

PARISH COUNCIL LIAISON MEETING	Agenda Item No. 4
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Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

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SITE ALLOCATIONS DPD – UPDATE (AND LINKS TO VILLAGE STATEMENTS / PARISH PLANS ETC)

1. PURPOSE

To update Members on the preparation of (and forthcoming consultation on) the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD), and the wider implications for planning and development in village and rural areas.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be noted and in particular that Parish Councils note, and subsequently respond to, the forthcoming public consultation on the Site Allocations document in late February or March 2010.

3. SITE ALLOCATIONS DPD

3.1 Introduction

The Site Allocations Document will allocate new land for housing, employment and Gypsy and Travellers to deliver the growth targets set out in the Peterborough Core Strategy. The Core Strategy sets the overall vision and ‘headlines’ for growth, and the Site Allocations Document will allocate the precise boundary of sites to accommodate that growth.

3.2 Already Completed Consultation Stages

In October 2008 a consultation document was published which contained all sites submitted to the council as potential housing and/or employment sites. Sites were proposed by developers, landowners, agents and parish councils. At this stage no sites for Gypsy and Travellers were received.

At the time of consultation in October 2008 no assessments had been carried out and no decision had been made as to the suitability of any site. The full consultation document, including a brief description and map of each site, can be viewed at:

http://consult.peterborough.gov.uk/portal/planning/peterborough/site_allocs_io_dpd/site_allocs_io_dpd?pointId=243162

(This link also includes all comments received during the consultation period.)

In January 2009, further sites were consulted upon. These can be viewed at: http://consult.peterborough.gov.uk/portal/planning/peterborough/site_allocs_io_dpd/saas/sa_additional_sites

A further few additional sites have subsequently been received throughout 2009, and legally the City Council has to consider these as well (though they have not had the benefit of previous formal consultation). These additional sites have been included in the assessment process, as described below.

3.3 Extra Consultation Stage for Parish Councils Only

On 8th September 2009, the GPP Rural Working Group wrote to all Parish Council Chairs, setting

out an extra consultation period for Parish Councils only – see Appendix 1 for details. A limited number of responses were received, and these have been included in the material considered by officers.

3.4 Method for Assessing Housing and Employment Sites

During 2009 a detailed assessment has been undertaken of all sites (i.e. all sites from October 2008, January 2009 and the further additional sites received). This assessment included site visits and desk-based research (including research across council departments, selected partners and utility providers). A comprehensive database has been created to record all information and site assessment. Each site has been scored against a wide-ranging list of criteria.

To help ‘weed out’ clearly unsuitable sites, ‘major criteria or constraints’ include:

- Flood Risk
- Proximity to European, nationally and local wildlife sites
- Proximity to Hazardous installations and Pipelines

Any site resulting in a negative impact against one of the above criteria will automatically be rejected, as it will be unsuitable for future development.

A wide range of other issues have also been taken into consideration in assessing sites. A separate Sustainability Appraisal has also been carried out to identify the most appropriate and sustainable sites.

3.5 Method for Assessing Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople accommodation

No sites were voluntarily submitted by landowners for assessment as candidate Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation during the early consultation periods. This has resulted in the City Council having to prepare, and then implement, a methodology for selecting sustainable, appropriate and deliverable sites, based on the Core Strategy (Policy CS 7) and taking advantage of large-scale major developments (development areas over 4ha, whereby a small element can be set aside for Gypsies and Travellers).

3.6 Next Stages

Based on this thorough assessment of all sites, recommendations on the preferred location for new developments are now being made. The full Site Allocations Document listing all preferred sites will be going to the Council’s Planning and Environmental Protection Committee on 26th January 2010 and Cabinet on 8th February 2010. It is then intended to go out for a 6-week public consultation on the preferred sites in late February or March 2010.

Any changes as a result of the consultation period will then be made, followed by a further public consultation on the “pre-submission” version of the document in late 2010 before the document is submitted to the Secretary of State. An independent public examination will take place by a Planning Inspector (in 2011) who will issue its final decision/recommendation on all sites. The Site Allocations Document can then be adopted by the Council in late 2011.

