City of York Council	Committee Minutes
MEETING	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP
DATE	9 MARCH 2009
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), POTTER (VICE-CHAIR), MERRETT, MOORE, REID, SIMPSON-LAING, R WATSON, WATT, TAYLOR (AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CLLR D'AGORNE) AND WAUDBY (AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CLLR AYRE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS AYRE AND D'AGORNE

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Tracy Simpson-Laing declared a Personal Non-Prejudicial interest as she lives opposite the former bowling green and Back Park, Leeman Road.

27. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mark Waters, representing York Natural Environment Trust, had registered to speak on the issue of housing allocation. Mr Waters quoted the recent population growth increase reported in January 2009 and asked how York residents were to benefit from new residences and house building. He expressed his concerns about Green Belt disappearance. He also spoke of the lack of meaningful public consultation and the need to debate the issues at open public consultation. He had two questions for the committee: He wanted to know how the report would be disseminated for consultation. He also questioned the inclusion of Site No 150 Manor School and Site No 151 Lowfield School as potential sites and asked how these sites could accommodate 324 dwellings, and whether the difference in figures could explain these figures and the figures used at the Public Inquiry on the Germany Beck and Derwenthorpe sites.

28. CONSULTATION DRAFT STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA) PHASE 2 – EVIDENCE BASE

Members considered a report that advised them of the preparation of the Consultation Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Phase 2 produced as a key part of the evidence base to support the Local Development Framework (LDF). The study was built on the stage 1 SHLAA that was reported to Members in 2008.

The Head of City Development introduced the report, and explained that it was a major piece of work and formed part of the evidence base for the LDF. He stressed that the report was very much a consultation draft, and that further opportunities would be provided to feed in information and comments. Next steps would include the two meetings scheduled for 6 and 20 April 2009 when reports on the Spatial and Core Strategy Options would be brought to Members.

The Principal Development Officer then further outlined some of the main aspects of the report. Members were advised that this draft report was built on to Phase 1 brought to Members in April 2008 and that it was one step in the process of the assessment of possible sites. The main purpose of the report was to identify sites with housing potential and to look at when these sites could come forward. The report asked Members to agree that this information could be used to inform and for consideration in the Core Strategy.

The Officer stated that Site 148 off Balfour Street, near Leeman Road, had, in the light of new information, been formally moved to the list of unsuitable sites.

The Officer stated that in preparing the report Officers had assessed all the sites where housing could be identified, including Brown Field and Green Field sites, so as not to prejudge. Out of the 226 sites looked at they had removed 49 sites, as these fell within primary constraint areas. A further 52 sites were removed following assessment of suitability. This then left 125 sites that were looked at in more detail. In terms of availability, officers had looked at landowner constraints and economic viability. Following this, 27 sites were placed in the unknown or unavailable category. 42 sites were in the draft Green Belt area. 56 sites were considered potentially developable and that those sites could provide 6856 dwellings. This provided just under 15,000 units with a shortfall of 6500 units. This indicated sufficient availability until 2021/2022. Officers explained that options for dealing with the shortfall would need to be evaluated as part of the emerging Spatial Strategy.

Members then raised various concerns and questions with regard to the report to which Officers responded.

- **Consultation**. Questions were asked about the planned dates for consultation and what this would entail. Officers stated that the Spatial Strategy and site specifics would be subject to citywide public consultation. The Spatial Strategy would be brought to members on 6 April 2009 with a further meeting on 20 April 2009 to consider the Core Strategy Preferred Options Allocations Report. With regard to sites, Officers stated that they hoped to be able consult on this in September 2009 through the Preferred Options Allocations Report and were working to get the Core Strategy ready for submission and the Allocations document to run alongside this. A question was asked about whether all members would be given the opportunity to look at the document. The Chair replied that the document would go for public consultation and that a document on this would go to every house in the city. Officers confirmed that this

would be in September 2009. With regard to how the document would be finalised, Officers confirmed that it would be brought back to Members for changes and detailed comments and that there would be a further round of consultation with stakeholders to look at questions of deliverability and viability.

