

Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee – 18 October 2011

PETERBOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: PETERBOROUGH PLANNING POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (PROPOSED SUBMISSION VERSION)

The report presented the proposed submission version of the Planning Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).

The Planning Policies DPD sets out the detailed development control planning policies which would be used day-to-day by planning officers and the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee when considering the detailed aspects of planning applications. The Planning Policies DPD sat beneath the Peterborough Core Strategy which had been adopted in February 2011.

The Consultation Draft document had been consulted on during February and March 2011 and all the comments made at that stage had been analysed and taken into consideration when formulating the policies in the Proposed Submissions document.

The document would be considered by Cabinet on 7 November 2011 and Council on 7 December 2011. Following consultation it would undergo independent examination by a Planning Inspector and Council should adopt the final plan in December 2012.

Comments and observations were made around the following areas:

- Policy PP11 - Parking Standards. When the Peterborough Regional College was looking to expand they had great difficulty in getting more car parking at the College so a lot of cars were blocking surrounding residential roads and causing problems for local residents. *The standards in relation to residential developments were the minimum that would be expected. The current government was more relaxed on parking standards and the Council had looked to increase the standards. With Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) the standard had increased to one parking space for each bedroom. There were design implications around parking and officers would negotiate if it was known problems would be created. The standards for educational establishments were the maximum standards however if a clear case could be put forward then allowing more than the maximum could be considered.*
- If the Council would consider allowing more than the maximum in some cases then that needed to be made clear within the document, however would it happen in reality? *The wording of the policy at paragraph 2.11.5 did say that it could be occasionally justified when all alternatives had been explored.*
- The previous government had stated the maximum levels of parking and this was now being addressed by the current government so that residential areas had minimum requirements. This requirement did not apply to commercial or educational areas so there was a need to encourage the use of alternative modes of travel particularly in the City Centre.
- Some commercial areas of the city such as Orton Southgate did not have sufficient parking for their employees, should there be some sites where the standard was one parking space per employee? *The Council had an aspiration to be the Home of Environment Capital. There needed to be sustainable solutions in place and a pragmatic approach using a variety of tools including travel plans. Some sites would need to be looked at individually for their parking requirements.*
- What was the reasoning behind one parking space for each bedroom in HMOs as many of the residents would be students or young people who might not be able to afford a car? *The proposed standards had come following advice from transport colleagues. HMOs caused a lot of problems in some areas and the number one problem was parking and the proposed standard was looking to redress the balance. It was about looking to ensure that problems were not*

created in the future. Also, some forms of development did not require planning permission and this policy would only take effect when planning permission was required.

- With regard to open space, why had Atkins undertaken the study into open space when Opportunity Peterborough had undertaken some work? *Officers were not aware of the work undertaken by Opportunity Peterborough. The open space standards had been set in line with government guidance.*
- The policy on prestigious homes (PP4) makes reference to top-of-the-range homes enabling business leaders to live locally, however it was not just business leaders who wanted prestigious homes. Also it was not clear what section (b) of the policy meant, what was reasonable? *The wording of the policy was to give some discretion but there would be guidance on what we would expect people to have done before losing a prestigious dwelling.*
- Planning Policy 4 – Prestigious Homes was there to promote the supply of prestigious homes and the Committee supported the need for more homes, however the policy appeared to be against that. *There was a mistake in the summary of comments and changes document and it should read that the policy protected existing top-of-the-range prestigious homes. Prestigious homes were important and featured in the Core Strategy. The Site Allocations document identified land which had been allocated to prestigious homes and the planning policy protected existing prestigious homes.*
- How did the planning policies fit in with the Neighbourhood agenda? Councillor Murphy declared a personal interest as he was involved in Neighbourhoods as part of his work.
- Would the planning policies be implemented retrospectively? *The policies would not be implemented retrospectively and would be effective only when applying for planning permission. Enforcement action would be taken if necessary.*
- The government was currently consulting on a National Planning Policy Framework. If our Plan was not adopted by December 2012 would our Core Strategy give us enough policy without having to rely on the National Planning Policy Framework? *Officers could not give a guarantee however we were well placed in Peterborough as we had an up to date Core Strategy in place which had a number of safeguards in it.*
- Planning Policy 10 – Transport Implications of Development - makes reference to consideration of the Transport User Hierarchy, however more emphatic wording was needed as there was a need for clear policies around areas such as transport. *When considering planning applications a number of factors would be taken into account including the Core Strategy and transport. Including the Transport User Hierarchy in the policy brought it to the attention of planners.*
- Planning Policy 12 – Open Space Standards – makes reference to the Woodland Access Standard but it does not appear in the appendix, why? *The open space standards do not consider woodland as guidance was already available in Planning Policy Guidance 17.*
- Planning Policy 17 – Ancient, Semi-natural woodland and Ancient and Veteran Trees – stated that planning permission would not be granted for developments which would adversely affect an area of ancient, semi-natural woodland or an ancient or veteran tree. It had been a strong policy but now had had a clarification added that where there was a need or public benefit for the development in that location that would outweigh the loss of the woodland or tree. All developers would argue that that there was an economic benefit for the loss of woodland, however the consultation comments showed that no comments were received so why had the policy wording been changed? *The change had been proposed by the Head of Service as he felt that there needed to be some explanation of the circumstances when it may be of benefit. Developers would have to clearly demonstrate the need and public benefit of the loss and it would be a balancing act. The new wording recognised that there may be some circumstances where there was benefit in the loss of a tree. Changes to proposed policies came from a number of different sources, for example something may have been missed when pulling the policy together, case*

law or changes in legislation. The document would be published again for consultation and would still be open for challenge.

- Ancient woodland was over 400 years old and could not be removed and replaced. The proposed wording is from the National Planning Policy Framework which would impose minimum standards and was not yet government planning policy.
- Members of the Committee supported the view that it was strange that even though there had been no comments on a policy it was still changed. This meant that the change could not be open to consultation.
- Planning Policy 13 – Nene Valley – was there a map showing the Nene Valley and the areas which would be promoted for development? *It was included on the Proposals Map, copies of which had been placed the Group Rooms. The policy was looking to treat the Nene Valley in a holistic way and to protect its character. It would encourage development and ensure quality development.*
- How had the list of buildings of local importance been put together as there were some noticeable omissions in some wards? *Criteria had been developed along with the Parish Councils and Peterborough Civic Society. The list did not include Grade I or II listed buildings as they were already on a national list. If members had anymore buildings they would like to be considered, please let the Principal Built Environment Officer know and he would look at them against the criteria.*
- Would the area which had been allocated as the City Centre be able to be reviewed as due to the way the various Local Development Framework documents had been put together meant that members had not been able to take a holistic view as they had all been considered individually? There were a number of anomalies in the City Centre, for example Railworld. *The City Centre boundary had already been decided however it had not been decided what to do in that area.*

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet be recommended that:

- (i) Appendix B – Open Spaces Standards, be amended to include reference to the Woodland Access Standard.
- (ii) The original wording of PP17 – Ancient, Semi-Natural Woodland and Ancient and Veteran Trees, be reinstated as no comments have been received from members of the public during the public consultation and the proposed change made by the Head of Service has not been open to public consultation.