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## ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – DRAFT PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' approval of the Draft Allocations Pre-Submission Development Plan Document (ADPD). Subject to comments from Members, the draft pre-submission plan will be referred to a special meeting of Full Council on 27 November 2012 to approve the plan for pre-submission consultation and subsequently for submission. A copy of the plan has been dispatched to Members under separate cover.
- 1.2 The pre-submission consultation period will last for a period of eight weeks (to allow for the Christmas period) and consultees will be invited to submit representations in respect of the document's soundness. Following this consultation the ADPD, together with the results of the pre-submission consultation, appraisals and other evidence base documents (including summaries of the results of previous community involvement), will be submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination.

### 2 ROLE OF THE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT

- 2.1 The ADPD is a plan that sits below the Rochford Core Strategy in the Local Development Framework. Its purpose is to deliver key aspects of the Core Strategy through identifying specific sites for different land uses such as residential development, employment land, open space, town centres and environmental designations.
- 2.2 The ADPD will also aid the delivery of national, regional and other local strategies such as the Council's corporate plan and vision. It should be noted that the ADPD does not include specific development management policies; these will be included in the Development Management Development Plan Document, which also forms part of the Local Development Framework.
- 2.3 The Allocations Document sets out specific allocations for the following:-
  - Brown field residential land;
  - *Settlement* extension residential land;
  - Existing employment land;
  - New employment land;
  - Ecology and landscape;
  - Educational land and facilities;
  - Open space and leisure facilities; and
  - Town centre and primary shopping area boundaries.

- 2.4 The Council's approach to the development of the ADPD must be sound. Consequently the policies within the document must be underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base. Involving the community throughout the production of the document is also of importance. A summary of the main concerns raised by the public and other stakeholders, and the Council's response to these has been prepared.

### **3 PREPARATION OF THE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT**

- 3.1 The development of the ADPD is an iterative process involving several stages of production.
- 3.2 The initial stage of this document (the Discussion and Consultation Document) was prepared in early 2010 and set out a number of options for different land uses to encourage discussion on the issues it addressed. A wide range of stakeholders, including residents, Town and Parish Councils, developers, agents, landowners, Essex County Council and neighbouring Councils were invited to comment on this document in March and April 2010.
- 3.3 The next stage in the preparation of the document is the Submission Document, which identifies specific sites, as opposed to options, that the Council considers to be the most appropriate and sustainable for a number of different land uses.
- 3.4 On 21 March 2012 Members of this Sub-Committee considered the options for the allocation of employment land, environmental designations and educational sites (including the expansion of the King Edmund School and existing school sites). The Sub-Committee also considered the options for open spaces, leisure facilities, community facilities, town centre boundaries, the option to reallocate Hockley as a district centre and Primary Shopping Areas. Following discussions Members made recommendations to officers, which have been taken into account in the production of the draft pre-submission document.
- 3.5 A plethora of evidence, including comments made on the Discussion and Consultation Document, Members' recommendations and Sustainability Appraisal (considered later in this report), as well as other background documents, has informed the proposed sites for allocation in the draft pre-submission document.
- 3.6 A detailed assessment of the potential residential site options, including potential Gypsy and Traveller site options, has been published which considers the suitability of sites submitted as part of the 'Call for Sites' and additional site options identified within the Discussion and Consultation Document against a range of criteria.
- 3.7 The draft pre-submission document sets out proposed policies for the range of themes listed above. The proposed policies, in particular those relating to

brown field residential land, settlement extension residential land, existing employment land and new employment land, set out the context and potential capacity for each site, identify the site on a map and then set out the principles for the development of each site within a concept statement. A section on the implementation and monitoring of each policy has also been included within the document.

- 3.8 Subject to Members' comments on the proposed allocation, a Proposals and Characteristics Map will be prepared and published alongside the final pre-submission document for consultation.

#### **4 ROLE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 Sustainability Appraisal is an important part of the plan making process. It assesses the environmental, economic and social implications of policies and options in the production of plans. The Sustainability Appraisal forms part of the evidence base for the development of the Allocations Document and has been used, alongside other evidence, to aid decision-making.
- 4.2 A draft Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken for the Discussion and Consultation Document. Comments were invited on this document in January and February 2012. Following these comments, the final Sustainability Appraisal for this stage of the document was prepared.
- 4.3 Stakeholders were then provided with an opportunity to comment on both the updated Sustainability Appraisal and the Discussion and Consultation Document in August and September 2012.
- 4.4 Comments from this consultation will be included within the final Sustainability Appraisal for the ADPD.
- 4.5 However, an interim report on the sustainability of suggested sites within the plan has been produced at this stage to aid decision-making. The full Sustainability Appraisal will be published once the document has been finalised, and accompany the version of the ADPD that will be subject to pre-submission consultation.

#### **5 NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 Following consideration of the ADPD by the Sub-Committee, the plan will be reported to a special meeting of Full Council on 27 November 2012.
- 5.2 If accepted by Full Council, it is proposed the ADPD will then be subject to a further round of public consultation for a formal period of eight-weeks, running until 25 January 2013. This is a formal consultation stage where respondents are invited to comment on soundness and legal compliance. It should be noted that the usual period for consultation is six weeks. The regulations do allow for this period to be extended, and given that the consultation will

straddle the Christmas period, it is considered appropriate to run the consultation for eight weeks, to account for this.

- 5.3 Following the completion of the consultation, the plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate, together with the results of the pre-submission consultation, appraisals and other evidence base documents (including summaries of the results of previous community involvement).

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Failure to progress the Local Development Framework will significantly affect the award of Government grant money through the New Homes Bonus, in particular.
- 6.2 Preparation, consultation, professional printing and examination of the Allocations Document will all have varying resource implications and, for the moment, these can be met through existing budgets.

## **7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Allocations Document will have a fundamental impact on the District's environment, as outlined within the document.

## **8 RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL**
- (1) That the Allocations Pre-Submission Development Plan Document be accepted for pre-submission consultation, followed by formal submission to the Secretary of State.
  - (2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, to make minor amendments to the document prior to submission to the Secretary of State, excluding those that would materially alter policy, having regard to the results of pre-submission consultation, in order to ensure soundness of the submission document.

Shaun Scrutton

Head of Planning and Transportation

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**Background Papers:-**

- 1 – Habitat Regulations Assessment Advice Note February 2012
- 2 – Interim Report on Sustainability of Suggested Sites October 2012

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