councillors and Clerks.
3. Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) states that "planning authorities should seek to provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, whilst recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas".

4. A traffic light scoring system was used to rank each village in terms of their sustainability under the following categories:
  - Employment
  - Health
  - Education
  - Shops
  - Leisure
  - Ancillary facilities
  - Access
5. From the results of the traffic light scoring system a village hierarchy was established. The purpose of this assessment was to spark debate about the villages and obtain information regarding services and facilities available to villages which had not been yet been recorded. Through the response questionnaire residents were also asked a number of questions regarding future policy considerations, such as the limits of development.
6. The findings of the village's facilities audit and the sustainability study have been compiled into one report in order to give a clear representation of the villages within the borough. An Executive Summary of the report is attached as Appendix A and the full report is as Appendix B with the recommendations summarised as follows:
  - I. Development limits to be maintained around all villages.
  - II. Infill development will be appropriate within Tiers 1 and 2. However, it will not be supported in Tiers 3 and 4 where residents have a greater reliance on the private car to access facilities. Infill development should respect the rural character and density of development in the villages.
  - III. Emerging policy should promote the development of shopping facilities and additional amenities as infill development to meet the needs of the villages.
  - IV. Where a need for affordable housing has been identified through the rural exceptions policy it will be essential that these are located in areas where facilities are present or can be accessed by sustainable means, this will allow occupants of affordable housing to be able to access the services and facilities they require to live and not become marginalised.
  - V. Development limits to be placed around Wynyard in order to define the boundary of the village and create a policy stance in accordance with Hartlepool Borough Council (which has a limits of development in place around the section of Wynyard which lies within the Borough). As Wynyard lies within tier 4 further housing infill development would not be supported until services and facilities were in place to rate the village within tiers 1 or 2 and thus reducing reliance on the private car.
  - VI. An update of the facilities and services audit will be undertaken every two years in conjunction with Parish Councils in order to reassess the hierarchy of villages and direct development away from the least sustainable locations.
7. The facilities audit for each village has been updated to reflect the current position and the traffic light scoring system used within the consultation session has been replaced by a points based scoring system. This has provided a clear hierarchy of sustainability amongst the villages as set out below.

	<b>Village</b>	<b>Sustainability Score</b>
<b>Tier 1</b> (40 points plus)	Stillington	41
<b>Tier 2</b> (30 to 39 points)	Long Newton	36
	Carlton	33
	Maltby	33
	Kirklevington	32
	Wolviston	30
<b>Tier 3</b> (25 to 29 points)	Redmarshall	29
	Hilton	28
	Elton	27
	Thorpe Thewles	25
<b>Tier 4</b> (24 points and less)	Wynyard	22
	Whitton	21
	Cowpen Bewley	20
	Aislaby	12

## **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial**

8. The cost of the study has been met from existing resources. However, this document will provide an evidence base for the emerging documents as part of the Local Development Framework with Planning Delivery Grant being based on meeting the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme for these documents. Missing the target dates could result in the council being penalised.

### **Legal.**

9. The contents of this report will form the evidence base for the development of planning policies to be incorporated into the Local Development Framework, which is being prepared under the Planning and Compensation Act 2004.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

10. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

### **Economic Regeneration and Transport**

11. Recommendations within the report aim to draw a distinction as to the villages where further housing infill development is appropriate in order to enhance and maintain their sustainability and those villages where further housing infill development would merely require occupants to travel via the private car for services and facilities. This will improve access to education, jobs and health services, increase use of public transport and reduce road congestion.
12. The study finds that policies are adopted to promote the development of shopping facilities and other amenities villages require. Alongside this the report notes the need to support the diversification of the rural economy.

## **Safer Communities**

13. As an evidence base document for the LDF the report does not specifically promote the creation of safer communities. Safer communities are a key principle of the Core Strategy and this will be replicated within other emerging policy documents as part of the LDF.

## **Children and Young People**

14. The report recommends directing infill development towards the most sustainable locations with the best access to services and facilities by sustainable means; this includes access to educational establishments. The report also promotes access to and development of sport and recreation facilities.

## **Healthier Communities and Adults**

15. As an evidence base document for the LDF the report does not specifically promote the creation healthier communities and adults. It is a key principle of the Core Strategy to create healthier communities and this will be replicated within other emerging policy documents as part of the LDF. Recommendations within the report aim to direct infill development towards the most sustainable locations with the best access to services and facilities by sustainable means (including walking and cycling). The report also promotes access to and development of sport and recreation facilities.

## **Liveability**

16. Recommendations within the report aim to ensure a balanced mix of housing in rural areas and support vulnerable and older people who may become marginalised by providing affordable housing via rural exceptions. It is acknowledged that more work needs to be undertaken on this matter; however, where there is an identified local need for affordable housing it is recommended that it is located in the most sustainable locations where facilities are present or can be accessed by sustainable means.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

17. In order to establish the levels of facilities available within the Borough's rural villages, an audit was carried out followed by extensive consultation on the initial findings.
18. Following consideration of the comments and views received, it was decided to take the study forward by undertaking a further consultation exercise in all villages included in the study in early July 2008. The consultation was based on further research into the sustainability, role and status of the villages within the Borough.
19. Councillors and Parish Councils have been invited to attend consultation exercises and comment on the accuracy of the facilities audit.

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Background Papers:

Planning the Future of Villages in Stockton on Tees Borough, Consultation Draft February 2008.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: **N/A**

Property: **N/A**