3.7 LINKS TO VILLAGE STATEMENTS / PARISH PLANS ETC

The Site Allocations Document is the only place that a site can be allocated for development in a Plan in order for it to have a statutory status, and hence have any significant weight when determining planning applications.

Village Statements, Parish Plans and similar documents should not allocate land for development. If such a document did, it would have virtually nil status in planning terms.

As such, it is vitally important that if a village or parish wishes to see a piece of land come forward for development (or not, as the case may be), then it must do so via the Site Allocations Document process and not via Village Statements / Parish Plans.

This is not to say that Village Statements / Parish Plans should not continue to be prepared or

updated (see previous agenda item), but it is important they avoid attempting to allocate land for development as this would not only be wasted effort but could also confuse communities.

4. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (SCS) AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA)

Direct relates to the SCS and LAA.

SCS vision is about growing a bigger and better Peterborough. The Site Allocations Document enables that growth to occur in the right places, at the right time and for the right purposes. Without the SA, growth would either not occur or would occur randomly and largely uncontrolled.

A number of LAA objectives and targets and similarly linked to the growth of Peterborough.

5. CONSULTATION/KEY ISSUES

See section 3

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

See section 3

7. APPENDICES

1. Letter to Parish Chairs, Sept 2009

Appendix 1 – Letter sent to Parish Chairs, September 2009



THE GREATER
PETERBOROUGH
PARTNERSHIP

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8th September 2009

Dear Parish Chair

PCC must prepare a document, known as the Site Allocations DPD, which will allocate new sites for development (such as housing, employment and retail).

An initial consultation took place in 2008, known as the Issues and Options stage. This was a weighty document which contained all sites put forward by developers and landowners. The public were asked to comment upon these 'options'.

The next consultation stage is due in Spring 2010, when PCC will issue a revised document which sets out which sites it thinks are good sites for development and which sites it has rejected. In both cases there will be reasons why. The public will be asked for their opinion as to whether PCC has got its views right for each site.

However, partly because of the relatively limited response from some parishes to early formal consultation rounds, the Rural Working Group has had discussions with Peterborough City Council, and it has kindly agreed to permit Parishes to have a second informal opportunity to comment on the sites that were put forward. PCC is not required to do this, but is doing so as it is committed to gaining as much information, local knowledge and views from Parishes as possible before it forms opinions on which sites to choose for new development. **This is a great opportunity to bring relevant facts to the attention of PCC before the final site selections are made.** The earlier that comments are made the more likely they are to have an effect.

This 'extra' consultation period until 30 Oct 2009 is purely voluntary and not a formal consultation stage. We hope Parishes take up this opportunity, especially those which struggled to put in comments at the earlier formal consultation stages.

The template enclosed should be used by Parishes to complete for each site in its area. Please note that PCC are not looking for additional sites, only comments on those already put forward. It is too late in the statutory process to put forward completely new sites for consideration. The sites, and their reference numbers, can be found via the already published 'Site Allocations Issues and options document'. The full document can be found via <http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/page-12420> and you will be able to find the sites which lie in your parish at <http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/page-15535>. Hard copies of the document were sent out to Parishes at their time of issue, and unfortunately further hard copies are no longer now available.

There is no requirement for Parishes to complete the attached template form, especially if they feel they sent in their views at the formal consultation stages in 2008. In addition, some Parishes may prefer to wait to see the next formal consultation stage in Spring 2010 before making any further representations, when they will have the benefit of seeing the reasons why PCC are recommending certain sites should be developed whilst others should not. However, for those Parishes that do take this opportunity now, they will of course also get a further opportunity at the next formal consultation stage in Spring 2010 to make its views known.

If you have any questions, the Greater Peterborough Partnership (Nick Goodman) will help. Alternatively, you could approach your PCC ward councillor.

Yours sincerely,

Henry Clark

Henry Clark
Chair, Rural Working Group

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