

## **Local Development Framework Steering Group**

A meeting of Local Development Framework Steering Group was held on Monday, 12th September, 2011.

**Present:** Cllr Nigel Cooke (In the Chair), Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Phillip Dennis, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr David Rose.

**Officers:** M.Clifford, J.Hutchcraft, I.Nicholls, Miss R.Wren, Mrs R.Young (DNS); N.Hart (LD).

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** were submitted on behalf of Cllr Smith.

### **LDF 18/11**

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Dennis declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the item entitled 'Core Strategy Development Plan Document Review-Issues and Options Consultation Update' having made representations as part of the consultation process.

### **LDF 19/11**

#### **Minutes of the Meetings held on 14th June and 12th July 2011**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th June and 12th July 2011, as amended, were agreed as a correct record.

### **LDF 20/11**

#### **Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessments-Presentation**

Members received a presentation on the purpose of both Sustainability Appraisals and Habitat Regulations Assessments.

Sustainability Appraisals were essentially the assessment of the environmental, social and economic impacts of a plan and were originally required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for both DPD's and SPD's, later amended to just DPD's by the Planning Act 2008. EU Directives also required a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the environmental effects of certain plans and programmes with the SEA usually incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal.

The five stage process for the Sustainability Appraisal was as follows:-

Stage A-Scoping Report including development of a framework and evidence base;

Stage B-Development and refining of options, including assessment of effects of policy options against SA framework;

Stage C-Production of Sustainability Appraisal report, including documentation of the process and findings;

Stage D-Consultation on Sustainability Appraisal report, followed by adoption of DPD;

Stage E-Monitoring of effects of DPD.

The Scoping Report, which used baseline data to identify sustainability issues for the Borough, also identified Sustainability Objectives to assess the plan against which included:-

- Strengthening the Borough's economy;
- Adapting to and mitigating against climate change;
- Living with environmental habitats;
- Developing a more sustainable employment market;
- Establishing a strong learning and skills base;
- Improving health and wellbeing while reducing inequalities in health;
- Safeguarding and enhancing the Borough's environmental infrastructure;
- Building sustainable communities;
- Developing sustainable transport and communication;
- Promoting, enhancing and respecting the Borough's culture and heritage.

The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) consisted of an assessment of the impact of plans and projects, either alone or in combination with others, on sites designated as of European importance for their nature conservation, and were required for all DPD and SPD's. The European sites involved were Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas for Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites, which were wetlands of international importance.

Details of the location of sites within the North and North Yorkshire were submitted for members, along with the steps involved within the HRA.

AGREED that the presentation be noted.

**LDF  
21/11**

**CS1, 2 & 3-Locational Strategy, Sustainable Transport & Sustainable Living- Presentation**

Consideration was given to an overview of Core Strategy Policies 1,2 and 3 insofar as they applied to Stockton Borough.

CS1, the Spatial Strategy, represented the highest level strategic policy and was the key policy within the Core Strategy. Its main focus was on regeneration of the Borough based on a sustainable approach to development, with continuing support for existing initiatives such as the Stockton & Middlesbrough Initiative (SMI) and cross boundary working and the importance of Stockton Town Centre to the regeneration of the Borough. Other key conclusions of CS1 was that not all new housing could be accommodated in the Core Area, and that there was a need to regenerate the wider Stockton area and Billingham and Thornaby, and that the special role of Yarm should be recognised (Point 3 of CS1).

Point 4 of the strategy emphasised the importance of support for the existing Council regeneration schemes and the possibility that new regeneration areas in the Borough might be identified over the plan period.

Points 5 and 6 focused on housing and employment. The SHMAA had identified affordable housing need in rural parts of the Borough whilst maintaining a highly

restricted approach to development in rural areas. It was also acknowledged that no new employment sites would be identified and that existing employment locations were dispersed and that emphasis should be given to completion of development of these sites.

With regard to CS2-Sustainable Transport, Members were advised that the strategy sought to ensure that all new development was well serviced by an attractive choice of transport modes, including public transport, footpaths and cycle routes. It was also noted that any major development proposals that were likely to generate significant additional journeys would be required to submit a Transport Assessment and if necessary, a Travel Plan to demonstrate that the road network would be no worse off as a result of the development. Provision would also be made to ensure that parking spaces were provided in new developments, with restrictions on long stay parking provision in town centres.

Other key initiatives within CS2 included:-

- Tees Valley Metro;
- Improved interchange facilities at the existing stations of Thornaby and Eaglescliffe;
- Pedestrian and cycle routes linking communities in the south of the Borough;
- Improvements to the road network, including to the east of Billingham to remove heavy goods vehicles from residential areas and supporting sustainable development in Ingleby Barwick.

CS3 concentrated on the effects of climate change, with key provisions being that:-

- All new developments were to incorporate climate change adaptation and energy efficiency measures;
- Renewable energy generation was to be encouraged and supported; and
- All new developments would make a positive contribution to the local area and would protect and enhance important environmental assets, would respond positively to existing natural, historic and archaeological features, would be designed with safety in mind with homes built to Lifetime Homes Standards, and would seek to safeguard the cultural heritage of the Borough.

