

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

12 July 2011
4.30 - 5.35 pm

Present: Councillors Saunders (Vice-Chair), Herbert, Marchant-Daisley and Znajek

Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport: Tim Ward

Officers: Joanna Gilbert-Wooldridge (Senior Planning Policy Officer), James Goddard (Committee Manager), Myles Greensmith (Principal Planning Policy Officer), Sara Saunders (Planning Policy Manager)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/28/DPSSC Apologies

Councillors Nimmo-Smith, Stuart and Tunnacliffe

11/29/DPSSC Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Ward	11/32/DPSSC	Personal – Member of Conservators of the River Cam.
Councillor Saunders	11/32/DPSSC & 11/33/DPSSC	Personal: Member of Cambridge Past, Present & Future. Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign. Personal: Member of Cambridge Transition.

11/30/DPSSC Minutes

The minutes of the 14 June 2011 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

11/31/DPSSC Public Questions

None.

11/32/DPSSC Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy**Matter for Decision:**

The purpose of the Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy was to replace the existing Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2006.

The Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy has been prepared for stakeholder consultation between July and September 2011.

Following stakeholder consultation and any consequent amendments, the Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy would be presented at Environment Scrutiny Committee in October 2011.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

- (i) Approved the Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy for stakeholder consultation (Appendix A of Officer's report).
- (ii) Approved the Draft Schedule of Consultees (Appendix B of Officer's report).

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The committee received a report from the Senior Planning Policy Officer regarding the Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy.

The committee made the following comments in response to the report.

- (i) Held a general discussion on areas of land to be defined as public or private. For example, allotments and schools. Councillors took the view that if land had no community access, then it should be classified as private. Officers undertook indicate public/private ownership on

maps of Protected Open Spaces within the draft strategy and confirmed that further consideration would be given to the issue of schools and whether they fell into the public or private category. It was also confirmed by officers that all schools would be consulted in addition to the County Council, and those schools that operate on a federal basis.

Councillor Herbert referred to a Labour Group motion to Council expressing concern about the lack of open space in the City. The City has significant levels of green space in the centre and in the west of the City, but less so in many of the suburbs. Given that applications for development were still likely to come forward in already densely packed areas, green spaces needed to be protected and increased to reflect an increasing local population.

- (ii) Made suggestions on contacts to be added to list of consultees set out in Appendix B of the Officer's report. For example Romsey Action and Residents of Old Newnham (RAON).

In response to Member's questions the Senior Planning Policy Officer confirmed the following:

- (i) The intention of the Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy was to identify priorities to address in balancing the competing land needs for housing, employment and recreation. Officers recognised that a joined up approach had not always been possible in the past when individual planning applications came forward for consideration. The review of the Local Plan should lead to a more co-ordinated approach.
- (ii) Officers undertook to liaise with Ward Councillors to ensure details of Protected Open Spaces within their wards were accurate and reflected Councillors' local knowledge.
- (iii) Officers confirmed that they would assess a number of private gardens along the banks of the River Cam in response to Councillor Znajek's suggestion. It was noted that private gardens could be designated as Protected Open Spaces if they met the criteria, but Officers would have to liaise with landowners to gain access to the sites in question.
- (iv) The River Cam was not assessed as a Protected Open Space as it was protected in other ways currently (such as the Land Drainage Act, Environment Agency bye-laws, Water Framework Directive and Anglian River Basin Management Plan). Officers could undertake a Protected Open Space assessment on the river if Members wished.

Individual sites along the River Cam bank had been assessed as Protected Open Spaces.

Councillor Ward suggested undertaking a water space strategy jointly with the Conservators of the River Cam. It was agreed that this issue should be given further consideration.

- (v) Gave an outline on the assessment methodology for assessment of an area as a Protected Open Space. A questionnaire would be completed and the site visited by two officers to assess the condition of the land against set criteria.

The Committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendations in the Officer's report on the understanding that Officers would amend the Draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy in line with Members' comments made at DPSSC.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/33/DPSSC Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Matter for Decision:

Planning Policy Statement 3 required Local Authorities to produce a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to form part of a robust evidence base to inform the production of Development Plan Documents. The main purpose of the SHLAA was to assess the amount of land that may be available for new housing in Cambridge over the next 20 years in order to inform the review of the Cambridge Local Plan.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

- (i) Agreed the draft SHLAA for consultation (Appendices A & B of Officer's report) subject to any amendments from Ward Members and; and any amendments resulting from ongoing work (Phase 2) with land owners and the Housing Market Partnership over the summer.
- (ii) Agreed that if there are any major changes in approach resulting from consultation with the Housing Market Partnership over the summer, these are considered and agreed in consultation with Chair and spokes before public consultation.

- (iii) Approved the draft schedule of consultees subject to amendments requested below.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The committee received a report from the Principal Planning Policy Officer regarding the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

The committee made the following comments in response to the report.

- (i) Asked for Romsey Action and Residents of Old Newnham (RAON) along with members of the general public and neighbours immediate to sites be added to the list of consultees as set out in Appendix C of the Officer's report.

Officers undertook to amend the list of consultees.

In response to Member's questions the (Officer) confirmed the following:

- (i) Noted Member's concern at the decline in the number of petrol stations in the City. This had been raised previously in the member briefing. Officers will be holding discussions with landowners concerning SHLAA aspirations and will need to balance the role such sites play in their retail functions with the demand for housing. Landowners could seek permission for change of use, such as building houses on land formally occupied by a petrol station, but it was the prerogative of the Council to grant this permission or not by considering the competing pressures for land use.
- (ii) Local Plan review would need to consider a range of competing demands for land use for housing, employment and protected open spaces. Sites in the report should produce a potential 1,600-1,700 dwellings, of which 1,100 could realistically be expect to go forward. Fresh sites would be sought through the consultation and assessed in line with current ones outlined in the report.
- (iii) The Local Plan review would need to test how appropriate the 14,000 homes envisaged in Cambridgeshire Authorities Agreement would be.

The Committee resolved by 2 votes to 0 to adopt the recommendations and amended Appendix C of the Officer's report.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 5.35 pm

CHAIR