

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 13th July, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor N Taggart in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Fox, T Leadley,
J Lewis, R Lewis and E Nash

10 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

11 Late items

Whilst there were no formal late items, the Panel was in receipt of the following documents:

- revised information in respect of the report on Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan and Urban Eco Settlement (minute 15 refers) which reflected the changes which had occurred at Government level
- a letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government dated 6th July in respect of the revocation of the RSS and providing some 'question and answer' advice on immediate issues arising from the announcement, for Members' information

12 Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interest

13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mulherin who was substituted for by Councillor Nash and from Councillor Smith

14 Minutes

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the Development Plan Panel meeting held on 22nd June 2010 be approved.

15 Update Report on Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan and Urban Eco Settlement

The Panel considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer setting out the progress on the proposed Area Action Plan (AAP) and the Urban Eco Settlement proposals for the Aire Valley Leeds in the context of the City Region

The Head of Forward Planning and Implementation presented the report and stated that a report on this matter would be considered by Executive Board at its meeting on 21st July

Draft minutes to be approved at the
Meeting to be held on 7th September 2010

Members were informed that there was a relationship between the Urban Eco Settlement (UES) and the scope and content of the AAP and in order to test some of the thinking around the UES, Officers had been asked to cover the development of standards for sustainable issues

The UES was a fast-moving process and work was ongoing with the Leeds City Region, with funding at a national level being split regionally to ensure that areas developed positively, using the principles of sustainability. However, the sum of money to be made available had been significantly reduced from £1.2m to £600,000

A key issue in the preparation of the AAP related to its boundary which had been adjusted and now extended to the south-east part of the City Centre, linking into the proposed city park area, Marsh Lane and Yarm Street, Cross Green and other areas in City and Hunslet Ward and Burmantofts and Richmond Hill Ward, so providing further opportunities to use UES funding to make sustainable improvements to existing properties

The key themes of the AAP were outlined, these being:

- the statutory planning process
- capacity building
- piloting innovation
- eco skills and training
- capital development

Members discussed the report and commented on the following matters:

- the revised southern boundary of the AAP; this being the railway line and that a more appropriate boundary would be the M62
- whether by extending the boundary, the existing resources would be stretched or whether additional resources would be made available
- the possibility of a new city park on the Tetley's Brewery site; that the extension of the boundary of the AAP to include this was understood, but that there needed to be a good reason for the extension of the boundary to the railway line
- that the inclusion of Cross Green in the boundary was welcomed as it was a deprived area with poor housing and these issues needed to be addressed
- that the proposals would provide the opportunity for some work to take place whilst the economic situation improved
- whether improvements would be undertaken to non-residential properties, and if this was the case, that Hunslet Library should be considered
- the need for further explanation of the figures contained in the report which set out the original bid figures for projects and the agreed funding
- why a bid was being made for Transport Feasibility Studies when this was not classed as being essential

Officers provided the following responses:

- that if the southern boundary was extended further to the M62, it was felt that resources would become stretched, particularly as there were more challenges beyond that area which would have to be addressed.

Whilst these could not be dealt with at this time, it was a future regeneration area to be considered

- the reason for the boundary extending to the railway line was to enable retro fitting of properties to take place
- that there were many challenges in the Aire Valley and this would provide a positive opportunity for some work to commence in the area
- whilst in terms of regeneration of the Aire Valley, Officers were concentrating upon residential properties, but that the energy efficiency of employment buildings would also be considered
- in respect of the funding table included in the report, that the reduced level of funding for Leeds City Region would have an impact and it would now be necessary to realign the priorities of Leeds City Council with the Leeds City Region. Whilst the table included the list of projects which were considered to be feasible, this could now be amended. Panel was informed that ongoing discussions would take place with Leeds City Region on how the reduced funding would be apportioned and that Leeds City Council would need to bid for money for projects in the AAP, in line with priorities
- that a bid had been put in for Transport Feasibility work but that the Council had been contacted by the Department of Transport (DoT) who were aware of a study which was being undertaken, so enabling the Council to benefit from this opportunity which was funded by the DoT

