

ROTHERHAM LOCAL PLAN STEERING GROUP
Friday, 28th September, 2012

Present:- Councillors Godfrey, Steele and Whelbourn.

together with:- Andrew Duncan and Ryan Shepherd (Planning Service); and Ann Todd (Press and Publications Office).

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor Pickering) and from Councillors Clark, Currie, Dodson, Lakin, McNeely, Smith and Whysall.

40. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

It was agreed that Councillor Whelbourn be appointed Chair of this meeting.

(Councillor Whelbourn in the Chair)

41. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20TH APRIL, 2012

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Local Development Framework Steering Group, held on 20th April, 2012.

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

42. CORE STRATEGY - PROGRESS TOWARDS SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT (REPORT ATTACHED)

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Senior Planning Officer stating that the Council had published its Publication Core Strategy for consultation between 25th June and 6th August, 2012 to allow formal representations to be made in connection with issues of soundness and legal compliance only. Legal compliance relates to the way in which the authority has prepared the Core Strategy. The four tests of soundness relate to the actual content of the Core Strategy which must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. It is therefore not unexpected that the majority of comments received were from developers (or their agents) and the statutory consultation bodies, with relatively few being received from members of the general public.

In response to the consultation, the Council had received 581 representations from 83 individuals, organisations or agents on behalf of others.

The Steering Group's discussion included the following issues:-

: drop-in sessions have taken place during June and July 2012, enabling the public to view and comment on the core strategy of the Local Development Scheme;

: the Soundness tests – which are different tests to ensure that the Plan is appropriate, relevant and robust, as prescribed by Government legislation and guidance;

: key issues within the Plan which are subject to objection, especially the proposal that safeguarded land should amount to ten (instead of five) years' worth of development and should be capable of release within this Plan period;

: Spatial Strategy – including targets for future housing development and the distribution of development; discussions with neighbouring local authorities about strategic and cross-boundary issues;

: the re-use of brownfield land and implications for land in the green belt;

: meeting held with planning inspectors held on 14th August 2012 – the PINS pre-submission visit (notes of this meeting were included with the submitted report);

: an opinion of Counsel is being obtained, prior to submission of the Core Strategy to HM Government;

: the financial implications arising from the submission of the Core Strategy;

: viability testing of local plans and the use of consultants;

: reference to the Plan's impact upon certain areas and sites in the Rotherham Borough (eg: Dinnington; Bassingthorpe Farm).

Agreed:- That the report be received and its contents noted.

43. BASSINGTHORPE FARM CONCEPT FRAMEWORK

The Planning Policy Manager explained the latest issues relating to the Bassingthorpe Farm Concept Framework, affecting a substantial area of land to the west of the Rotherham town centre, towards Greasbrough and including the Barbot Hall area. The following issues were discussed:-

: this Concept Framework is a fundamental aspect of the Local Plan Core Strategy;

: as the Concept Framework is being drafted, there will be emphasis upon defining areas of land for development, identifying the local centre, specifying new roads and other infrastructure, assessing the impact upon the green belt and suggesting ways of dealing with the former landfill site at Carr Hill;

: there are implications for any development in respect of the ground

conditions (eg: because of the former mine-working in this area);

: the Concept Framework will include an assessment of the capacity of the area for residential development; and the impact of additional vehicular traffic upon the existing highway network;

: the Concept Framework is being prepared in order to satisfy the planning inspector, at any public inquiry, as to the possible future development of this area;

: descriptive background papers are to be written and included in the Core Strategy;

: consultation issues : (i) discussions will soon take place with existing landowners; (ii) there will be a workshop on Friday, 19th October, 2012 with key stakeholders; and (iii) community consultation will take place later in 2012 (a process which will involve the Area Assemblies).

Agreed:- (1) That the progress being made with the Bassingthorpe Farm Concept Framework, as now reported, be noted.

(2) That a progress report on this issue be submitted to future meetings of both the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development and of the Cabinet.

(3) That the Elected Members representing the Electoral Wards affected by this Concept Framework be invited to attend the next meeting of this Steering Group, to be held on Friday, 9th November, 2012, to enable them to be informed of progress.

44. NAME OF STEERING GROUP

Agreed:- (1) That the title of the Rotherham Local Development Framework Steering Group shall be changed to the "Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group".

(2) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of this Steering Group, in order to update the Constitution, Terms of Reference and the Scheme of Delegation (which were last reviewed by this Steering Group on 23rd April, 2010).

45. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That the meeting of this Steering Group scheduled to take place on Friday, 26th October, 2012, shall not take place because several Members have prior commitments on that day.

(2) That the next meeting of the Rotherham Local Plan Steering Group shall take place on Friday, 9th November, 2012, at the Town Hall, Rotherham, commencing at 10.00 a.m.