

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

29 May 2012
4.30 - 8.15 pm

Present: Councillors Reid (Chair), Saunders (Vice-Chair), Blencowe, Herbert, Marchant-Daisley and Tucker

Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport: Councillor Ward

Other Councillor in Attendance: Councillor Hipkin

Officers: Emma Davies (Senior Sustainability Officer), Patsy Dell (Head of Planning Services), James Goddard (Committee Manager), Myles Greensmith (Principal Planning Policy Officer) and Sara Saunders (Planning Policy Manager)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

12/20/DPSSC Apologies

No apologies were received.

12/21/DPSSC Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Reid	12/25/DPSSC	Personal: Connections with people who have made SHLAA representations, but has not fettered discretion
Councillors Reid & Saunders	12/25/DPSSC	Personal: Member of Cambridge Past, Present & Future
Councillor Ward	12/25/DPSSC	Personal: Family members connected to College

12/22/DPSSC Minutes

The minutes of the 17 April 2012 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

12/23/DPSSC Public Questions (See Below)

Public questions were taken under agenda items 12/25/DPSSC and 12/26/DPSSC.

12/24/DPSSC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

The Committee received a representation on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) from Mr Bamberg.

The representation covered the following issues:

- (i) Welcomed the SHLAA consultation opportunity and supported Planning Officers recommendation.
- (ii) Suggested the Owlstone Croft should not be included in sites proposed in the SHLAA for the following reasons:
 - It is in a flood plain and Conservation Area.
 - The site could only be accessed by a road that has not been adopted by the Highways Authority. The track forms part of a riverside walking route from Paradise Nature Reserve to Granchester Meadows. Developing the site would cause traffic flow issues and associated safety concerns for pedestrians. Other streets are heavily congested and double parked and do not suit two way traffic.
 - Site access is in multiple ownership two thirds City Council owned and one third privately owned. The right of way is across Council section not the privately owned section. There would be difficulties in altering it as the private owners would be unlikely to agree to any widening.
 - Site is in a Conservation Area the quintessential character of which should be protected. Development would conflict with the existing Local Plan policy.
 - Impacts on the nature reserve.

The Committee received a SHLAA representation from Councillor Nethsingha (Newnham Ward County Councillor).

The representation covered the following issues:

- (i) Supported Mr Bamberg's view that Owlstone Croft should not be included in sites proposed in the SHLAA. It is not suited to open market housing. Its development would have devastating consequences for a well loved area of the City. Current use is appropriate and welcomed.
- (ii) Echoed public disappointment that the County Council had not made a representation on transport grounds concerning Owlstone Croft.
- (iii) Supported the Officer's recommendation to protect playing fields.
- (iv) Some car free development might be possible.

The Committee adjourned at this point to move to the Guildhall Council Chamber due to audio/visual equipment technical difficulties in Committee Rooms.

Matter for Decision:

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 requires 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 is 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. It is important to note that the SHLAA does not allocate land for development, or determine whether planning permission would be granted for housing development on a site.

Future housing provision would be set locally through the review of the Local Plan, which would need to balance housing need and demand against the capacity of the area to accommodate new development. This would need to ensure that any housing proposal sites are deliverable or developable. Technical work on the SHLAA prepares the way for this work. The review of the Local Plan would also need to balance housing pressures against pressure for the development of other uses such as employment.

Following the Issues & Options consultation in June–July 2012 there would be a further public consultation on sites for all land uses as part of the Local Plan Review.

The Officer's report sought Member's agreement to the response to the representations, the assessment of sites put forward in the call for sites and other updates since the draft of July 2011.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

- (i) Agreed the response to representations on the draft SHLAA (Appendix A of the Officer's report).
- (ii) Agreed the SHLAA document (Appendices B & C of the Officer's report) in advance of consultation on Issues & Options Stage of the Local Plan Review.
- (iii) Agreed to publish the SHLAA on the Council's web site and write to all consultees who made representations and landowners who submitted sites.

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 SHLAA.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Planning Services, Planning Policy Manager and Principal Planning Policy Officer confirmed the following:

- (i) The SHLAA is a technical exercise for the Local Plan. It was the first stage of the planning process to quantify sites available i.e. list all possible options. The SHLAA does not commit the Council to allocate or approve development on sites listed in the SHLAA.
- (ii) P101 of the Officer's report sets out the Council's assessment of the Owlstone Croft site. Land ownership and availability are key factors in the SHLAA assessment of the achievability of sites.
- (iii) SHLAA Appendix B Annex 2 sets out the methodology for calculating site density, it is derived from Urban Capacity Study methodology. Owners of proposed development sites were asked to give indicative capacity figures within site submissions. The Council refined these based upon a design led approach to each site.
- (iv) The City is highly constrained and the SHLAA considered various sites around the City including City Centre, fringe and strategic sites. Competing land use demands would affect the number of sites taken

forward for housing developments. The Local Plan Review process may identify further sites.

