

DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

29 May 2013
2.00 - 5.10 pm

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

Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change: Councillor Ward

Officers:

Head of Planning Services: Patsy Dell
Urban Design & Conservation Manager: Glen Richardson
Principal Planning Policy Officer: Joanna Gilbert-Wooldridge
Senior Sustainability Officer: Emma Davies
Senior Planning Policy Officer: Nancy Kimberley
Senior Planning Policy Officer: Brendan Troy
Senior Planning Policy Officer: Bruce Waller
Committee Manager: James Goddard

Other Officers Present:

Head of Strategic Housing: Alan Carter
Housing Strategy Manager: Helen Reed
Urban Extensions Project Manager: Julian Sykes

Sustainable Drainage Engineer: Simon Bunn
Planning Policy & Economic Development Officer: Stephen Miles
Urban Designer: Matthew Paul
Consultant: Myles Greensmith

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

13/26/DPSSC Apologies

No apologies were received.

13/27/DPSSC Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor	13/30/DPSSC	Personal: Member of Trumpington

Blackhurst		Resident's Association
Councillor Blencowe	13/30/DPSSC	Personal: Chair of YMCA Football Club
Councillors Reid & Saunders	13/30/DPSSC	Personal: Member of Cambridge Past, Present & Future
Councillors Saunders	13/30/DPSSC	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign

13/28/DPSSC Minutes

The minutes of the 25 March 2013 and 27 March 2013 meetings were approved and signed as a correct record.

13/29/DPSSC Public Questions (See Below)

Members of the public asked a number of questions, and made representations as set out below.

- 1. Mr George and Mr James' representations covered the following issues:**
 - i. Wanted a fit for purpose football stadium.**
 - ii. The current Cambridge United site was not sustainable.**
 - iii. The Club delivered a lot of sports through its community role. It worked with schools through the Trust.**
 - iv. Sport was important for health and well-being. Football was in a powerful position to help young people with their education.**
 - v. The Club experienced the following difficulties in delivering community sports:**
 - a. Lack of funding.**
 - b. Lack of capacity.**
 - c. Lack of facilities and a waiting list for those already in place.**
 - vi. Reiterated CUFC had the desire and expertise to delivery community sports facilities, but required appropriate facilities to do so.**

The Head of Planning Services said the community had been consulted regarding sites for a community stadium through the Local Plan issues

and options 2 consultation. Officers advised there was no exceptional circumstances need as required by the NPPF to release green belt land in Trumpington. DPSSC would consider the advice and make their own decision at this meeting.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change said there was no statutory need for community stadium facilities in the Local Plan. Specific applications would be considered on their merits if submitted to the Planning Committee.

2. Mr Gudgeon's representation covered the following issues:

- i. **The need for extra housing that eats into the green belt is not evidenced in the Local Plan.**
- ii. **Took issue with use of the green belt and suggested this was open to legal challenge.**

3. Mr Pellew's representation covered the following issues:

- i. **Cambridge Past Present and Future were encouraged by the Council's planning stance, but had some reservations.**
- ii. **Agreed with Local Plan principles such as being a compact green city.**
- iii. **Suggested there were inconsistencies between policies and implementation:**
 - **Market towns were omitted from the Local Plan, these should be the priorities after urban centres.**
 - **No clear argument under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) why green belt sites were released for development.**

4. Mr Beresford's representation covered the following issues:

- i. **Worts Causeway should not be developed for housing, residents object to this.**
- ii. **The green belt is valued as a green and leisure space.**

5. Mr Parry-Jones' representation covered the following issues:

- i. **Took issue with proposal to develop the green belt.**
- ii. **GB1 is important to Cambridge.**
- iii. **Took issue with details in the Officer's report:**

- **There was no evidence to justify the development of GB1 for housing.**
- **The Council should protect its heritage assets.**
- **Releasing one area could lead to legal challenges by developers to open up other areas of the green belt etc.**

The Head of Planning Services responded to the questioners as follows:

- i. The planning landscape had changed since the 2006 iteration of the Plan.
- ii. The City Council was working with neighbouring authorities on strategic issues, but the City Council was responsible for activities within the city boundary.
- iii. The NPPF was clear about City Council responsibilities in relation to identifying then seeking to meet development needs through the local plan.
- iv. Referred to policies considered by the City Council when making planning decisions.
- v. The City Council was responsible for finding sites to meet housing needs within its boundaries. Needs had been identified through the joint work with other councils and through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This set out the evidence base for demand and supply. The Plan was presented to DPSSC for consideration of the release of four small green belt sites for housing and employment needs.
- vi. Only small green belt sites had been released, in adherence with key Local Plan principles to retain the character of the City as a 'compact city'. Sites had been released due to exceptional circumstance need and all other options within city boundaries on non-green belt sites had been exhausted.
- vii. Referred to Appendix B, table 2 regarding supply figures.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change responded to the questioners as follows:

- i. The intention was to preserve Cambridge as a compact city.
- ii. Local Plan Policy 26 contains mitigation measures to address people's concerns such as protecting the character of the city.

