

PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

EASINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (PREFERRED OPTIONS CORE STRATEGY. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION.

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Council has been consulted by Easington District Council regarding its Core Strategy (Preferred Options). This report highlights specific issues arising from the Core Strategy that will be of significance to the future development of the City. An officer response has already been forwarded to the District Council to meet the deadline of 27th June 2008. Endorsement is sought for the officer response.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION:

2.1 Committee is requested to:

- i) Endorse the officer comments as detailed within this report and make any comments considered appropriate;
- ii) Authorise officers to forward a copy of this report to Easington District Council as the City Council's formal response to the Core Strategy.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Government has introduced Local Development Frameworks (LDF) as part of the reforms to the Planning System. Easington District Council's Local Development Framework will in due course replace Easington Local Plan adopted in 2001.

3.2 Easington District Council has published the aforementioned document as part of its LDF for consultation. As a neighbouring authority, the City of Sunderland Council is a statutory consultee and as such has been invited to comment on the Core Strategy. The closing date for comments was the 27th June. As such, officers have submitted the comments set out in this report.

4.0 THE CORE STRATEGY

4.1 The Core Strategy sets out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and policies for the District of Easington. All other LDF development plan documents must be in conformity with it. It will also include a monitoring and implementation framework outlining targets, indicators and the delivery mechanism for policies.

4.2 The Core Strategy Issues and Options were published in June 2006.

- 4.3 The Easington Core Strategy contains 14 preferred policy options detailing the spatial aims and objectives for the area. The options are related to key issues including providing for employment, town and local centres, sustainable and travel accessibility, housing provision, green space, renewable energy, local heritage, biodiversity and geological conservation.
- 4.4 It seeks to allocate sufficient housing land to meet provision for the District and proposes to construct 7000 new dwellings net between 2004 and 2024, including 3200 planned for the Peterlee Area and 2500 planned for the Seaham Area within this time period.
- 4.5 The Core Strategy examines in detail the new A182 East Durham Link Road and its proposed extension beyond Murton, which has brought forward the potential for development of further employment sites. These include Seaham Port, Spectrum Business Park, Seaham, Hawthorn Business Park, Dalton Park and Murton Colliery. Improvements to the A182 in Sunderland are also outlined in the Sunderland City Council Core Strategy Preferred Options (December 2007) (Paragraph 6.10).
- 4.6 Policy CS2 (Providing for Employment) of the Core Strategy Preferred Options states that 110 hectares of land will be brought forward to meet economic development requirements identified in the RSS, including 72 hectares of land south of Seaham.

5.0 COMMENT

- 5.1 The two principle areas of concern relate to both the quantity and location of new housing and employment land.
- 5.2 In relation to new housing, the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (RSS) (Submission Draft, June 2005) identified that an average of 175 additional dwellings should be built each year in Easington for the period 2004 to 2021. Each district should conform to the RSS.
- 5.3 However, after further consultation, the RSS Further Proposed Changes (February 2008) allocates some 4720 new dwellings to be built in the District of Easington between 2004 and 2021, averaging 236 dwellings per year. However, Easington has planned for 7000-67% above RSS provision. While RSS makes it clear that district apportionments are a minimum commitment, the figures are still 47% above the accepted variance of 20%.
- 5.4 Therefore policy CS6 (Meeting Housing Requirements) of the Core Strategy and its Justification is inconsistent with RSS Policy 30 (Gross and Net Dwelling Provision) and also its locational strategy.
- 5.5 It is considered the number of new housing built in Easington, especially in the Seaham area, would have adverse implications for the

delivery of housing in the City of Sunderland and could continue to exacerbate out-migration by diverting development interest away from the City.

