
MEETING	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP
DATE	4 OCTOBER 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), D'AGORNE, POTTER (VICE-CHAIR), MERRETT, AYRE, REID, SIMPSON-LAING AND WATT
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLOR MORLEY

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Group held on 6 September 2010 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were two registrations to speak under the council's Public Participation Scheme. Both registrations were in respect of agenda item 4 – "LDF Core Strategy" (minute 13 refers).

A representative of Osbaldwick Parish Council stated that the parish council welcomed the commitment to localism. He urged Members to support Issue 3 – Option 1 in the report and to take the opportunity to protect York's Green Belt.

A representative of residents surrounding the North Selby Mine (NSM) raised concerns regarding the suggestion that NSM could be designated as an area for employment. He stated that it had been granted mining status in the 1970's on the understanding that it would be returned to agriculture once mining had ceased. Copies of a document entitled "Selby Coalfield Mines Activity and Afteruse" dated July 2003 had been provided by the speaker and were tabled. The speaker stated that if NSM was to be designated as an employment area, the local community would perceive that the planning process had been overtaken by the zoning of the site as brownfield. He requested that the council provide the local community with the opportunity to have their views heard on this issue.

13. LDF CORE STRATEGY.

Members received a report that followed on from the previous report on the Core Strategy which had been considered on 6 September 2010. The report highlighted a series of key issues relating to the Core Strategy arising from the changing policy context.

The report set out a number of options for Members to consider as follows:

Issue 1: The Level of Future Housing

- What should the LDF Core Strategy use as a target for future housing supply?
- Should an allowance for small windfalls be included in the housing?

Issue 2: The Level of future employment land provision

- Should the LDF Core Strategy include the target of approximately 1,000 jobs a year?
- Should the LDF allocate Areas C, I and North Selby Mine for employment?

Issue 3: Options for identifying the extent of York's Green Belt

- Option 1: Retaining the existing draft Green Belt in line with citywide consultation responses;
- Option 2: Identify sufficient housing and employment land for at least 20 years including areas of search as required (dependent on the responses to the issues highlighted above). Designating the remaining open land outside the built up areas as Green Belt;
- Option 3: Identify sufficient housing and employment land for 15 years. Undertake to keep all land outside the built up areas open for at least the duration of the plan using Green Belt for those areas outside the outer ring road but designating unconstrained areas within the ring road as "Open Countryside"; or
- Option 4: Identify sufficient housing and employment land for 15 years. Undertake to keep all land outside the built up areas open for at least the duration of the plan i.e. 15 years. Recognising the Historic Character & Setting of York as its key objective of York Green Belt, designate those areas identified as performing that role as Green Belt and the remainder as countryside.

Members put forward the following views on the options:

Issue 1: The Level of Future Housing

(i) Affordable Housing

Concerns were expressed that figures had not been provided in respect of the level of affordable housing generated by the suggested number of future houses. No mention had been made of the Affordable Housing Strategy and of the impact that this would have. There was existing un-met demand for affordable housing,

including examples of the displacement of York residents, but this had not been addressed in the report.

(ii) Ageing Population

Some Members stated that insufficient consideration had been given to issues arising from an ageing population, including the increase in the retirement age and older people staying in their own homes.

(iii) Buy to Let Properties

Concerns were expressed that the report did not address the issue of buy to let properties. Officers confirmed that the figures did allow for some growth in the student population.

(iv) Potential Sites

Concerns were expressed regarding inaccuracies in Annex 3 of the report in respect of the descriptions of some sites. Members agreed to notify officers of any required amendments following the meeting.

Consideration was given to Table 2 of the report: "Known Sites and Potential Sites Identified through the SHLAA". The following comments were made:

- Peel Street/Margaret Street Car Park – this would have transport implications
- York Central – it was noted that the figure proposed was of reasonable high density but would also include businesses
- Askham Bar Park and Ride Car Park – would need to be phased towards the end of the trajectory
- Lowfield Secondary School – the figure proposed appeared to be rather intensive. Concerns were expressed at the possibility of open space being lost.
- Millfield Industrial Estate, Wheldrake – it was noted that this was a brownfield site and that the intention was not to extend the village. Concerns were, however, raised regarding transport to the village.
- Monks Cross North – it was noted that this site was currently identified as an employment site but it offered potential as a housing site. Concerns were expressed that there was a shortage of large sites for employment and that therefore it was not appropriate to remove this designation from Monks Cross North. Members stated that the bus service to the site was inadequate and that when employment sites were in diverse locations it was difficult to provide a sustainable public transport service.

