

Local Development Framework Steering Group

A meeting of Local Development Framework Steering Group was held on Tuesday, 30th March, 2010.

Present: Cllr Bob Cook (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr John Fletcher, Cllr Roy Rix and Cllr Mick Womphrey.

Officers: M.Clifford, Ms J.Hall, Ms C.Straughan, Ms R.Young (DNS); N.Hart (LD).

Also in attendance:

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Leckonby, Nelson and Stoker.

LDF 38/09 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest declared.

LDF 39/09 **Minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2010**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2010.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2010 be approved.

LDF 40/09 **Adoption of Stockton-on-Tees Core Strategy Development Plan Document.**

Consideration was given to how the policies of the recently adopted Core Strategy would be implemented; which local plan policies would be deleted; and which of the saved Local Plan and Alteration Number 1 policies would still be used in the determination of planning applications.

Section 18 of the Core Strategy, copies of which were submitted, indicated which Local Plan policies were replaced by policies in the Core Strategy. Twenty-two Local Plan policies would be replaced, however a number of the existing Local Plan and Alteration Number 1 policies would remain extant until further Local Development Documents (LDDs) were adopted.

The planning policy input into planning decisions may now be quite complicated because as well as introducing a new set of policies, the format of the new Local Development Framework documents differed from Local Plans in that their content was streamlined and did not repeat national or regional planning policies. Therefore, in determining the policy context of an application officers and members will have to reference a number of planning policy documents and the evidence base used in developing the Core Strategy policies can be a material consideration.

Essentially the development plan for the Borough now comprised:

- National Planning Policy Statements or Guidance (PPS or PPG);
- Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS);
- Stockton-on-Tees Core Strategy

- Saved policies of Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan 1997 and Alteration Number 1 not deleted by the Core Strategy
- Evidence base for Core Strategy.

In light of the above, it was suggested that all members be provided with an explanation of how the new Core Strategy affected the consideration of future planning applications, and how the saved plans were integrated into the new framework.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. Appropriate training be provided for all members on how the new Core Strategy affected the consideration of future planning applications, and how the saved plans were integrated into the new framework.

**LDF
41/09**

Regeneration DPD Progress Update

Members were reminded that in 2007, the Issues and Options document relating to the Regeneration Development Plan Document was published and consulted upon. This document sought views on site allocations, and issues such as whether to extend development limits and areas such as health and education provision. The responses received had been recorded, but since that time, work had stalled in favour of more pressing policy matters, in particular the Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

A report was put forward to refresh Members on the background to the Issues and Options Paper, what has and is happening in the meantime and the intended next steps forward. The report was intended to give a flavour of the draft document as it stood at present, a very general outline of the work that was being undertaken to progress the document and some thoughts of what it was likely to contain.

The Issues and Options version of the Regeneration DPD gave a brief overview of Stockton Borough, identified drivers for change, set out the broader policy context for the preparation of the Regeneration DPD e.g. the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East and the Stockton Middlesbrough Initiative etc and gave a brief overview of the new Local Development Framework spatial planning system. The document then set out a series of issues and, where appropriate, options linked to them. These were organised under the same headings as the policies in the Core Strategy Preferred Options e.g. Spatial Strategy, Transport etc so as to make explicit the intended synthesis between the Core Strategy and Regeneration DPDs. A table setting out the top line Issues and Options was submitted for members.

The key driver for the Regeneration DPD was site allocations but also extended to such issues as whether to extend limits to development, and for example includes health and education provision. The Issues and Options paper also included Appendices setting out:

- Land that had been submitted to the Council for consideration as extensions to the limits to development
- Land that had been submitted to the Council for consideration as housing allocations
- Land that had been submitted to the Council as mixed-use allocations
- Land that had been submitted to the Council as employment allocations
- Land that had been submitted for consideration as a cemetery

In parallel, consultation took place on the Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Regeneration DPD. Its purpose was to document the initial stages of the Sustainability Appraisal process. It contained a listing of other relevant plans and programmes, baseline information, key sustainability issues and a set of sustainability objectives, indicators and targets to be used to test the Preferred Options and inform the development of them.

The foundation document for the planning documents in the Council's Local Scheme, the Core Strategy Development Plan Document had been found sound, and had been adopted by the Council for adoption. In setting the pattern of development and growth in the Borough over the next 15 years and how this will be achieved, the Regeneration DPD could now progress with confidence to seek to secure the spatial vision.

A total of 332 individual responses to the Issues and Options consultation had been received. The responses received generated some 1,265 individual comments. Officers were now in the process of considering those comments and formulating the Council's draft responses to those comments.

