

Local Plan Steering Group

A meeting of Local Plan Steering Group was held on Tuesday, 30th October, 2012.

Present: Cllr Michael Smith (Chairman); Cllr Phil Dennis, Cllr John Gardner

Officers: Matthew Clifford, Isabel Nicholls, Carol Straughan, Rebecca Wren, Rosemary Young (DNS); Tanya Harrison (LD)

Also in attendance: No other persons were present

Apologies: Cllr Bob Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Steven Nelson, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Steve Walmsley

LPS 1/12 **Inquorate Meeting**

The meeting was inquorate and therefore the following informal notes were taken and would be considered at the next meeting.

LPS 2/12 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Smith declared a personal interest in relation to the item entitled 'Planning to meet the Needs of Gypsies and Travellers' due to the fact that an original Gypsy site had been considered in his Ward.

LPS 3/12 **Minutes of 24th July 2012**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2012 were agreed.

LPS 4/12 **Initial Feedback from Regeneration and Environment Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation 2012**

Consideration was given to the report that provided initial feedback on the scale of the response to the recent Regeneration and Environment Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation and the main issues that had emerged.

Members were reminded that between 30th July and 24th September 2012, the Spatial Planning Team undertook a public consultation exercise about the Regeneration and Environment Local Plan Preferred Options.

Three Hundred and twenty seven separate representations were received as a result of the consultation. The majority of comments focused on the Yarm, Urray Nook, Yarm Back Lane and Wynyard Village housing sites. However a number of individual comments also raised important issues for the plan.

Members considered the summary of key responses that were in the report but were also provided with a full schedule of summary responses.

Key respondents were:

- Highways Agency
- Natural England
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- English Heritage

-Environment Agency

All of the adjoining Local Planning Authorities had provided comments with all but one giving their general support for the plan. Concerns raised related to:

- Housing
- Employment
- Local and Strategic Links
- Continued viability of Durham Tees Valley Airport
- Highways
- Biodiversity issues
- Capacity in relation to schools, doctors and dentists
- Impact on countryside
- Impact on wildlife

Officers noted that Natural England had requested a phase 1 habitat survey be carried out but officers were hoping to negotiate with them as this had not been mentioned in the issues and option stage and such habitat surveys were usually undertaken by the developer. However, if Stockton Council were required to undertake the phase 1 habitat survey this could not begin until March 2013, so would delay the issue of the Regeneration and Environment Local Development Document.

Officers stated that a further summary report would be brought to the next Local Plan Steering Group meeting, which would give details of the Council's proposed response to the comments made. Members requested more information providing the rationale behind the comments, however due to the number of responses the Chair advised that Members could email officers to specify which comments they wished greater background detail to be provided for at this meeting.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LPS
5/12**

Planning to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers

Consideration was given the report updating the Panel on how the Spatial Planning team intend to take forward planning to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

Members were reminded that meeting the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers was being taken forward through a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Local Development Document (LDD).

Members discussed the following:

- The reduction of the original requirement of pitch allocations from 34 to 26
- A Steering Group had been assembled to progress the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation LDD consisting of officer, Cabinet Members and representatives from the Travellers Education Services
- National planning policy for Gypsies and Travellers
- Requirement for pitches to be allocated within the development plan
- The timetable for the Gypsy and Traveller site allocation Local Development Document

- Lack of suitable locations for traveller sites within Local Authority ownership
- Letters to go out to land owners enquiring about the availability for pitches whether it be a full site or a single pitch.

AGREED that the report be noted.

**LPS
6/12**

Time of Local Plan Steering Group

The Steering Group discussed the option of changing the time of the meetings of Local Plan Steering Group to facilitate attendance.

The Chair requested the Democratic Services Officer send an email to all the Members of the Steering Group providing alternative times for the meetings and requesting Member's preference.

AGREED that:

The Democratic Services Officer send an email to all Members of the Steering Group providing alternative times for the meetings and requesting Members preference.