Members considered the recommendations set out in the submitted report

RESOLVED -

- i) To note and support the proposals for the AAP and the Urban Eco Settlement within Aire Valley Leeds
- ii) To recommend to the Executive Board at its meeting on 21st July 2010, support for the preparation of the Aire Valley AAP (with the revised boundary) as the means of ensuring that eco-standards and the objectives of the AAP are achieved

16 Leeds' Needs and Opportunities Assessment for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

The Panel considered a report of the Director of City Development on a PPG17 study which had been undertaken to collect data on the range of sports, open space and recreation sites within the Leeds boundary, which would inform the evidence base of the LDF, including the Core Strategy as well as assisting in delivering services and initiatives

Members received a presentation from a Principal Planner and were shown maps of the city highlighting the different types of open space

Members were informed that PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' was soon to be replaced and that consultation on this had closed on 1st June 2010. The proposed replacement would retain the requirement set out in PPG17 for LPAs to keep up to date assessments of the existing and future needs

In providing details of each slide, the Principal Planner stated that sites of 2000 sqm or above had only been included as had been set out in the UDP, with this methodology being continued. However, golf courses had been omitted from the outdoor sports data as they distorted the information due to their size. Furthermore

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many of these were private courses, so not open to everyone. Harewood House had also not been included as there was an admission charge and that the decision had been taken at an early stage to exclude agricultural land and public rights of way (PROW) from the data; this comprising much of the Harewood estate. If this estate was to be included, then this would need an additional layer of information to pick up these site specific circumstances as they were currently excluded from the study definitions

Information was provided on the following:

- park and garden sites
- amenity sites
- childrens' play facilities
- outdoor sports sites
- allotments
- natural greenspace
- cemeteries and green corridors

Members discussed the information and commented on the following matters:

- whether Lotherton Hall should be excluded as well as Harewood House
- the need to show Harewood House in some form due to its status and its value to the city
- that it was possible to walk large areas of the Harewood estate as Public Right of Way (PROW) and that PROWs were a huge facility in Leeds and that this should be recognised
- whether the information which was collected would be used by professionals or lay people
- that Otley Chevin was now shown as natural greenspace as opposed to a city park
- that the amount of park land varied across the city, with inner areas being the worst provided for
- that excluding Templenewsam, the inner east of the city was poorly served for park land despite the existence of East End Park which was not greatly used due to problems with vandalism
- the need for neighbourhood parks to receive more attention
- that the quality of some inner city parks was not as good as it could be and there could be the potential for better land use
- the need for a city park which would cater for the growing number of residents in the city centre as well as surrounding communities and visitors to the city
- concerns that a city centre park would not bring amenity to residents in neighbouring areas but that it was important for the vision of the south of the city
- the information provided on childrens' play areas; that the focus had been more on equipped sites; that those indicated were based on a 10 minute walk and whether, crucially, this took into account a parent walking with a buggy
- that despite the seemingly excellent coverage of sports pitches across the city, that the quality of these varied with many being of low quality

and whether there would be textual references accompanying the map to explain this

- the increased demand for allotments; the long waiting lists in some parts of the city and whether by increasing the amount of allotments it would help with green targets which the Council had to achieve
 - the natural greenspace sites and that St Aidan's had not been included
- Officers provided the following responses:

- that unlike Harewood House, there was not an admission charge to the grounds of Lotherton Hall
- that Harewood House was recognised as a resource in the city but that its function was different from the other public open space areas which had been included in the study
- that the areas of the Harewood estate which were accessible by PROW were primarily agricultural and used for cattle grazing
- that the study would be predominantly for professionals, ie for planning purposes for future needs as well as being a usable document for the Authority, although this would not exclude the public from using the document
- that a city park was aspirational and would be dependent upon a number of issues, including funding
- that textual references would accompany the maps to provide more detailed information
- that St Aidan's had not been included in the natural greenspace sites at this time, as currently there was no public access

The Head of Forward Planning and Implementation emphasised the amount of work which had been undertaken to obtain this data and stated that it was a valuable resource which linked into many other areas of work and that the next step would be to translate that knowledge into planning standards and policies

Members were informed that work on housing growth issues and the employment land study would continue with Panel being updated on these components to better inform Members of the origin of the strands forming the policies which were being brought forward

RESOLVED - To note the contents of the report and the presentation in preparing a completed draft Leeds PPG17 study and the comments now made

17 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 10th August 2010 at 1.30pm