- Some **inaccuracies** in the report, with regard to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) at Manor School, bus routes, and Beckfield Lane Doctor's surgery were pointed out. Officers stated that the document was a position in time and wanted comments and feedback from Members to update the information. **Inconsistencies** were noted in the list of sites. For example, the land at Clifton and Fulford and the reasons why these sites were not suitable were in the technical appendices. It was also noted that when the text was read it was difficult to know why one was more unsuitable than another.
- **Maps and colour coding concerns**. Concerns were raised about the maps and the meaning of the specific colours used to code areas and site 36 north of Skelton. Officers confirmed that the red sites fell within the Draft Green Belt and the Grey sites fell within the area of primary constraint. Area 43 in the Green Belt had been dropped.
- **Green Belt**. Some Members felt that with regard to sites within the Draft Green Belt, that it was better that these should be brought forward in the Green Belt Review. Concern was expressed that developers might think that land could be developed. Officers stated that the guidance they had received for the preparation of the document had stated that they needed to look at Brownfield and Green field sites, to show that they had looked at all the possible alternative sites.
- ***North Side of Grimston Bar****. That this was considered to be a Green Wedge and Members wanted the Officer report to reflect this. [amended at meeting on 20 April 2009]*
- **Growth sustainability**. Concerns were expressed that the demands on York for growth were unsustainable and a question was asked about whether there had been any re-interpretation on the need for growth. Officers confirmed that the guidance had statutory weight and that officers were required to work to this strategy and to work with the current figures with regard to housing. With regard to employment, figures for pre-recession York had indicated that York would need about 1000 additional jobs per annum.
- **Windfalls**. One Member expressed concern about page 4 paragraph 6 of the report and the question of windfalls on page 6 and stated that these could not be allowed when there were clearly sites that could not yet be identified and wished to make representation on this issue. Concerns were also raised regarding Site16 South of Woodthorpe and whether this was within the Green Belt appraisal area. Officers confirmed that all areas of land highlighted in the Green Belt Review had been removed as a primary constraint and that this area of land fell outside of those areas, but would double check the map boundaries in this area. With regard to site 31 Officers confirmed that they wanted to prevent the coalescence of York and Knapton. With reference to paragraph

69 of the report, it was felt that it would be very risky to rely on windfall areas. A question was asked about the concept of "broad locations" and whether this was the same as "safeguarded land". Officers confirmed that they were looking at "broad locations" and that that they were required to show sites for 10 years. After that they could show "broad areas". If windfalls were to come forward this could affect the plan and if these were better sites they could then be fed in to the plan. This was similar to safeguarded sites but not exactly the same and the time period could change.

- The **land west of Chapelfields** had been scored a 'red' for traffic issues whereas the York Central site. Had scored 'green'. This seemed to be inconsistent. Officers agreed to look at this.
- **Clifton Moor.** Members noted that access could be provided, but this area has been marked in red. Officers confirmed that public transport was a criterion.
- **Playing fields**. The question of sites where there were playing fields was raised and reference was made to the comments made by Mr Waters. It was noted by members that there was a constraint with the existing policy not to lose existing playing fields. Officers confirmed that this was the reason that it was brought to Members, Officers and outside parties for discussion. Officers stated that they were looking for input to shape the options, so that by September 2009 there would be a list of recommended sites with justification for why those sites had been recommended.
- **Housing numbers**. Officers confirmed that they had tried to include consistent methodology.
- **Open Space Strategy**. Members raised concerns about the amount of open space to be retained on the Manor school site. Officers confirmed that on larger sites above 5 hectares they had 'netted off' 30% of the total gross site area to provide for open space and community facilities. Officers also referred to the site proformas for Manor School and Lowfield School sites, which state that the open space should be retained within the site.
- **Flood risk**. Ref to Paragraph 9.28 page 63. Officers confirmed that sites falling within the functional floodplain (zone3b) had been excluded as unsuitable for housing development under criterion 1 (primary constraints) and in addition Greenfield sites falling within zone 3a (high probability of flooding) had been automatically scored a 'red' for locational suitability and given a recommendation of 'unsuitable for housing development'.
- **Houses and flats**. It was felt that house type and size needed to be looked at, particularly larger family-type houses. Officers confirmed that the indicative guide concerning the number of units was 70% houses and 30% flats. The minimum density was detailed on page 51 of the report. Questions were also raised about why flats were not being considered in rural areas. Officers stated that it had been assumed that houses were more suited to rural areas but that this was a choice for Members. In response to a question raised about affordable housing, officers stated that this was being looked at through the Affordable Housing Policy as part of the emerging Core Strategy.
- **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** and regional advice was raised**.**

