

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

6 March 2009

Attendance:

Committee Members:

Councillors:

Wood (Chairman)
Beckett (in the Chair) (P)

Coates (P)

Pearson (P)

Deputy Members in attendance:

Councillors Allgood

Other invited Councillors:

Busher (P)
Jeffs (P)
Pines

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Barratt and Learney

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Cooper, Humby and Ruffell

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THIS MEETING AND NEXT**

RESOLVED:

That in the absence of the Chairman (Councillor Wood),
Councillor Beckett be appointed as Chairman for both this meeting and
the next meeting on 25 March 2009.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Pearson declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests as he was the Council's representative on the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) and also a member of the Hampshire Countryside and Access Forum. He declared the interests because there were representatives of both bodies present at the meeting. He remained in the room, spoke and voted.

Councillor Allgood declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests as he was the County Councillor for the area covering Whiteley, Southwick and Wickham. In addition, he was a member of the South Downs Joint Committee. He remained in the room, spoke and voted.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 28 January 2009 be approved and adopted.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Three people spoke during the general public participation period and their comments are summarised below.

Mr B Gibbs (Denmead Parish Council) spoke in support of comments made at previous meetings by on behalf of the Parish Council, in defence of the Denmead local gap and in opposition to the designation of Little Frenchies Field as a reserve site. He also drew attention to the new standards regarding minimum parking provision on new developments.

Mr J Hayter in general supported the proposals set out in Report CAB1799(LDF) below, but expressed concern about the Council's position to defend speculative planning applications if the planned strategic developments were not completed in time to meet the requirements of the South East Plan. In addition, he queried whether the options for market towns would take account of the different requirements in the PUSH and non-PUSH areas, South East Plan policies SH13 and 14 and density requirements.

Mr Weeks stated that he did not consider the Council were giving adequate regard to the requirements of the Climate Change Act. He mentioned that the NHS had published a document outlining how it would reduce carbon emissions.

In response to comments made above by Mr Gibbs, the Head of Strategic Planning explained that the LDF Core Strategy was considering strategic allocations, not the smaller possible sites, such as Little Frenchies Field. The suitability of such sites would instead be analysed at the Development Allocations Document stage, scheduled to be subject to initial consultation in summer 2010.

In response to comments from Mr Hayter, the Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Council was required to demonstrate that it had allocated sufficient sites to meet the requirements of the South East Plan and that these were deliverable within the specified timescale in order to meet the Government's tests of soundness of the LDF. The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the other points made by Mr Hayter had been addressed in previous Reports to the Committee and that South East Plan policies and

PUSH guidance frameworks had been taken into account. The full Preferred Options report to be considered at its meeting on 25 March 2009 would include proposals for the settlement hierarchy, following the approach agreed previously by the Committee.

Councillor Pearson and the Head of Strategic Planning also outlined to Mr Weeks the various measures being undertaken by the Council to meet the requirements of the Climate Change Act.

5. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS – FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND SUGGESTED PREFERRED STRATEGIC ALLOCATION FOR M27 CORRIDOR**

(Report [CAB1799\(LDF\)](#) refers)

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that this was the last of a series of reports drawing together the results of the consultation exercise on the Core Strategy Issues and Options. It contained a detailed analysis of the responses received in respect of some parts of the Core Strategy and suggested a preferred approach.

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the process undertaken previously which had led up to the recommendations outlined in the Report.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the Report recommended (at Paragraph 3.5):

- (i) Development of approximately 3,000 dwellings should be provided on land to the north north/west of Whiteley, together with supporting social and physical infrastructure.
- (ii) development of up to 1,200 dwellings should be provided on the current Major Development Areas (MDA) 'reserve site' at West of Waterlooville.

The Committee discussed each proposal in detail as summarised below.

North North/West of Whiteley

The Committee noted that it was proposed to focus development at Areas 1 and 2, as outlined in the Report's Appendices. Area 3 was disregarded because of environmental constraints, poor linkages with the rest of Whiteley and its inability to contribute to the provision of the Whiteley Way access road.

The Head of Strategic Planning advised that it was estimated that the remaining two areas could allow development of approximately 3,000 dwellings. However, the exact provision would not be known until further investigation into the environmental constraints of the areas was undertaken. He confirmed that there would be barriers between any development and the SSSI land and other environmental sensitive land in the area, such as the ancient woodland.

One Member queried why it was proposed to allocate land for the development of 700 more dwellings than was actually required? The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the amount of development was determined by the natural boundaries of the proposed sites, based on provision of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare. Neither one of the two recommended sites on its own could meet the required level of development, but there was no reason to constrain the development of the sites artificially.

