

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 14

Brighton & Hove City Council

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|-------------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| Subject: | Local Development Framework Core Strategy – Updated Background Studies | | |
| Date of Meeting: | 26 May 2011 | | |
| Report of: | Strategic Director Place | | |
| Contact Officer: | Name: | Liz Hobden | Tel: 29-2504 |
| | E-mail: | liz.hobden@brighton-hove.gov.uk | |
| Key Decision: | No | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of two background studies that provide background and supporting evidence for the Core Strategy and future Local Development Framework documents.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the final reports of the two background studies as supporting evidence for the Core Strategy and other Local Development Framework documents.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 The Core Strategy is the main planning policy document within the Local Development Framework that was introduced by the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Its role is to provide an overall strategic vision and policy framework for the city for fifteen years. The Core Strategy is required to conform to national policy and be supported by a sound evidence base. The two studies that are the subject of this report form part of this evidence base. Although background studies inform the policy approach they do not determine policy.
- 3.2 There are a number of changes proposed to planning legislation in the Decentralisation and Localism Bill published in December 2010. However the need to have a strategic element to a development plan and the requirement for a sound evidence base remain unchanged.
- 3.4 The two studies subject to this report are technical documents produced in order to comply with national planning guidance and to help ensure therefore that the Core Strategy is considered to be sound. The Background Studies under consideration here are:

- **Update to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** – the purpose of the study is undertake a comprehensive update of the assessment of the potential housing capacity of development sites in the city. The results can be used help to inform the likely amount of the development over the plan period;
- **Open Spaces Study Update** – the purpose of this Study is to provide a comprehensive and robust scoring system for assessing the quality of Brighton & Hove’s open spaces and the ranking of non local authority open spaces.

3.5 See appendix 1 for a more comprehensive outline of the purpose of the studies and a summary of the key findings.

4. **CONSULTATION:**

4.1 A ‘call for sites’ was undertaken as part of the SHLAA consultation. This involved an invitation to landowners, agents and developers in the city to submit potential development sites to ensure that all possible housing sites were included in the study. It is required as part of preparation of the SHLAA and lasted for 4-6 weeks.

4.2 Consultation has not been undertaken as part of the Open Space Study update.

5. **FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial Implications:

5.1 Preparation costs comprise Officers’ time, consultants’ fees and were met from existing revenue budgets. There are no capital implications.

Finance Officer Consulted: Derek Mansfield Date: 03/05/11

Legal Implications:

5.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new development plan system. The new system is generally known as the Local Development Framework and this Framework will include documents which have the status of Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The Secretary of State for examination will consider whether the Core Strategy is “sound”. As pointed out in paragraph 3.1 of this Report the Core Strategy must be supported by a sound evidence base and this will require studies, such as those that are the subject of this Report, to inform the Core Strategy’s policies and to ensure the Core Strategy will meet the tests to be applied by the Secretary of State at the examination stage.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Woodward Date: 03/05/11

Equalities Implications:

5.3 These are technical studies not policy documents therefore an EQIA is not considered to be necessary given that an Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out on the Core Strategy which will propose policies based upon the evidence within these studies. The Council has already adopted a Statement of

Community Involvement, which encourages effective social inclusion for all groups to influence the policy making agenda.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability considerations are central to the new planning system. The Core Strategy to be informed by these background studies has been subject to a sustainability appraisal and any amendments to it will be re-evaluated. This, in itself, also contributes to the development of policies within the Core Strategy.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 In the Open Space Study Update the safety of open spaces was one a number of the criteria upon which the assessment of the quality of non local authority open spaces was assessed.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The primary risks are that the Core Strategy be found unsound and these studies minimise those risks. Opportunities for development, especially those for housing, address corporate priorities and city opportunities (risks are evaluated in paragraph 6.1).

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The background studies will assist delivery of a number of council and city-wide strategies. They will also form a material consideration in current and future planning proposals.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 None required as the studies are concerned with the identification of matters of fact. The Studies are required by Government planning guidance requiring plans to be supported by a sound evidence base. Indeed if the final background studies are not approved the interim versions will remain in the public domain. The latest information may not therefore be taken into consideration in planning matters. Without formal approval of the background studies the evidence base to the Core Strategy may be considered unsound.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To gain formal approval of the two background studies that form part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents and council strategies. It also allows the final documents to go into the public domain to inform planning decisions.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. Summary of Background Studies

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, March 2011
2. Open Space Study Update, March 2011

Background Documents

1. Proposed Submission Version of the Core Strategy (approved at Council in December 2009)