AGREED that the presentation be noted.

## **LDF 22/11      Consultations on draft National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Regulations**

Members were advised of the content of the Government's consultation on the Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Planning Regulations; each of which were of significance to the preparation of Local Plans.

The NPPF represented a radical streamlining of existing Planning Policy Statements and some circulars to form a single consolidated document with emphasis given to:-

- Planning for prosperity defined as an economic role,
- Planning for people; a social role,
- Planning for places; an environmental role.

Members were provided with a summary of the implications of the proposals on the Local Planning Authority (LPA), which included the following important changes to the planning system:-

- The need for LPA's to identify land for a 5 year supply plus 20% of housing sites to ensure choice and competition in the housing supply,
- The abolition of the brownfield housing target,
- The removal of the caps on parking provision for major development,
- The introduction of 'duty to co-operate',
- The emphasis on ensuring and supporting the viability of developments and for planning policies and decisions to respond to market signals,
- The need not to overburden developments with policy requirements,
- The introduction of a new 'Local Green Space Designation'.

A proposed officer response to consultation on the NPFF, which was due to end on the 17th October 2011, was submitted for endorsement.

The main changes included within the consultation regarding Local Planning Regulations were brought about as a result of the new Localism Bill, which sought to:-

- Introduce a Duty to Co-operate, requiring Councils and other public bodies to work together on planning issues;
- Make the preparation of local plans simpler and more transparent;
- Remove the Planning Inspector's powers to impose changes to a local plan after the public examination and allowing Councils to make non-material changes themselves;
- Allow Councils to withdraw a development plan document at any time before its adoption;
- Require Councils to prepare and maintain a local development scheme but no longer require them to submit it to the Secretary of State;
- Remove the requirement for Councils to publish an annual monitoring report for the Secretary of State, but maintain the requirement for an 'authorities monitoring report' to be available for the public.

Members were invited to endorse the proposed officer response to the consultation, which ended on 7th October 2011.

It was noted that the proposed responses to each consultation reflected discussions held to date by officers within the Tees Valley, with further discussions likely, and also reflected the views of the National Planning Officer Society.

AGREED that the report be noted and the proposed responses to each consultation be endorsed.

Consideration was given to an overview of the following six National Policy Statements (NPS) for energy which were designated in July 2011 under the Planning Act 2008:-

- EN-1-Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy
- EN-2-Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure
- EN-3-Renewable Energy Infrastructure
- EN-4-Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipelines
- EN-5-Electricity Networks Infrastructure
- EN-6-Nuclear Power Generation.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LDF  
24/11      Adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents**

Members were advised that the following two Supplementary Planning Documents had now fulfilled the requirements of the relevant regulations and could now progress for adoption by Council:-

- Parking Provision for Developments,
- Sustainable Design Guide.

A summary of each of the above documents was submitted, and copies of each, along with Consultation Statements and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Reports were available in the Members Library and on E-Genda.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LDF  
25/11      Core Strategy Development Plan Document Review – Issues and Options  
Consultation Update**

Consideration was given to an update on the ongoing consultation on the Core Strategy Review Issues and Options Report.

Consultation commenced on the 11th July 2011 and was due to end on the 19th September 2011. As at 1st September, 520 questionnaire responses had been received and a number of drop in events had been held at libraries and community venues around the Borough.

A number of activities were planned for the closing weeks of the consultation to ensure as much data as possible was gathered, including attendance at Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board on 13th September 2011 and the issuing of a further press release.

It was anticipated that, once the consultation had ended, the top line results would be available during November 2011.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LDF      Planning the Future of Rural Villages 2008: Update**

26/11

Members were advised of the proposal to update the Planning for the Future of Rural Villages Report, which was last produced in 2008 and followed an audit of services and facilities within the villages of the Borough.

The information obtained by such a study allowed the undertaking of a Sustainability Study examining each villages ability to access the following:-

- Employment
- Health
- Education
- Shops
- Leisure
- Ancillary facilities
- Access.

Details of the existing sustainability hierarchy of villages was submitted.

The views of Parish and Town Councils would now be sought to update the facilities and services audit to ensure the accuracy of the data held, prior to undertaking the Sustainability Study and updating the village sustainability hierarchy.

AGREED that the report be noted.

LDF  
27/11

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011 Update**

The Steering Group was reminded that the first Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was published in 2008 and updated annually thereafter. The primary role of the SHLAA was to:-

- identify sites with potential for housing,
- assess their housing potential, and
- assess whether they could be developed.

The 2011 SHLAA update was intended to be published for a period of six weeks consultation, including an Overview Report, a schedule of draft site assessments of core and urban extension sites, village sites and sites assessed as having zero housing potential.

AGREED that the report be noted.