The Committee discussed whether it would be possible to off-set any such “over provision” against other housing requirements on the Council in other areas, including those placed on it by Strategic Development Areas. However, the Head of Strategic Planning stated that there was no such possibility as each Strategic Development Area had its own housing requirements which were separate from those for each District. The Head of Strategic Planning also emphasised the benefits of incorporating a level of flexibility regarding housing provision within the LDF. The Council’s estimates of how it would achieve the Government’s housing requirements would be challenged by developers. It therefore was prudent for the Council to include some over-provision of development, where appropriate, such as at Whiteley, to reduce the risk of a successful challenge and the consequential likelihood of additional sites being allocated by the Inspector or the Plan being found ‘unsound’.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Learney spoke on behalf of Councillor Achwal (a Ward Councillor for Whiteley) and also the Liberal Democrat Group. She noted that Whiteley residents were not opposing the proposed new developments because it was anticipated that it would result in improvements to road access, school provision and public transport in the area. However, the necessary improvements to infrastructure should be in place before any new dwellings were built and occupied. The commitment to higher sustainability standards was welcomed and should be introduced with immediate effect.

Following further debate, Councillor Allgood proposed that the wording of the Report’s recommendations be amended from “approximately 3,000 dwellings” to “*up to 3,000 dwellings*”. This was agreed.

In addition, the Committee requested that consultation with Whiteley residents about the form of development be undertaken along similar lines as for the West of Waterlooville MDA.

Members highlighted the importance of ensuring that development secured the provision of the Whiteley Way and the Head of Strategic Planning agreed to make sure that the wording of the recommendation was strengthened to reflect this requirement.

West of Waterlooville MDA ‘reserve site’

Councillor Allgood welcomed the recommendation to focus on Area 4 as set out in the Report’s appendices and therefore not include any proposal for

development within the Denmead gap. However, he queried why the recommendation was for development of up to 1,200 dwellings, rather than the 1,000 dwellings previously proposed? He requested that the recommendation be amended to 1,000 dwellings. It was noted that this approach was supported by Councillor Hollingbery, Chairman of the West of Waterlooville Forum.

The Head of Strategic Planning explained that the figure of 1,200 dwellings had been calculated by applying the same density as applied over the remaining West of Waterlooville MDA (i.e. 40dph). Officers had concluded that the natural boundaries and surrounding infrastructure could support this level of development. He also confirmed that the development assumed lower density levels at its peripheries. However, following debate, the Committee agreed to the proposed amendment to reduce to 1,000 dwellings.

Councillor Allgood also expressed concern about the phrasing of the third paragraph on page 39 of the Report's Appendix, which appeared to favour site allocation in relation to Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council requirements. It was agreed that this paragraph be redrafted to reflect a more neutral stance and that the wording of the Preferred Options document should take this into account and be agreed in consultation with the Leader.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the recommended strategic site allocations in relation to Whiteley and Waterlooville be agreed as set out in the report and as amended above, and incorporated when developing the 'Preferred Options' version of the Core Strategy for consultation.

6. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2009**
(Report [CAB1802\(LDF\)](#) refers)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Barratt emphasised the urgent need to address the shortfall in primary school places in Winchester. She mentioned the ongoing discussions with the County Council on this matter. However, she considered that the City Council should be more proactive and encourage the identification of sites for new schools. Councillor Barratt also suggested that the Council should adopt a Sustainable Building Design Supplementary Planning Document, similar to that adopted by Brighton Council. She believed that this would assist the Council in requiring a more sustainable level of development in decisions on planning applications.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Barratt for her comments, but noted that site allocation for education provision was a matter for the Development Allocation document.

With regard to the suggestion that the Council adopt a Sustainable Building Design SPD, the Head of Strategic Planning stated that it would first be necessary to identify a suitable “parent” policy to relate such a SPD too. In addition, there was resource implications of the additional work required. The Committee requested that officers investigate the suggestion and submit a report to a future Committee meeting for further consideration.

The Committee welcomed the consultation proposed in the Scheme and emphasised its importance.

Councillor Coates suggested that the Council give consideration to how the emerging LDF policies would be applied, together with how the Council would work with housing associations and developers, to mitigate the effects of the current economic downturn. The Chairman agreed that this matter should be considered further outside the meeting.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Planning confirmed that Village Design Statements would remain as Supplementary Planning Guidance but some were adopted under the previous Local Plan and the weight attached to them would diminish over time. Therefore they needed to be updated and parish councils had been reminded about the need to update their Statements.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

1. That the Revised Winchester District Local Development Scheme, attached at Appendix A to this report, be approved for submission to the Government Office for the South East.

2. That the Head of Strategic Planning be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access, to agree any minor changes which may be needed to address issues raised by the Government Office for the South East, prior to the LDS being brought into effect.

7. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

It was noted that the following date had been agreed for a future meeting of the Committee: 25 March 2009 (9.30am).

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.05pm.

Chairman