(v) Windfalls

Discussion took place as to whether windfalls should be included. Whilst some Members stated that they were in support of windfalls

being included in whatever option was chosen, other Members stated that windfalls could not be relied upon and that assurances would need to be given that their inclusion would not undermine the soundness of the plan.

(vi) Housing Trajectory

Consideration was given to Figure 2 in the report: “Comparison of Housing Demand with Potential Supply Over a 15 Year Period”. The following issues were raised:

- Some Members reiterated their concerns regarding the need to increase the amount of affordable housing that was available in the city. By limiting the supply of housing it made it more expensive and this could result in factors such as an increase in the number of people who had to commute into the city for work.
- The figures were focussed on the total number of houses rather than providing the right type of homes for local residents.
- More should be done to make more efficient use of the housing stock that was already in place.
- Information was requested on the proportion of second homes in the city¹.
- Views were put forward that the key driver would be economic growth and that housing and population growth would be based on this.

Issue 2: The Level of Future Employment Land Provision

- There was general agreement that the LDF Core Strategy should include the target of approximately 1,000 jobs a year.
- Concerns were expressed at the assumptions that had been made in respect of sectoral growth. Members commented that the national predictions regarding changes in the economy, including the likelihood of a reduced financial sector, had not been sufficiently recognised in the report. Officers stated that the issue of sectoral growth had been discussed with Economic Development and that the report had tried to include a balanced portfolio of employment land provision.
- Members endorsed the need for the employment land provision to be flexible in view of the present economic uncertainties.
- Views were put forward that the allocation in respect of York Central appeared to be quite low. Officers stated that the new office quarter could provide between 87,000-100,000 sq m of B1a office space which would double the amount that was already available in the city centre. Members requested that more detailed information was provided to evidence the figures¹.
- Some Members expressed concern regarding the possibility of using the North Selby Mine site for the development of green technologies, for example the development of renewable energy. They stated that the site was not suitable for general employment and were concerned that if it were to be used for green technologies this could lead to other developments.

- In respect of Northminster (Area of Search 1), Members stated that this was a very large area of reserved land and that it might be prudent to retain some of that designation but not include the whole of that area.
- In respect of Land to the North of Hull Road (Area of Search C) it was agreed that the area of the medieval furrow should be removed.

Issue 3: Options for Identifying the Extent of York's Green Belt

Consideration was given to the options for identifying York's Green Belt, as detailed in the report.

Whilst some Members supported Option 1 – retaining the existing draft Green Belt in line with citywide consultation responses, some Members stated that they would wish to some safeguarded sites available to meet any unmet demand in the future.

It was noted that Members' views on the issues set out in the report would be used as a basis for finalising the LDF Core Strategy pre-submission document. This would involve discussions with key consultees before officers prepared a final report for the Working Group to consider.

Whilst some Members stated that they supported a lower target for housing and would wish an allowance for small windfalls to be included in the housing supply, other Members expressed concern that this would result in insufficient affordable housing and would not provide for the needs of the city. They requested that more detailed analysis be provided on how the emerging proposals would impact on affordable housing and that further consideration be given to this issue. They also reiterated concerns that had been raised that the inclusion of windfalls may undermine the soundness of the plan.

RESOLVED: (i) That more detailed analysis be prepared by officers in respect of the impact of the proposals on affordable housing in the city to enable further consideration to be given to the level of future housing. This information to be presented to the Working Group at the next meeting if possible or at the meeting scheduled for 1 November 2010¹.

REASON: To help progress the LDF Core Strategy to its next stage of development.

Action Required

1. Officers to provide further information

MG

Cllr S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 6.35 pm].