

Local Development Framework Sub-Committee – 21 March 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the **Local Development Sub-Committee** held on **21 March 2012** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr C I Black
Cllr K J Gordon

Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr Mrs C A Weston

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn.

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Scrutton	- Head of Planning and Transportation
S Hollingworth	- Team Leader (Planning Policy)
N Hayward	- Senior Planner (Planning Policy)
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 OPTIONS FOR EARLY REVIEW OF THE CORE STRATEGY

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation outlining options in the approach the Council may take to a review of the Core Strategy, and seeking Members' views on the way forward.

Responding to a Member question around the difference in costs between options D and E outlined in the officer report, officers advised that it was difficult to quantify precise costs.

Recommended to Council

That option E, to re-consider and revise policy H3, as detailed in the officer report, be the agreed form of the early review of the Council's Core Strategy. (HPT)

3 ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD) PROGRESSION

(**Note:** Cllr C G Seagers declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of owning a boat at Essex Marina).

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation detailing options for the allocation of employment land, environmental designations and educational sites, for open spaces, leisure

facilities, community facilities, town centre boundaries, for re-allocating Hockley as a district centre and for Primary Shopping Areas.

During discussion of the various existing employment sites to be protected through the Rochford District Local Development Framework, there was concern expressed about the current access to the Baltic Wharf site. The suggestion was made that a parcel of land to the south of the site could be added to the employment site allocation and used to improve access to the site. Officers emphasised, however, that the Core Strategy document does not provide for loss of additional Green Belt land in this location; there would, in addition, be a need to assess any impact in terms of potential flooding or effect on wildlife.

The point was also made that it was questionable whether appropriate section 106 monies could be obtained to cover any costs of improving the access road in this location. Members concurred that officers should discuss with the site owner how the existing site access might be improved and that the employment sites, as detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the officer report, should be protected as employment sites.

Members considered the appropriateness of sites considered for new employment land (item 2), within the general locations for employment development set out in the Council's Core Strategy.

Members considered that the site at Michelin Farm, Arterial Road, Rayleigh would have little value for commercial use, given the lack of public transport in that vicinity. It was, however, considered that this might be better suited for accommodating a waste transfer station. Members emphasised that it would be desirable to re-deploy the site in Castle Road currently used as a waste recycling centre, potentially for residential use. In addition, it was considered that related businesses within the existing Rawreth industrial estate, including, for example, private waste disposal businesses, could be moved alongside a waste/recycling facility at Michelin Farm. Other heavier industry could also be re-located.

It was further emphasised that waste disposal inevitably involved movement of a large number of lorries to and from the facility and it was clearly more sensible to relocate such a facility away from residential areas. Particular reference was also made to the fact that the location of Michelin Farm close to a major road junction was better suited to use as a waste facility than the current Castle Road site. It was anticipated that the County Council would contribute towards the costs of developing a new waste site by means of a capital receipt. In addition, the point was made that the current air quality issues around Rawreth industrial estate could be ameliorated by moving waste-related businesses to Michelin Farm alongside a waste facility.

During debate of the site at Tithe Park, Great Wakering there was a general consensus that it would be unsuitable for employment land as it is in close

proximity to a residential area and should therefore not be included in the pre-submission document.

During debate of the sites for west Rayleigh, Members all considered the Swallows Aquatics business to be successful and worth retaining and accordingly concurred that option 13 should not be included in the pre-submission document, but that land to the east and west of it (a combination of options E14 and E16) should instead be included for employment land use. It was also considered that officers should discuss the various issues around traffic and congestion in this location. There was, similarly, a general consensus that option E17, north of London Road, Rayleigh should be excluded from the pre-submission document.

Members concurred that options E19, E20, E21 and E22 to the south of Great Wakering should not be included in the pre-submission document because of their proximity to a brown field site, which has been identified in the Rochford District Core Strategy for residential development. There was concern that employment uses could become a 'bad neighbour'. Members discussed issues around the deficiencies in the Poynters Lane/Star Lane road junction. It was concluded that officers should consider the merits of an alternative site with a similar layout to option E22, but located in the south west corner of option E20. It was noted that such an option could be used to provide improvements at the Poynters Lane/Star Lane road junction.

Members all concurred that items 3 to 9 and items 11 and 18, detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the officer report should be included in the pre-submission document as recommended. In respect of item 10, it was considered prudent to review the allocation of the Great Wakering Leisure Centre and the playing field to the rear of the leisure centre at a later date once the future of the leisure centre has been finalised.

Members debated the Rayleigh town centre boundary (item 12) and concluded that it should remain as existing. In response to a Member enquiry as to whether it might be possible to create another Conservation Area in the area south of the High Road in Rayleigh, as this was a pleasant approach to the town centre, officers emphasised that a lot of work was done only a short time ago on Conservation Areas/town centres. As such it was difficult to justify extending the Conservation Area up the High Road, given that nothing substantial has changed since this was reviewed recently. However, officers agreed to explore whether it might be possible to protect that area south of the High Road via Article 4 directions; some of the buildings along there were probably already included on the emerging Local List.

During debate of item 13, the Rochford town centre boundary, it was emphasised that there was currently a mix of residential and retail uses within Rochford town centre, with retail uses in East Street and North Street that should be included within the boundary. It was proposed that the area around Back Lane car park and Locks Hill should not be included in the amended boundary. There was a general consensus that combining options TC4 and

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TC5 would be more appropriate for the town centre boundary.

During debate of item 14, Members concurred that the emerging Hockley area action plan will determine any future retail use for Hockley town centre including Eldon Way industrial estate and the Foundry industrial estate; this was due to be submitted to the Government in spring 2013. It was therefore deemed appropriate to retain option TC7 for the Hockley town centre boundary at this time.

Turning to item 15, Members considered that designating Hockley as a village was not positive in terms of commercial investment in the centre and that it was more appropriate, therefore, to continue to designate Hockley as a town centre.

During debate of item 16 and in response to a Member question relating to whether restaurants are appropriate uses in a Primary Shopping Area (PSA), officers commented that refusing planning permission for restaurants in a PSA often did not encourage more retail uses; leisure, health care and flats would be appropriate uses in the wider town centre area. Members concurred that option TC11 should define the Primary Shopping Area for Rayleigh.

During discussion of item 17 relating to option TC13 as the defining boundary for the PSA for Rochford, it was noted that the issues around the definition of the Rochford town centre boundary and consideration of whether Roche Close should be included within the Primary Shopping Area should be explored by officers before a decision on the PSA boundary is taken.

Resolved

That the preferred sites detailed in the appendix to the Minutes be included in the pre-submission version of the Allocations Development Plan Document.
(HPT)

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and closed at 9.15 pm.

Chairman

Date

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Appendix

Item	Decisions for Officers to Take into Account in Preparation of the Pre-Submission Document
<p>1. Employment Land Options</p>	<p>The existing employment sites, listed below, should be identified within the pre-submission document and allocated for employment use. The Baltic Wharf allocation should also include Essex Marina (as per appendix 1 to the officer report).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baltic Wharf (which should also include Essex Marina to the east) • Swaines Industrial Estate • Purdeys Industrial Estate • Riverside Industrial Estate • Rochford Business Park • Imperial Park Industrial Estate • Brook Road Industrial Estate • Aviation Way Industrial Estate
<p>2. Sites within the General Locations for New Employment Land as set out in the Core Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site identified at Michelin Farm, Rayleigh (references 49 and 108) would be appropriate for a waste transfer station and ‘bad neighbour’ industrial uses located at Rawreth industrial estate. • Tithe Park, Great Wakering (reference 149) would be unsuitable for employment land as it is in close proximity to a residential area and should not be included in the pre-submission document. • Option E13 should not be included in the pre-submission document. • A combination of options E14 and E16 for employment land to the west of Rayleigh should be included in the pre-submission document and officers should discuss transport issues in this location with County Highways.

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Item	Decisions for Officers to Take into Account in Preparation of the Pre-Submission Document
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option E17 should not be included in the pre-submission document. • Option E19 should not be included in the pre-submission document. • Officers should consider the merits of an alternative site with a similar layout to option E22, but located in the south west corner of option E20 and explore the possibility of improvements at the Poynters Lane/Star Lane road junction.
3. Environment Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Wildlife Sites, the Upper Roach Valley and the Coastal Protection Belt be identified and allocated as such in the pre-submission document.
4. Education Options – Expansion of King Edmund School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hectares to the south of Brays Lane, as detailed on appendix 3 to the officer report, be allocated for education use as part of the existing King Edmund School site.
5. Education Options – Existing School Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing school sites identified within the Discussion and Consultation Document should be allocated for educational use. The existing developed part of the school sites should not retain their Green Belt designations, as appropriate. • Rayleigh Primary School, Love Lane, Rayleigh, should be allocated for education use, as detailed in appendix 4 to the officer report.
6. Open Space Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sites identified within the Open Space Study 2009 are allocated as open space.

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Item	Decisions for Officers to Take into Account in Preparation of the Pre-Submission Document
<p>7. Leisure Facilities Options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rayleigh Leisure Centre should be allocated in its entirety for leisure use, as detailed in appendix 5 to the officer report. • Clements Hall Leisure Centre should be allocated for leisure use, with just the playing field remaining in the Green Belt. • The option to include the playing field to the rear of Great Wakering Leisure Centre to continue to be allocated as open space and an appropriate allocation for the leisure centre will be reviewed at a later date.
<p>8. Community Facilities Options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community facilities within the District should not be allocated individually within the next iteration of the Allocations DPD, but should continue to be protected through the overarching policy within the Rochford District Core Strategy.
<p>9. Town Centre Boundary Options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rayleigh town centre boundary should remain as existing. Officers will also explore the possibility of protecting the area south of the High Road via Article 4 directions. • Option TC5 for the Rochford town centre boundary should be extended by combining it with option TC4 to include more retail uses than proposed within the officer report. However, it should exclude the area around Back Lane car park and Locks Hill. • Option TC7 should be retained as the Hockley town centre boundary.

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Item	Decisions for Officers to Take into Account in Preparation of the Pre-Submission Document
10. Re-Allocation of Hockley as a District Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hockley should continue to be designated as a town centre.
11. Primary Shopping Area Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option TC11 should be used to define the Primary Shopping Area for Rayleigh, with other appropriate town centre uses to be encouraged within the wider town centre boundary. A decision on defining the Primary Shopping Area for Rochford should be deferred until issues around the town boundary and potential inclusion of Roche Close within the PSA have been considered in detail by officers. Option TC15 should be used to define the Primary Shopping Area for Hockley, with other appropriate town centre uses to be encouraged within the wider town centre boundary.