

Local Development Framework Steering Group

A meeting of Local Development Framework Steering Group was held on Tuesday, 20th March, 2012.

Present: Cllr Nigel Cooke (In the Chair), Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Phillip Dennis, Cllr John Gardner and Cllr David Rose.

Officers: I Nicholls, R Wren, R Young (DNS); P K Bell (LD).

Also in attendance: No other persons were present.

Apologies: Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Mick Smith, Cllr Mick Stoker and Cllr Steve Walmsley.

LDF 46/11 Declarations of Interest

There were no interest declared.

LDF 47/11 Minutes of 15th November 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

LDF 48/11 Local Development Scheme 2011 to 2014

Consideration was given to a report on the Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2011-2014.

At the LDF Steering Group meeting in November 2011, Members were presented with an outline timetable for the next stages in the production of Stockton's Local Development Scheme for agreement.

At that meeting one of the recommendations was that; "a fully amended LDS document will be brought to the next meeting of the Steering Group for information, prior to submission to the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and publication on the Council's website."

The format and content of the LDS were set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations and that outline timetable had been incorporated into the full version of the document which was attached to the report. The document was agreed by Planning Committee on 18th January 2012.

Council had delegated powers to agree amendments to the LDS to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair of the LDF Members' Steering Group. A delegated decision sheet was completed on 24th January 2012 stating that the LDS would be effective from that date.

Under the provisions of section 111 of the Localism Act, Local Planning Authorities no longer had to send copies of their LDS to the Secretary of State who could direct modifications to the scheme. The provisions of this section came into effect on 15th January 2012, which meant that it was no longer necessary to comply with that recommendation. This had been replaced by a

requirement to publish up-to-date information direct to the public on the scheme including their compliance with their timetable for the preparation or revision of development plan documents. For this reason, the LDS was published on the Council's website as soon as the delegated decision was signed.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LDF
49/11** **Planning for Rural Villages**

Consideration was given to a report on the updated Planning for the Future of Rural Villages. The Planning for the Future of Rural Villages report was produced in 2008 and was based upon an audit of services and facilities within the villages. The information within the audit was then used to undertake a sustainability study in which villages were scored against a methodology for their ability to access Employment, Health, Education, Shops, Leisure, Ancillary facilities by sustainable means.

The report had been updated with current facilities and services information and Parish Councils had been consulted on the facilities and services audit to ensure the information contained within the report was up-to-date and accurate.

In October 2008 the 'Planning the Future of Rural Villages' study was completed. The purpose of the study was to underpin and support policy development within the Local Development Framework (LDF) and to give clarity in the implementation of Core Strategy policies for housing proposals in the rural area.

The 2008 village study began with an audit of services and facilities available to each village. Information was collected under the following headings:-

- Village Services, including shop or post office, schools and community facilities,
- Distances to other facilities,
- Public Transport Links,
- Quality of Pedestrian and Cycling Links.

The information within the audit of services and facilities was then used to undertake a 'Sustainability Study' in which villages were scored against a methodology for their ability to access the following by sustainable means:-

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

The scorings from the 'Sustainability Study' were then used to establish a sustainability hierarchy of villages and this was detailed within the report.

Extensive consultation was undertaken with Parish Councils and residents within villages to ensure the content within the study was accurate at the time of

writing.

As an evidence base for policy documents emerging as part of the LDF the report made a number of recommendations, including:-

- I. Development limits should 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 within development limits, to meet the needs of the villages.
- IV. Where a need for rural affordable housing has been identified, it will be essential that rural exception sites 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. Update of the facilities and services audit should 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.

Following consultation with the Parish Councils on the revised facilities and services audits, the sustainability scores of each village and the village sustainability hierarchy had been updated and these were detailed within the report.

The sustainability scores had increased for Wolviston, Elton, Thorpe Thewles, Whitton and Aislaby and decreased for Maltby and Kirklevington. The majority of these changes results from alterations to the public transport services. In addition, Maltby Parish Council had informed the Council that their village shop closed in December 2011. This resulted in the loss of a further point, although Maltby Farm Shop remained.

The school bus service between Kirklevington and Conyers School was cancelled, resulting in a loss of 2 points for access to education. The score for Aislaby village had been increased by one point to correct an error in the scoring from the 2008 study. The score for Long Newton remained the same, despite changes to the bus services, because a new village shop had opened since the original study.

While there had been some changes to the sustainability of the villages, which had, in turn, resulted in some changes to the order of sustainability between the villages, these alterations to the scores had not resulted in the movement of any villages between the tiers. All villages remained within the tier in which they were placed by the 2008 study.

Parish council's would be notified of the finalised Planning for Rural Villages 2012 Update report. This information would then be used to inform emerging Local Development Framework documents.

Members discussed the criteria that the study was based on and it was agreed that when the audit was due to be updated, the criteria to be used would be considered at a future meeting.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LDF
50/11**

Planning for Housing Consultation Update

Members were informed that the Core Strategy Review Issues and Options consultation period was held in summer 2011 and progress was being made towards the production of a 'Preferred Options' document. The report outlined progress to date and the salient issues that were likely to influence the revision of the spatial strategy and the selection of sites for housing allocations.

Following thorough studies, site visits and a sustainability appraisal, 16 sites were identified as reasonable options to somewhat fulfil the objectives of a revised Core Strategy.

A thorough consultation took place, which resulted in nearly 800 responses; however some of the online questionnaires were not completed by the named individual. The named person was contacted and if they did not agree with the form submitted in their name, it was removed. The Spatial planning team were satisfied that the action taken ensured that the consultation was robust and could correctly form the basis for the next stage of decision making.

During the process it became apparent that the Core Strategy would be required to address an outstanding housing requirement of 4,200 dwellings, 1,400 more than the outstanding requirements identified in 2011. This had been due to the number of existing planning permissions being less than previously estimated.

An analysis of the more strategic questions asked suggested that the allocation of a number of smaller sites spread across the Borough would be more acceptable than one large site.

Once the information on the various scenarios had been received and analysed, the Spatial Planning Team would draft a 'Preferred Option' which was reasonable, sustainable and broadly met with community aspirations for consideration by Senior Management and Members.

There would be further opportunity for community engagement in the form of a 'Preferred Options' consultation period in Summer 2012.

AGREED that the report be noted.