6. Mr Gudgeon's supplementary representation covered the following issues:

- i. **Said the Local Plan was on thin ice.**
- ii. **Took issue with housing demand figures.**

The Head of Planning Services responded that the Local Plan evidence base included the Technical forecasting work and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment covered in the county-wide Memorandum of Co-operation as required by the NPPF. This was where housing supply figures came from.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change responded that officers were watching developing case law on new local plans. Authorities were required to satisfy housing needs for face a challenge by the Planning Inspector at local plan examinations.

7. Mr Pellew's supplementary representation covered the following issues:

- i. **Queried how the council reconciled its stated policy of a compact city with the release of the green belt.**
- ii. **Queried why the Draft Local Plan did not include details of the exceptional circumstances for the release of the green belt.**

The Head of Planning Services responded that the policy justification was included in agenda part two reports. She accepted that the policy justification for exceptional Green Belt release could have been made clearer and this issue would be reviewed as the plan moved through the next committee stages

8. Mr Parry-Jones' supplementary representation covered the following issues:

- i. **Queried impact of green belt development on heritage assets.**
- ii. **Queried how the numbers of units could be reduced.**

The Head of Planning Services referred to details in the Officer's report on sites GB1 and 2. The intention was to have no negative impact on heritage buildings, wildlife etc, so this affected the amount of housing that could be delivered.

9. Councillor Birtles' (Ward Councillor for Queen Edith's) representation covered the following issues:

- i. Residents had expressed concerns regarding the development of GB1 and 2 sites.
 - ii. Took issue with development on the green belt.
 - iii. Referred to the NPPF and asked if green belt development met its criteria.
 - iv. Queried predicted job growth figures and thus housing need.
 - v. Asked for clear justification of green belt development.
10. Councillor Swanson's (Ward Councillor for Queen Edith's) representation covered the following issues
- i. Asked for clear justification for development of GB1 and 2. Flora and fauna was under stress.
 - ii. Queried if GB2 was deliverable as a site.
 - iii. Worts Causeway and Babraham Road were busy traffic through routes. This impacted on their being used as an access route.
 - iv. Infrastructure in Queen Edith's Ward was limited, sites would exacerbate existing issues.
11. Councillor Pippas' (Ward Councillor for Queen Edith's) representation covered the following issues:
- i. The green belt was an area of natural beauty that needed to be protected.
 - ii. Took issue with GB1 development.
 - iii. Acknowledged the need to build houses, but proposed using alternative sites to the green belt, such as brown field.

The Head of Planning Services responded as follows:

- i. The housing need figure had been established/evidenced.
- ii. Appendix H of the Officer's report showed the justification for housing figures and the reasons for site selection.
- iii. GB2 was a viable site.
- iv. Green belt sites were not required in 2005/6 when considered by the Local Plan Planning Inspector at the time, but were now so were being considered.
- v. A transport assessment would still be required for each site at the appropriate time.

13/30/DPSSC Cambridge Local Plan – Towards 2031 – draft Local Plan including the preferred approach to the Spatial Strategy, Vision and Objectives

Matter for Decision

The current local plan was adopted in July 2006 and runs to 2016 and beyond.

The Officer's report updated the strategic context for the preparation of the new local plan through the agreement amongst the authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to endorse the adoption of a Memorandum of Co-operation on a spatial approach.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change

- i. Agreed that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Co-operation (and the technical work that as fed into that approach) be used as the basis for identifying the objectively assessed needs for homes and jobs in the Cambridge Local Plan 2014;
- ii. Agreed the Tranche 4 draft plan sections to be put forward into the composite full draft plan;
- iii. Considered feedback from this committee on the accompanying policy justification documents for each draft policy, which will be published alongside the draft plan as an audit trail of how the policy was evidenced, consulted on and assessed;
- iv. Endorsed the content of the associated evidence base documents for use as an evidence base for the review of the Local Plan and as a material consideration in planning decisions comprising:
 - the Employment Land Review Update 2013,
 - the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment update 2013,
 - the Retail and Leisure Update 2013,
 - City Centre Capacity Study 2013,
 - Student Accommodation – Affordable Housing, Financial Contributions Viability Study,
 - SHLAA and Potential Site Allocations High Level Viability Assessment 2013,
 - Technical Background Document – Part 2 Supplement
- v. Agreed that any amendments and editing changes that need to be made prior to the draft Local Plan version being put to Environment Scrutiny Committee and Full Council in June should be agreed by the Executive Councillor in consultation with the Chair and Spokesperson.

