

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

13 DECEMBER 2007

Wards Affected

County wide.

Purpose

To seek approval of the revised Local Development Scheme.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT the revised Local Development Scheme be approved and have effect from 31 January 2008.

Reasons

To ensure that the Council's Local Development Scheme, a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, is up to date.

Considerations

1. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new system of development planning, known as the Local Development Framework. One of the requirements placed on local planning authorities is to publish a statement of how their forward planning work will be organised over a three year period – known as the Local Development Scheme. The Scheme must be revised as necessary.
2. Cabinet considered the first Scheme in 2004 and since then there has been a programme of annual reviews, linked to completion of the Annual Monitoring report. Both the Scheme and the Annual Monitoring report are approved by Cabinet, prior to submission to Government Office.
3. The revised Scheme (copy attached) has been prepared to reflect the following factors:
 - The need to roll the Scheme forward a year and include revised proposals for local development documents, taking account of advice from Government Office (GO) and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) as experience of implementing the new system is accrued.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
David Nicholson, Forward Planning Manager on 01432 261952

- The adoption of the UDP in March 2007, and the taking forward of recommendations made by the Inspector following the UDP Inquiry.
 - The need to address the emerging provisions in the current Phase 2 review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), notably new housing development for the period up to 2026, responding to the higher level of house building required by Government. There is also continuing recognition in the RSS of the role of Hereford as a “settlement of significant development” (replacing the previous designation of Hereford in the RSS as a sub-regional foci).
 - The need to take forward the partnership for growth with Government set out in the identification of Hereford as a ‘New Growth Point’, by addressing the delivery of housing growth in and around the City. The levels of growth will be confirmed through the current RSS review process.
 - Current timetables for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).
 - The increased emphasis being placed by GO and PINS on the development of a “sound” evidence base to underpin the LDF. Considerable work is underway across a range of topics in this regard, and this must be completed or progressed to certain stages in order to support the development of various LDF policy documents.
4. The revised Scheme includes the following principal amendments:
- Unitary Development Plan: amendments to record the adoption of the UDP and the demise of the former Structure/Local Plans, together with their related Supplementary Planning Guidance;
 - Hereford Area Action Plan (AAP): inclusion of a new proposal for an AAP to be prepared for Hereford, taking forward the City’s Growth Point status and RSS proposals for the City in an integrated manner and including the delivery of housing, employment and retail growth in a balanced fashion;
 - The deletion of the proposed Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD). This document was proposed in last year’s Scheme as a means of taking forward UDP development control policies on a County-wide basis. However, this approach has been reviewed over the summer with Government Office, PINS and the Planning Advisory Service. As a result of these discussions, a revised approach is to be taken, comprising: reference to national and regional planning policies wherever possible, avoiding duplication; setting out key policies within the Core Strategy; and including more specific policies within subsequent DPD’s. This will include the proposed Hereford AAP, to be followed with a further DPD or DPD’s dealing with the market towns and rural areas. This locationally specific approach will facilitate a greater emphasis on ‘place shaping’.
 - SPD’s: timetables have been reviewed for Supplementary Planning Documents for archaeology and development, historic landscapes and Model Farm, Ross-on-Wye.
5. There has been no change to the Core Strategy timetable. The revised Scheme assumes that the Edgar Street Grid and Planning Obligations SPDs are adopted as planned.

6. As work on establishing the Local Development Framework is underway, the UDP will of course continue to provide an overall policy framework. It will be necessary to apply to Government Office to allow relevant UDP policies to be 'saved' beyond March 2010 (when the three year transitional period expires), where these are needed to enable effective planning control and have not yet been superseded by elements of the new system.
7. Following approval by Cabinet, the revised Scheme must be submitted to Government Office with a four week period for comment before it can come into effect. The date for the Scheme coming into effect included in the recommendation is subject to possible variations arising from this process.

Financial implications

The work programme set out in the Scheme is based on in house resources and the availability of external funding for the Local Development Framework (LDF) via Growth Point and the new Housing and Planning Delivery Grant from 2008/9.

Risk Management

Maintenance of the Local Development Scheme is a statutory requirement. The various risk factors to achieving the Scheme's programme are:

- The availability of staff resource
- Funding being available to support the timely and necessary development of the evidence base
- The extent to which national and regional housing requirements are subject to change as the RSS review process continues
- Linked to this, the RSS review proceeding to timetable
- Anticipated changes to statutory regulations and PPS12, coupled with proposals expected to emerge in the forthcoming Planning Bill.

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options, preparation of the Local Development Scheme being a statutory requirement.

Consultees

Government Office for the West Midlands

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Revised Local Development Scheme

Background Papers

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks