

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 9th November, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor N Taggart in the Chair

Councillors C Fox, T Leadley, J Lewis,
R Lewis, E Nash and S Smith

33 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Councillor Richard Lewis for chairing the October meeting in his absence

34 Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interest

35 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Anderson

36 Minutes

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the Development Plan Panel meeting held on 12th October 2010 be approved

37 Leeds LDF Core Strategy - Evidence Base Work and Employment Land Review

The Panel considered a report of the Director of City Development outlining the current progress on a number of studies being undertaken within the Directorate on the evidence base for the Core Strategy and received a presentation by Officers on the Employment Land Review (2010 Update)

The Head of Forward Planning and Implementation presented the report and outlined the current position in respect of:

- Leeds Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
- Leeds Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
- PPG17 Audit and Needs Assessment
- Retail and Town Centre Study
- Housing Growth Options
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Members commented on the following matters:

- the interim figure of 2260 homes per annum recently agreed by Executive Board following the abolition of the RSS ; that this figure was perhaps more achievable than the previous target of 4300 homes per annum contained in the RSS but concerns at the large number of people on the waiting list for social housing

- the large number of flats being built despite their decline in popularity and the need for family houses to be provided
- that further work should be undertaken on the changing need within the housing market and that within the figure of 2260, there should be some indication of the levels of different types of homes which should be provided
- whether on the plans displayed at the meeting, the out of centre sites shown for office use would be retained. Members were informed that those being retained reflected those sites which had planning permission
- how the renewal of a planning consent which had not been implemented would be considered where a change in policy had occurred since the original permission had been granted. Officers stated that in such circumstances the changes in policy would have to be taken into account although each case would be considered on its merits. Furthermore, the requirements around granting an extension of time were different so it could be possible for an applicant to seek an extension of a permission but after a further 2 years, the application would need to be reassessed

The Panel then received a presentation on the Employment Land Review, 2010 Update (ELR)

The previous ELR had been published in March 2006 and now needed to be updated to take into account various changes including changes to national planning policy and the effects of the economic downturn

Members were informed that the ELR provided information on and justification for the amount of land that would be proposed for employment use in the Local Development Framework. For the purposes of the study only uses within class B of the Planning Use Classes Order were being considered; these being mainly offices, industry and warehousing; these sectors accounting for approximately 50% of the total number of jobs in Leeds

The methodology for the ELR was outlined, with Panel being informed that the jobs forecasts from the Regional Econometric Model, which was updated twice a year, formed the basis of the information which was used. Additionally the existing supply of undeveloped employment land in the district was assessed which would provide a portfolio of sites which could be taken forward into the LDF to help meet identified need

The interim results of the ELR indicated a need for 500 hectares of industrial and warehousing land to 2026; this need being mainly derived from replacement of lost sites rather than employment growth. A further breakdown of the figures indicated there was 365ha which was suitable and this would be retained; 18ha which would be for the LDF to determine and 80ha which would be removed. The importance of Aire Valley Leeds could not be underestimated as it provided over 200ha of suitable industrial/warehousing employment land

In terms of offices, there was a need indicated of 1.1 million square metres of floorspace to 2026, with this need mainly being derived from employment growth

The supply assessment indicated that 213ha of land still suitable for office use would be retained, 49ha would be for the LDF to determine and 34ha would be removed. As of April 2010, 945,000 square metres of land had planning permission for office use, 53% of this being in the city centre and 2% located in town centres

The implications of the ELR for the Core Strategy was not solely the total amount of land required but also the need to consider local employment designation, with the possibility of an additional 20ha of land needed to be made available in the West/NW parts of the city

In respect of office accommodation, a 10 year supply would equate to 870,000 square metres which was less than the total amount which had planning permission and in terms of the ELR it was being recommended that a 5 year supply of employment land should be available at any one time

Officers also outlined some of the questions raised by the work, these being:

- that the ELR was based on job forecasts and there was a need to ensure there was sufficient flexibility in the process
- that some of the SHLAA sites overlapped existing employment sites
- whether the use of a criteria approach might be better

Members commented on the following matters:

- neighbouring areas, particular those which bordered Leeds and whether the availability of land in those areas had been considered as it was not possible to view this in isolation. Officers stated that although employment land in other Local Authorities, eg Bradford, Wakefield Kirklees had not been included in the ELR, this would be reflected in the forecasts which were prepared regionally and that availability of land, particularly on the borders would be looked at
- whether research had been done on the numbers commuting into and out of Leeds for work purposes and the possibility of discussing this with Leeds' partner Authorities
- the future for those sites which would be taken out of the supply, especially those with high remediation costs. Members were informed that in the case of the site in Knowsthorpe, this would be greened over and that over the years, it might be possible due to improved technology to restore sites more easily
- the lack of employment sites in Chapel Allerton and Harehills
- the importance of train stations to Leeds' infrastructure; the need to consider the location of future stations and the position in respect of proposed stations at Kirkstall Forge and Apperley Bridge, with information being provided that the proposals were in a development pool where they were competing against other schemes, with the outcome being expected in 12 months time

RESOLVED - To note the report, the presentation and the comments now made in respect of the work in relation to the Core Strategy evidence base

38 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 7th December 2010 at 1.30pm