- 5.6 On this basis, the City Council objects to the quantity of new housing proposed.
- 5.7 With regards to employment land, the RSS (Submission Draft, June 2005) also recognised that the Easington Local Development Framework should reserve the site, south of Seaham, for large-scale inward investment from piecemeal development. This site should only be considered for development if:
 - i) Employment sites within the conurbations and main towns cannot accommodate the proposed large-scale development; and
 - ii) No large single site is available on a Prestige Employment Site or a Regional Brownfield mixed-use site.
- 5.8 However, the subsequent EiP stated that there was no case to hold any reserve sites and that all the reserve sites were not particularly well related to the urban core of Tees Valley and was relatively remote from Tyne and Wear. The EiP recommended that the site be deleted.
- 5.9 The site, along with the other two reserve sites initially envisaged, was deleted in the RSS (May 2007).
- 5.10 Paragraph 1.4 of the Easington Core Strategy states that due to new road links, the employment site to the south of Seaham has brought forward the potential for development of that would underpin a regional growth sector.
- 5.11 Policy CS2 (Providing for Employment) states that 110 hectares of land will be brought forward to 2024 to meet economic development requirements identified in the RSS, including 72 hectares of land south of Seaham. The land is to be used for proposals associated with the creative and related industries.
- 5.12 The allocation of this site south of Seaham for employment uses may have a detrimental impact on Sunderland's ability to deliver economic led regeneration to the employment sites within the conurbation.
- 5.13 The Core Strategy is also inconsistent with RSS policy 12, Sustainable Economic Development, which focuses the majority of new economic development in; the two conurbations, on brownfield mixed-use sites, or on key employment locations. Easington is not in either of the conurbations, does not have a major brownfield mixed-use site as identified in RSS and does not have a key employment location, as identified in RSS.
- 5.14 The Core Strategy is inconsistent with RSS policy 5, the Locational Strategy, which supports the development of the Tyne and Wear and

Tees Valley City Region by concentrating the majority of new development in the two conurbations and the main settlements. Therefore Sunderland City Council objects to policy CS2.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Subject to Committee approval, this report will be forwarded to the District of Easington Council as constituting the formal response of the City Council as a statutory consultee.
- 6.2 In light of the recent Local Government Review, which will see the abolition of the District of Easington Council and its replacement with a unitary authority for the whole of County Durham, it should be noted that the Core Strategy Preferred Options document will not be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination and adoption. Any representations will be considered as part of the evaluation of options to be taken forward by the new planning authority for County Durham in the preparation of the new LDF for the County.

7.0 REASON FOR DECISION

- 7.1 The decision will enable the views of the City Council to be included in the preparation of the District of Easington Council LDF and the preparation of the new County Durham LDF.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1 As a statutory consultee and through appropriate comments, City of Sunderland Council is able to ensure that emerging LDF proposals of neighbouring Councils have a positive effect on the socio-economic sustainability of Sunderland.
- 8.2 If no comments are submitted the ability to ensure positive impacts are limited and consequently no alternative options can be recommended.

9.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

- 10.1 Officer Comments on the District of Easington Council LDF.
- 10.2 District of Easington Core Strategy Key Diagram.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 District of Easington Council Core Strategy Preferred Options.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Committee is requested to agree that the Council be recommended to:
 - i) Agree comments as detailed within this report;

- ii) Forward a copy of this report to the District of Easington Council as constituting the consultation response of the City Council.

Contact Officer: Musawwir Choudhary 0191 553 1516

Office Use Only:	Ref:
------------------	------

EASINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

RESPONSE FORM

Name: Musawwir Choudhary	
Organisation (if applicable): Sunderland City Council	
Address: Civic Centre Burdon Road Sunderland SR2 7DN	
Tel: 0191 553 1516	Email: Musawwir.Choudhary@sunderland.gov.uk

Which document are you commenting on?

CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
PREFERRED OPTIONS

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Nature of representation
Page/Policy number: CS6
Are you <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUPPORTING? <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECTING? <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER OPTION? (Please tick one box)
(Please use a separate form for each element you wish to comment on.)