- **Sites in the unknown category** detailed on pages 84 and 85 of the report**.** A question was asked about the checking of these sites. Officers stated that some of the unknown sites could be employment sites.
- **Annamine Nurseries.** Officers agreed to look again at this site and the planning history and Greenfield/brownfield status.
- **Gross to Net Site Ratio.** The question of assumptions about the proportion of land and on site facilities. With reference to page 9 paragraph 20 of the report, a Member commented that it was difficult to understand the logic about the assumptions made. It was felt that there needed to be a consistent value for all sites above the minimum cut-off. Concern was also expressed about proper provision for urban sites. Officers confirmed that examples of medium sized sites of between 0.41 and 4.99 hectares had been looked at in terms of their net to gross ratios and could be added to the report.
- Officers had missed an additional **site adjacent to the Westfield School** site, which had been put forward by developers. Officers confirmed that a proforma would be completed for this site and it would be added to the map, but that the score and comments would be very similar to the existing site.
- **Details on the Internet.** It was confirmed that details of the Consultation Draft Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) would be made available on the council website, including a list of those who had been consulted.
- **Maps.** Officers advised that maps were available for Members to consult in the Member's Lounge. It was also noted that further work would be done on the maps following comments from Members.

Some members expressed concern that in the long-term planning for the next 30 years certain potential sites would be ruled out as there was not enough land for future housing requirement. Concerns were expressed that there was too much development in the city centre and that the amenity level was not provided for this. It was also felt that the distinction between the primary function of Green Belt sites and Green Field sites should be made clear in order for people to understand these different categories. It was suggested that the Green Field Sites could be left on the map, but the colour coding changed so that the public could understand the difference between the two site categories.

There were strong views expressed that Green Belt land should be defended and that housing was inappropriate on Green Belt land. It was stated that Green Belt land should be the choice of last resort for housing and that any proposed use of Green Belt land should be fully justified. It was also stated that the Draft Green Belt should be looked at through the Green Belt Review.

Other concerns were expressed that the maps used could not be worked with without the other map layers, including the Green Belt areas. A sympathetic view was expressed in support of the exclusion of the Green Belt areas, but it was stated that this then put more pressure on the city. The Member asked that other areas be excluded, including land near

Clifford's tower and around York's historical character, as there had been too much reliance on the York central area.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Executive be recommended to endorse the proposed Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment included as Annex A to the report for publication as part of the Local Development Framework Evidence Base, subject to the exclusion of the sites in the Draft Green Belt category shown in figure 24 on page 86 to 87 of the report, which should be classed as unsuitable for development.[1]

REASON: So that the Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment can be used as part of the Local Development Framework evidence base.

(ii) That the Executive be recommended to delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy and the Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy, to make any other necessary changes to the document arising from the recommendation of the LDF Working Group, prior to its publication as part of the Local Development Framework Evidence Base.

REASON: So that any recommended changes can be incorporated into the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

[1].*Note: Cllrs Simpson-Laing, Merrett and Potter voted against this resolution and asked that their opposition be recorded.*

Cllr S F Galloway, Chair
[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 6.05 pm].