Work was also ongoing to formulate policy and to allocate sites and approaches to development around the topic areas of Core Strategy: Transport, Sustainable Living, The Economy, Town Centre, Provision of Facilities, Housing and the Environment. Within those topic areas, work was ongoing to:

- Identify key regeneration areas and the Council's objectives for these
- Identify and allocate a number of significant development sites, for example for housing, education, health and employment, and a suggested approach for each of them
- Define and set out approaches to individual policy areas such as Green Wedges, Limits to Development, Retail Centres and Areas of Special Townscape Character
- Consider if any development management policies would be required for the determination of planning applications

The list of sites that the Council considers at this stage should be allocated was currently being finalised. The identification of likely housing sites had been completed and site visits had commenced. Once the background work had been completed, it was intended that internal and external stakeholders would be engaged in a series of meetings to ensure that all sites were deliverable as predicted, and to secure an approach for each site.

An initial drafting of development management policies had also commenced,

and those included for example mix of housing, special needs and accessible homes, student accommodation, travel plans, car parking, cycling. Initial drafts had also been made of site safeguarding policies, which for example sought to ensure that transport infrastructure could be delivered through development of the Tees Valley Metro, Core Bus Route Corridor and Road Rail Interchanges.

Officers and appointed consultants were now finalising work on the evidence base, around topics such as, the Sustainability Appraisal, Appropriate Assessment, employment land, retail centres, transport, green and hard infrastructure, flood risk, nature conservation, limits to development, and townscape character areas. Work would continue towards completing the schedule of responses received, background work and evidence and drafting the initial version of the document, with stakeholders engaged as soon as possible, with publication for consultation later this year.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

**LDF
42/09** **Rural Housing Needs Assessment**

The Steering Group was presented with the results of the study undertaken to ascertain the level of affordable housing need in rural areas for local people.

This was in accordance with Planning Policy CS8 which sought to provide affordable housing in rural areas and followed the issuing of a questionnaire to all households within the Borough, all Parish/Town Councils, and the holding of 4 community events. A 21% response rate to the household survey resulted, which was considered to be appropriate for the purpose of reaching a conclusion for this sort of study, and the results revealed that there was a shortfall of 24 affordable dwellings in rural areas within the Borough over the next 5 years. The results also revealed that the tenure of such provision should be two thirds social rented properties; one third intermediate (shared ownership/equity). The areas identified of most need were Stillington & Whitton, Carlton, Grindon and Redmarshall. It was essential that whatever future provision was made, the locations benefited from connectivity with other areas and were sustainable.

Consideration would now be given as to how to take forward the findings of the study in terms of the different options for delivery. This would include seeking the views and advice of stakeholders at the Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership and was expected to involve Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) in partnership.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

**LDF
43/09** **Strategic Flood Risk assessment**

The Steering Group was provided with an update on the progress of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) undertaken by JBA Consulting, including a brief on its content and key findings. It was noted that the 2010 SFRA updated the 2007 SFRA and that a full SFRA comprised a Level 1 SFRA and a Level 2 SFRA, the details of which were summarised.

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was now very near to completion.

The only outstanding task was the full reporting of the Green Infrastructure section of Volume III of the Level 1 SFRA. Also outstanding was the strategic flood storage compensation report. However, it had been decided to keep this separate from the SFRA and it would be reported to Members when complete.

The Level 1 SFRA for Stockton BC identified 'candidate' critical drainage areas (CDAs). Critical drainage areas came in many shapes and sizes and drivers for characterizing an area as a CDA could come from severe existing flooding problems from either overland routes or piped drainage systems, or proposed intensity of development and its impact on runoff, or an area where multiple sources of flooding were linked. The candidate CDAs identified in the Level 1 SFRA were:

- Billingham
- Seal Sands
- Lustrum Beck

Recommended action in respect of each site was submitted.

The proposed residential and employment allocations had been put into five different groups for the Level 2 SFRA; as follows:

- Tees Marshalling Yard (TMY)
- Bowesfield North Phase 1 and Phase 2
- Boathouse Lane and Chandlers Wharf
- Seal Sands (includes the Seal Sands, North Tees Pools and Port Clarence sites)
- Haverton Hill (includes the Haverton Hill, Casebourne and Billingham Reach sites).

Whilst the focus of the Level 2 SFRA was site assessments, it also included the following:

A Flood Defence Asset Review including the following assets:

- Flood defences at the above sites
- Tees Barrage
- Flood Risk Assessment requirements for the above sites. This included the following issues:
 - Flood risk from the River Tees
 - Flood risk from the Old River Tees
 - Flood risk from the Tees Estuary
 - Emergency planning issues
- A broad strategic assessment of the applicability of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) techniques in on an area-by-area basis in the Borough.

Details of the key findings from each of the Level 2 SFRA site assessments were summarised and presented for members.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

