

REPORT ON THE REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED DURING THE REGULATION 25 CONSULTATION PROCESS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation providing Members with a brief summary of the representations received during the Regulation 25 consultation process and to seek approval for the Planning Policy Sub-Committee to consider the representations further and to use these to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy Regulation 26 draft.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Regulation 25 stage of the Core Strategy production process is one where the community have an initial opportunity to influence the direction of the document.
- 2.2 The preparation of the Local Development Framework is a statutory function for the Authority. The Core Strategy is the document that sets out the Council's spatial portrait and vision for the district for the period 2001 until 2021. It is not the intention of the Core Strategy to produce in depth policies. The Core Strategy is an overarching document that must be in general conformity with the East of England Plan. Once adopted, the Core Strategy will be the senior document in the hierarchy of Development Plan Documents produced by the Council.

3 CORE STRATEGY REGULATION 25 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 To enable as much engagement as possible, the length of the consultation process was extended significantly. It finally finished in January 2007, rather than November 2006 as had originally been envisaged. To collect public views a number of methods were used, these included:-
- Roadshows;
 - Article and questionnaire in *Rochford District Matters*;
 - Press releases;
 - On-line questionnaire and information;
 - Mailshot to all consultees on the Planning Policy database; and
 - School visits and workshops.
- 3.2 Over 700 people were engaged in this process, who have provided useful information to inform the Core Strategy. This information has shown what respondents think of the initial draft as well as what their preferred options would be. This latter part is important, as it will be used to inform the production of the Regulation 26 Draft Core Strategy. This document will set out the Council's preferred options for the Core Strategy.

4 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 A copy of all the summarised representations, by subject, has been placed in the Members' Library at Rayleigh and is available from the Council Offices in Rochford and the Civic Suite in Rayleigh.

4.2 A brief summary of the representations by subject areas is shown below:-

HOUSING

- Already enough housing and that some settlements are full.
- The Green Belt should not be built on.
- Develop brownfield sites in existing settlements.
- Providing a new settlement was largely rejected.
- No clear preference as to which settlements should take new housing and which should not.
- There is a need to improve infrastructure.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- More affordable housing is needed for local people.
- Too much expensive housing has been built over recent years.
- Housing for key workers also considered an issue, but difficulty in defining who is a key worker.
- Affordable housing must be available only to those who need it.

JOBS

- Existing employment sites are poor quality and need updating.
- New employment land needs to be accessible and to have an attractive design. There is a need to improve infrastructure.
- There should be no land released from the Green Belt, but instead that existing land should be re-developed.

PROTECTION

- Existing Green Belt, parks and countryside should be protected and that there should be better access to these areas, particularly on foot, bike or horse.
- The Roach Valley and Hockley Woods are important, together with the Rivers Roach and Crouch.
- Need to enhance and advertise the green spaces.
- The Council has done a good job in recent years to protect the district, but that it should over-focus on this.

CHARACTER

- The district does have a distinct character, although this is good in Rochford and poor in Rayleigh.
- Landscaping and design are vital in planning process.
- The Council has done a good job in recent years to ensure the retention of the character of district, but that it should over-focus on this.
- The idea of bringing back the local list was supported.

ENERGY & WATER

- Need for work to ensure that energy and water use is reduced.
- Opportunities are taken now to provide for the use of renewable energy sources and the recycling of water.
- High standards must be incorporated in new buildings, and there must be a requirement to include water butts and solar panels.
- Large scale wind energy schemes should be offshore.

LEISURE, TOURISM & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- The level of facilities is about right, as there is no infrastructure to support extra ones.
- There should be more for youths to do in the evenings.
- There was a need for a swimming pool in Rayleigh.
- There is a lack of medical and dental facilities.
- More use should be made of the rivers and their banks.

COMPULSORY PURCHASE & PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- Money raised from development should be spent locally and to resolve existing issues.
- The approach put forward by the Council was reasonable.
- Compulsory purchase should be used as a last resort and not for road building.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is an issue with regulatory risk if the Core Strategy fails to comply with the relevant sections of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 or secondary legislation.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Failure to keep the Core Strategy to the timetable laid out in the Local Development Scheme will affect the award of Planning Delivery Grant.
- 6.2 Preparation, consultation and the professional printing of subsequent versions will all have varying resource implications.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are legal implications if the Core Strategy fails to comply with the relevant sections of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 or secondary legislation.

8 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) That the contents of this report be noted.
- (2) That the Planning Policy Sub-Committee considers the representations and draft Regulation 26 Core Strategy document and makes appropriate recommendations to this Committee in March 2007.

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Head of Planning & Transportation

Background Papers:-

Summary of Regulation 25 Core Strategy Representations (in Members' Library)

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