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 Head of Planning Services regarding the draft Local Plan. She said a professional proof reader would review the document and pick up omissions, style changes and typographical errors prior to publication

In response to Members' questions the Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change, Head of Planning Services, Urban Design & Conservation Manager, Principal Planning Policy Officer, Consultant, Senior Sustainability Officer and Senior Planning Policy Officer said the following:

Appendix A

- i. DPSSC had viewed this appendix in previous meetings and it reflected comments thus far.

Appendix B

- ii. DPSSC had viewed this appendix in March 2013 and it was brought back for comment.
- iii. The County Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire was being developed on a parallel timetable to the Local Plan. Members would be updated on progress at June 2013 Council, including the progress of neighbouring authorities in addressing strategic needs such as housing and transport.

Appendix C

- iv. The County Council were looking at the impact of the Transport Strategy on the city.
- v. The Area Action Plan looked at how the City Council could work with neighbouring authorities on the wider regeneration of the city.
- vi. Supplementary Planning Documents would still have a role in the planning process supporting the Local Plan with additional details.
- vii. It was noted that the public consultation had not supported development of the green belt, however alternative sites had not come forward to meet the identified need. Various sites needed to be considered to meet the council's identified development needs. The experience from other local plan examinations elsewhere was that Planning Inspectors were strictly applying the NPPF requirements and could penalise the Council for not planning to meet its needs.

Appendix D

- viii. A surcharge could not be imposed on top of the Community Infrastructure Levy charge for student accommodation.
- ix. It was difficult for Officers to specify if the provision of affordable housing or payment of a commuted sum was preferable; this would depend on circumstances. The 2006 Local Plan allowed the use of either option, this position could be reviewed as part of the consultation process for the plan.
- x. Homes in multiple occupation (HMOs) could be used for accommodation by students and others.
- xi. It was hard for local plan policy to be used to limit the number of class 4 HMO properties in an area.

Appendix E

- xii. Permeable paving to mitigate surface run-off was encouraged where gardens were converted into car parking spaces.
- xiii. The City Council was jointly working with the County Council on transport and public realm.
- xiv. Officers noted Member's concerns about developing open/recreational space. Officers explained that the policy will clarify the conditions that would be acceptable for relocated open spaces. Open space could only be developed if further open space, or better alternative recreational facilities were provided within 800m of housing. Members believed that a 400m threshold was a more appropriate distance from the original site for replacement open space. Officers agreed to amend the policy accordingly.
- xv. The policy tried to be flexible to provide quality open space. Officers undertook to review the wording of Policies 67 and 68 to ensure open space was protected, this amendment would be brought back to Environment Scrutiny Committee in future.

Councillor Marchant-Daisley formally proposed an amendment to the text of paragraph B of Policy 68: Open Space and Recreation Provision Through New Development as follows:

“if, taking into account the accessibility/capacity of existing open space facilities and the circumstances of the surrounding area, the open space needs of the proposed residential development can be **exceptionally** met more appropriately by providing either new or enhanced provision off-site”

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the amendment shown in bold.

- xvi. The Planning Committee would judge the merit of protecting trees or not in individual planning applications. It was not appropriate to specify a generic policy position as part of the strategy document.

Appendix F

- xvii. Policy 83 text amendments were set out on the amendment sheet. Health impact assessments would be completed as part of the planning application process.

Appendix H

- xviii. The justification of why sites had been identified as suitable for development were set out in Appendices A and B of the Local Plan; and Appendix H of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- xix. The Abbey Stadium was considered as a suitable site for housing in earlier stages of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment work but this had not been the case in the 2006 Plan. However the decision not to allocate a site for a community stadium meant it should not be identified as suitable for housing at this stage.

Appendix N

- xx. The Memorandum of Co-operation summarised the technical work that Councillors on the Cambridgeshire wide Planning and Strategic Transport Governance group have signed up to. The technical work pulled together a number of forecasting models into one evidence base. This was supplemented by the strategic housing market assessment work.
- xxi. The City Council had been involved in the development of the Memorandum of Co-operation. It needed to be adopted by the council as part of the evidence base for the preparation of the local plan.

The Chair decided that the recommendations highlighted in the Officer's report should be voted on and recorded separately:

The Committee unanimously approved recommendation (i).

The Committee approved recommendation (ii) by 3 votes to 0.

The Committee approved recommendation (iii) by 3 votes to 0.

The Committee approved recommendation (iv) by 3 votes to 0.

The Committee unanimously approved recommendation (v).

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 5.10 pm

CHAIR