Ref:	Comment:
	<p>The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (RSS) (Submission Draft, June 2005) identified that an average of 175 new dwellings should be built in Easington for the period 2004 to 2021. Each district should conform to the RSS.</p> <p>However, after further consultation, the RSS Further Proposed Changes (February 2008) allocates some 4720 new dwellings to be built in the District of Easington between 2004 and 2021, averaging 236 dwellings per year. However, Easington has planned for 7000- 67% above RSS provision and 47% above the accepted variance of 20%.</p> <p>Therefore policy CS6 (Meeting Housing Requirements) of the Core Strategy and its Justification is inconsistent with RSS Policy 30 (Gross and Net Dwelling Provision) and also its locational strategy.</p> <p>It is considered the number of new housing built in Easington, especially in the Seaham area, would have adverse implications for the delivery of housing in the City of Sunderland and could continue to exacerbate out-migration by diverting development interest away from the City.</p> <p>On this basis, the City Council objects to the quantity of new housing proposed.</p>

Return completed form to:

Planning Policy, District of Easington, Council Offices, Seaside Lane, Easington Co Durham SR8 3TN

Email to: ldf@easington.gov.uk

Fax to: (0191) 527 3797

Forms should be returned no later than 4.30pm on Friday 27th June 2008

Office Use Only:	Ref:
------------------	------

EASINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

RESPONSE FORM

Name: Musawwir Choudhary	
Organisation (if applicable): Sunderland City Council	
Address: Civic Centre Burdon Road Sunderland SR2 7DN	
Tel: 0191 553 1516	Email: Musawwir.Choudhary@sunderland.gov.uk

Which document are you commenting on?

CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
PREFERRED OPTIONS

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Nature of representation
Page/Policy number: CS2/ page 1 (Paragraph 1.4)
Are you <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUPPORTING? <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECTING? <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER OPTION? (Please tick one box)
(Please use a separate form for each element you wish to comment on.)

Ref:	Comment:
	<p>With regards to employment land, the RSS (Submission Draft, June 2005) also recognised that the Easington Local Development Framework should reserve the site, south of Seaham, for large-scale inward investment from piecemeal development. This site should only be considered for development if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii) Employment sites within the conurbations and main towns cannot accommodate the proposed large-scale development; and iv) No large single site is available on a Prestige Employment Site or a Regional Brownfield mixed-use site. <p>However, the subsequent EiP stated that there was no case to hold any reserve sites and that all the reserve sites were not particularly well related to the urban core of Tees Valley and was relatively remote from Tyne and Wear. The EiP recommended that the site be deleted.</p> <p>The site, along with the other two reserve sites initially envisaged, was deleted in the RSS (May 2007).</p> <p>Paragraph 1.4 of the Easington Core Strategy states that due to new road links, the employment site to the south of Seaham has brought forward the potential for development of that would underpin a regional growth sector.</p> <p>Policy CS2 (Providing for Employment) states that 110 hectares of land will be brought forward to 2024 to meet economic development requirements identified in the RSS, including 72 hectares of land south of Seaham. The land is to be used for proposals associated with the creative and related industries.</p> <p>The allocation of this site south of Seaham for employment uses may have a detrimental impact on Sunderland's ability to deliver economic led regeneration to the employment sites within the conurbation.</p> <p>The Core Strategy is also inconsistent with RSS policy 12, Sustainable Economic Development, which focuses the majority of new economic development in; the two conurbations, on brownfield mixed-use sites, or on key employment locations. Easington is not in either of the conurbations, does not have a major brownfield mixed-use site as identified in RSS and does not have a key employment location, as identified in RSS.</p> <p>The Core Strategy is inconsistent with RSS policy 5, the Locational Strategy, which supports the development of the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley City Region by concentrating</p>

	the majority of new development in the two conurbations and the main settlements. Therefore Sunderland City Council objects to policy CS2.
--	--

Return completed form to:

Planning Policy, District of Easington, Council Offices, Seaside Lane, Easington Co
Durham SR8 3TN

Email to: ldf@easington.gov.uk

Fax to: (0191) 527 3797

Forms should be returned no later than 4.30pm on Friday 27th June 2008