- (v) The City Council was working closely with South Cambridgeshire District Council to join up site assessments and site delivery options. The broad locations cover all remaining land within the inner green belt boundary.
- (vi) Sites such as the Owlstone Croft could be developed for sheltered housing or student housing, but these would not contribute to SHLAA housing needs. However, this would not preclude sites being used in this way.

Councillors requested a change to the recommendations. Councillor Saunders formally proposed to amend 2.2b from the Officer's report:

- To agree the SHLAA document (Appendices B & C) in advance of consultation ~~commencing the consultation~~ on Issues & Options Stage of the Local Plan Review.

The Committee approved this amendment to the recommendation unanimously.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations as amended.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations as amended.

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

Not applicable.

12/25/DPSSC Local Plan Issues and Options

The Committee received a representation from Ms Blair.

The representation covered the following issues:

- (i) Requested that the City, County and South Cambridgeshire Councils worked together to produce a shared strategic vision for planning in the greater Cambridge area. Its not helpful for residents to look at

- separate documents. Also, the Orchard Park urban extension is not referred to in the document and it should be.
- (ii) The Local Plan Issues and Options report contains significant implications that are implicit, not explicit. Resident consultation was requested on high profile developments, such as the potential safeguarding of land for the guided busway.
 - (iii) With regards to the study in relation to public houses, the planning status of the 'Penny Ferry' and the 'Dog and Pheasant' pubs is not yet clear.

The Committee received a representation from Councillor Hipkin.

The representation covered the following issues:

- (i) There appeared to be some assumptions embedded in the Issues & Options report that need to be examined. For example, at paragraph 3.2 of the spatial strategy, there is the assumption that the Green Belt is causing commuting, and that more workers should live in the City to make it sustainable. Councillor Hipkin queried if commuting could be viewed as acceptable in principle, and any difficulties viewed as transport issues due to inadequate transport infrastructure.
- (ii) Paragraph 3.34 assumes that Cambridge house prices are too high due to a lack of supply. However, where is the evidence that building more will lower prices?
- (iii) Queried wording in Options 6, 7 and 8 of the Report. The Local Plan itself isn't 'providing jobs', it is enabling planning for jobs.
- (iv) Option 155, which deals with the location of new hotels, refers to Shire Hall and Mill Lane, but not the Guildhall, which was also identified in the draft Hotel Futures Report.

Matter for Decision:

The current Local Plan was adopted in July 2006. It sets out a vision, policies and proposal for future development and land use in Cambridge to 2016 and beyond.

The current Local Plan is a robust document, but there is a need to review and update policies.

The preparation of a Local Plan involves a number of stages, including public consultation. This is to ensure that it is robust and comprehensive.

The Issues and Options stage is about considering the types of issues that the city may face over the next two decades, and thinking about the issues and policy options that would need to be put in place to address those challenges. The issues and options document presents these issues and options in a thematic way to start the process of developing new policies.

Consultation on the Issues and Options Report is scheduled for six weeks between 15 June and 27 July 2012.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

- (i) Agreed the Issues and Options Report (Appendix A of the Officer's report) including the summary document (Appendix B of the Officer's report), and interim Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix C of the Officer's report) for consultation.
- (ii) Agreed the consultation arrangements set out in paragraphs 3.33 to 3.38 and the consultee list (subject to minor additions) (Appendix D of the Officer's report).
- (iii) Endorsed the supporting evidence base relating to the 2012 Appraisal of the Inner Green Belt (Appendix E of the Officer's report), Housing and Employment Provision in Cambridge – Technical Background Paper (Appendix F of the Officer's report) Cambridge Sub-Regional Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2011 (Appendix G of the Officer's report) and Gypsy & Traveller Provision in Cambridge – Site Assessment Process 2012 (Appendix H of the Officer's report).
- (iv) Agreed that any minor amendments and editing changes that need to be made prior to publication should be agreed by the Executive Councillor in consultation with the Chair and Spokes.

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 Planning Policy Manager regarding the report on Local Plan Issues and Options.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- (i) The Local Plan Issues & Options report should reflect Greater Cambridge needs. The City, County and South Cambridgeshire

Councils must work together to join up policy development and implementation. Specifically concerning:

- General employment growth.
 - Affordable housing.
 - Quality public transport.
- (ii) At the moment there is concern that there isn't an overall strategic vision on housing, transport and jobs. When will this linkage occur? There is concern about the later phases of plan making without a real joined up body.
- (iii) There is a tension between profitability and deliverability of sites for developers. Public consultation could identify what members of the public think are examples of quality building designs.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Planning Services and Planning Policy Manager confirmed the following:

- (i) The final version Hotels Future report would be presented to members in June for endorsement.
- (ii) The Issues and Options report includes 4 options relating to housing provision and includes options relating to the physical capacity of land within the city boundary. There isn't any government guidance in relation to setting the levels of housing provision but a range of information has been looked at in order to feed into the options.
- (iii) The City Council has been working closely with both South Cambridgeshire District Council and the County Council and will continue to do so as the Plans' are prepared. The Council is very mindful of the need to prepare a new plan and could not slow down its plan making to entirely match those of SCDC. The aim is to minimise any policy gap where planning decisions may be made in relation to the NPPF as opposed to the Local Plan. The City is developing the approach to the development strategy for the Cambridge area with SCDC and the County Council. It is a step by step iterative process and there will be joint discussions as preparation of the plan continues.
- (iv) A joint decision body would not be practicable as the City's planning strategy would be set by other areas. The Executive Councillor was not comfortable with this proposal. However, a joint governance board between SCDC the City Council and County Council has been set up and has already met and fed into the Issues and Options stage. This group will continue to provide a steer as work progresses.
- (v) Planning policies would not deliver jobs, but could identify and allocate land for others to take up and use for job creation. Officers

- would look at ways to encourage general employment without limiting options for consultation.
- (vi) Transport modelling will be undertaken as preparation of the plan continues.
 - (vii) Officers undertook to clarify affordable housing trigger and general figures in paragraph 3.8 on P769 of the Officer's report for Councillors Blencowe and Ward.
 - (viii) Officers would bring details concerning parking standards back to DPSSC later in the year.

The Committee reviewed the Issues & Options report on a chapter by chapter basis. The Committee unanimously agreed to amend specific details in the Chapters set out below. Officers undertook to amend the final document.

- Introduction
 - Add a question about how we define 'sustainable development' and what should be included in this.
- Chapter 2 – Vision
 - Include a reference supporting the provision of jobs for all.
 - Make reference to affordable housing.
 - 'Require' that there is design excellence (5th bullet).
- Chapter 3 – Spatial Strategy
 - Add data on housing commitments in the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) urban extensions – including Orchard Park, NW Cambridge, NIAB 2, Southern Fringe.
 - Paragraphs 3.38 and 3.39 – clarify where the housing numbers are from ie the 19,000 homes figure is from the SHMA
 - Explain why there are housing numbers provided for the City Council area, but none provided for the SCDC part of the broad locations.
- Chapter 4 – Spatial Strategic Options
 - City Centre – would like to see more about retail diversity and the different functional zones of the City Centre.
 - Paragraph 4.18 – add Riverside and Stourbridge Common Conservation Area.

- Paragraph 4.23 - look at the role of planning policy in relation to the control of moorings.
- Paragraph 4.59 – add reference to the possibility of housing in Northern Fringe East if the waste water treatment works were to downsize.
- Paragraph 4.61 – Relook at the wording with regards to safeguarding land alongside the railway between Cambridge Station and the proposed station at Chesterton Sidings for a future extension to the guided busway. This needs specific consultation. Officers to clarify the position with the County Council.
- Cambridge East – look at the wording of this section – use of terms ‘would’ and ‘could’.
- Chapter 5 – Opportunity Areas
 - Officers to clarify if Mill Road would be included as an ‘opportunity’ area. Mill Road isn’t really an opportunity area for new development, as it is more about protecting what is already there. However, it is an opportunity for a new planning policy. Look at wording.
- Chapter 6 – Sustainable development, climate change, water & flooding
 - Water efficiency will require looking at existing properties as well as new properties. A possible water offsetting fund is mentioned. This could also be considered as part of the consequential improvements option (option 50) in Chapter 6.
- Chapter 7 – Delivering High Quality Places
 - Add a question after Option 63, asking whether current design policies have been successful.
- Chapter 8 – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic and Natural Environment
 - No comments.
- Chapter 9 – Delivering High Quality Housing
 - Re-look at wording of Option 93 with regards to the deliverability of affordable housing on schemes with less than 15 dwellings.
 - Consider adding reference about the clustering of affordable housing.
- Chapter 10 – Building a Strong & Competitive Economy

- More clarity on employment being in sustainable locations.
- Officers to clarify the contribution of tourism towards the local economy.
- Retail diversity – need a specific opportunity to comment on this in relation to the City Centre. This could be here or earlier in Chapter 4, which relates to the City Centre.
- Chapter 11
 - Community Stadium (option 179) – the current wording implies Council support for the proposals. Re-order the questions and go back to general principles by starting with Question 11.50 - should the Abbey Stadium be retained as a stadium? Wording should be more neutral and less detailed about Grosvenor's proposals. Potentially refer to a new sub-regional stadium as opposed to a community stadium. Amendments to text to be agreed with Chair, Spokes and Executive Councillor.
- Chapter 12
 - Need better consistency between the figures in the key facts.
 - Options 186 to 188 – the options need to be crisper and more distinct.
 - Question 12.30 – drafting error as it refers to wrong options.
- Consultee list
 - Amend consultee list to include companies that have contacted the Council, secondary schools and business representatives.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations, subject to document amendments set out above to be agreed with Chair, Spokes and Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

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

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm

CHAIR