

**STAFFORD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
MEETING WITH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY SERVICE PROVIDERS**

DATE OF MEETING – 19 FEBRUARY 2008

Name of Attendees

Tony Lovett - Staffordshire County Council, Development Services
Chris Smailes - Staffordshire County Council, Development Services
Ian Baldwin - Staffordshire County Council, Development Advice
Kevin Danks - Staffordshire County Council, Head of Estates
Alex Yendole - Principal Planning Officer, Stafford Borough Council
Naomi Perry - Planning Officer, Stafford Borough Council

Matters Arising

- The notes of previous meeting on 11th December 2007 were agreed.
- The Plan for Stafford Borough – Borough-wide Development Strategy, the Settlement Assessment of Services & Facilities for Stafford and for Stone were circulated to the group. The first two documents are currently out for consultation and the Assessment of Services and Facilities in Stafford will be out for comments shortly.
- AY introduced the six 'high level' strategy options for the Borough, with a more detailed stage looking at locations and relevant information, such as constraints and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to take place in April / May 2008. The Council will also be publishing a map highlighting sites which landowners have put forward at that time. AY suggested that if Staffordshire County Council had any sites which should be considered for redevelopment it was advised to submit these areas as soon as possible.

Details

- TL provided the group with an update to the Regional Spatial Strategy, in particular the letter from Baroness Andrews stating that the West Midlands region will need to provide more housing. It will ultimately be up to the Examination Panel and the Minister to decide how the additional houses will be distributed.
- AY provided information on Stafford being an Area of Significant Development within the Regional Spatial Strategy and Members view that this level of development was appropriate provided that this was supplemented by major employment and infrastructure provision. The County and Borough Councils have submitted an Expression of Interest for Stafford Borough to becoming a Growth Point. If successful this funding would provide evidence base work for the Development Plan for delivery.

- IB stated that it might be difficult for landowners to gather all the information required by the Council for their sites. AY stated that the Council would be approaching landowners to explain the kind of information required.
- AY enquired as to the slippage in the RSS, in particular how it would impact on the Council's timetable for the LDF. TL explained that the RSS will not be adopted until 2010. However the Government advocates that LDF timetables need not slip if long term alternative allocations and flexibility are incorporated.
- TL raised the issue of landowners submitting applications for development in advance of the LDF being formally adopted. Delays in the LDF could lead to problems of land supply / availability and thus threaten the ability of the Borough to plan land release.
- AY raised the issue of development in South Staffordshire District to provide for Stafford town's housing numbers, as indicated through the Regional Spatial Strategy. South Staffordshire District has opposed this location, but Stafford Borough will still be considering this area as an option.
- IB commented that the 'constraints' map does not include the condition of the land, or noise impacts from the M6, both of which are issues in this part of South Staffordshire District.
- Staffordshire County Council needs to consider not just the sites supported for development, but also the quantity and locations of development which may well have an impact on the delivery of services.
- In terms of potential housing sites and sites submitted by the County Council, it was noted that uncompleted housing allocations should be included on both maps.
- Development at Falmouth Avenue, Stafford will require a Transport Assessment to support the planning application. Following the Transport Assessment an outline application for housing development will be submitted to Stafford Borough Council.
- AY confirmed that any site / location to be considered for development should be submitted by the County Council to Stafford Borough regardless of the site size. The issue of windfall verses allocations will be considered later through the Core Strategy process.
- IB raised the point that some of the SCC social care sites are being redevelopment for different kind of services, rather than for open market housing. Some sites are being used for specialist sector ownership, such as Registered Social Landlords and therefore may not be classed as 'housing' and not contribute to housing provision for the Borough Council.

- IB stated that Staffordshire County Council land must provide community benefit if it is not being sold, although there can be some difficulty in defining such community benefits with regards to extra care provision.
- IB and TL stated that the proposed development in South Staffordshire District is currently inaccessible and will rely on the Stafford southern bypass being built. The price of this road would need to be assessed in terms of viability given that the development will also need to make provision for other factors such as education and health care.
- Rising Brook school could be relocating to King Edwards School as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme although the exact plans are yet to be finalised for the Stafford Borough area, which is later on in the County's programme. Contact Claire Collins for further information.
- AY reiterated that it is not just housing, but employment, retail and office development that the Council needs to provide land for. IB stated that Green Hall and premises on Sandyford Street might be included for development.
- Issues of allocations in the Core Strategy were raised, along with affordable housing for urban and rural areas. There is a presumption that a rural exception policy will be put in place.
- Turning to the spatial option maps for the rural settlements IB raised the issue of drainage at Great Haywood which could be problematic due to the impact on a sensitive woodland biodiversity area. The school should be maintained at Eccleshall on the south side of the settlement. Gnosall has a new health centre and school provision.
- With regards to Hixon, IB thought there is a possibility that the rail line may be re-directed to avoid the tight bends at the Haywoods thus following a more direct route.
- A useful contact is Richard Moore at the County Council regarding gas and electricity utility contacts.
- It was decided that it would be useful to broaden the purpose and attendees for the following meetings to focus on delivery and implementation, in particular the implications of the Community Infrastructure Levy as well as continuing the debate on SCC surplus land. Future attendees should include social care & health, education and the Chief Executive's secretariat.
- Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 17th June 2008.