

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting5th August 2010

1. Title of Item/Report

Yarm & Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan, Review of Limits to Development and Green Wedge, and Character Areas

2. Record of the Decision

The Committee considered a report that dealt with a number of Local Development Framework topics/projects:

- Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan (YEAAP)
- Review of the Limits to Development and Green Wedge
- Character Areas

Members were reminded that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) adopted in March 2009 detailed the purpose of the YEAAP as a document which would ‘...address the key pressures/development opportunities within Yarm and Eaglescliffe. Would include a series of co-ordinated proposals for traffic management and parking, future redevelopment opportunities and planning obligations.’

As the YEAAP had progressed it had become much more focused upon the historic built environment. With PPS12: ‘Local Spatial Planning’ identifying that in areas of conservation, area action plans should do two things:

- define areas where specific conservation measures are proposed and areas which will be subject to specific controls over development,
- set out the policies and proposals for action to preserve or enhance the area.

In the process of taking the YEAAP towards the Preferred Options stage and producing a draft Preferred Options report it became apparent that:

- there was no significant change scheduled within the area,
- the document had limited scope (relatively few deliverable actions identified),
- there were few identified actions to preserve or enhance the historic built environment,

- many of the proposed policies contained within the draft document were not specific to Yarm and Eaglescliffe and would be repeated within other DPDs.

In addition to the above there would also be major cost implications for producing a separate document. Those costs included officer time, printing, consultation and independent examination by a planning inspector.

It was explained that, given the above, the Local Development Framework Members' Steering Group had agreed to recommend that the YEAAP not proceed and be incorporated into the Regeneration and Environment Development Plan Documents (DPD).

Members noted that it was proposed that the Regeneration DPD would include policies concerning the 'limits to development' and 'green wedge'. In order for those policies to be robust they had to be reviewed and updated to reflect the changes made to the landscape since the last review of the policies, as part of the Local Plan, in the mid-1990s. Following responses made to the Regeneration DPD Issues and Options Report each settlement in the Stockton conurbation had received its own limits to development.

It was intended that the revised limits of development and green wedges would be consulted upon as part of the Regeneration DPD Preferred Options Report. A technical paper containing the methodology, mapping and justification for reviewing those policy boundaries would support the Regeneration DPD Preferred Options as an evidence base document. Members were provided with access to the technical paper together with a series of overview maps detailing the Local Plan and the Regeneration DPD preferred options boundaries for the limits to development and green wedge.

Cabinet was aware that there were a number of areas within the Borough that had a distinctive character and sense of place. However, many areas within the Borough had been under pressure from development in recent years. The Council recognised that if a considered approach was not adopted then development could contribute to the loss of character or distinctiveness of an area. This might also lead to the disruption of the development pattern and result in the loss of trees and hedges.

Areas considered as having special character would be designated within the Regeneration DPD and be supported by policy to offer these areas protection from inappropriate development. A technical paper containing the methodology for selecting character areas and their individual assessments had been completed and Members had been provided with

a copy.

It was intended that the proposed character areas would be consulted upon as part of the Regeneration DPD Preferred Options Report. The technical paper would be consulted upon as part of the preferred options.

During consideration reference was made to a stretch of Durham Road, Stockton, which, following assessment, had not been included as a character area. It was explained that the stretch in question was an established area, with the majority of houses being pre war, and it was suggested that it did have a distinctive character and sense of place. Officers had assessed the area and concluded that whilst there was a distinct character, development had eroded it significantly over a number of years. However, as the study would be used to inform a consultation document, it was agreed that Durham Road could be included to gauge the public's views and it was agreed that that part of Durham Road, Stockton be included in the Regeneration DPD preferred options, for consultation

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. the content of the evidence base documents, relating to the limits to development and green wedge, and character areas, be endorsed for consultation as part of the Regeneration DPD Preferred Options, subject to the inclusion of Durham Road in line with discussion detailed above.

2. the production of a separate Yarm and Eaglescliffe Area Action Plan should not proceed and the policies proposed for the Plan be incorporated into the Regeneration and Environment DPDs.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To agree that work on YEAAP cease and work to date be incorporated into the Regeneration and Environment DPDs.

To agree evidence base documents relating to the limits to development and green wedge, and character areas prior to consultation as part of Regeneration DPD preferred options.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable.

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not applicable

Proper Officer
09 October 2010