

AGENDA NO.

**REPORT TO PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

DATE: 22nd May 2008.

**CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK : UPDATE ON THE EMPLOYMENT
LAND REVIEW STAGE 3.**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update members regarding the Employment Land Review, which is an important part of the evidence base for the production of Local Development Framework documents. Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners and Storey SSP were commissioned to undertake Stages 2 and 3 of the study after the Council had completed Stage 1. Members will be aware that stage 2 was recently finalised and viewed by the Council's Planning Committee and Cabinet earlier this year.

Stage 3 is currently being finalised with a draft report received from Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners on the 7th May 2008, Council officers are currently assessing the report.

THE REPORT.

Summary of the findings.

Employment land review stage 2 concluded that 340.3 hectares of general employment land was required within the borough to provide a 25 year supply of employment land. The purpose of the Stage 3 study is to review the suitability of existing sites and present a balanced portfolio of employment land to support the Local Development Framework.

The report identifies that there is a significant oversupply of employment land within the borough when the amount of available land is compared to the stage 2 figure. However, it is concluded that a number of sites "restricted" for particular purposes, such as airport and port related uses and the chemical and steel industries, should be considered as additional land over and above that identified by the demand forecasts. This echoes the approach in the latest draft of the Regional Spatial Strategy. As a result 317.68 ha of land has been identified by the consultants for "restricted" use.

Before undertaking detailed site assessments the consultants identified sites that they considered were suitable for retention without any further surveys being undertaken. These sites totalled 167.41 hectares and are, Billingham

House; Bowesfield Lane; Bowesfield South; Cowpen Lane; Malleable Industrial Estate (part of the former Corus site); North Shore; North Tees Industrial Estate; Portrack Interchange; Portrack Lane; Preston Farm; Stillington; Teesdale; Wynyard Business Park and Wynyard (Former Samsung Site).

Retaining these sites leaves a requirement to identify a further 173 hectares to meet the employment land forecast. Each site was assessed individually with a detailed justification provided in the stage 3 report. Following the site appraisal, Urray Nook, Durham Tees Valley Airport, Chemplex North & Central, Belasis Technology Park, Durham Lane Industrial Estate, Oxbridge Foundry and Teesside Industrial Estate were all identified for retention. The retention of these sites would result in a total forward supply of 323.3 hectares of employment land. This is slightly below the identified need for 340.3 hectares identified by economic forecasting but above historic take up of employment land within the Borough.

Sites not recommended for allocation are Bowesfield North, Eaglescliffe Inward Investment Site, Former Cable Ski site, Smiths Farm, land adjacent to Synthonia Ground, Tees Marshalling Yards and Eaglescliffe Logistics Centre (Allens West). In addition the Belasis Avenue North and South site is recommended for de-allocation.

Next steps

Council officers will consider the content of the report and provide comments to Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners. It is expected that a final report will be received before the end of May 2008. The completed study will be used as an important part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Development Framework documents.

Corporate Director of Development and Regeneration.

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Background Papers -

Employment Land Review: Stage 1.

Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks.

Financial Implications – The production of the document can be made within existing budgetary provisions

Environmental Implications- N/A

Community Safety Implications - N/A

Human Rights Implications - The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 has been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward and Ward Councillors – N/A