

Meeting **JOINT COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT**

Date **23 MARCH 2012** Agenda item number

From **JOINT OFFICER STEERING GROUP**

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Purpose of the report

- 1 To inform the Committee of the progress of the Aligned Core Strategies.

Aligned Core Strategies

- 2 The local planning authorities of Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling and Nottingham City are to publish a 'Publication' draft of the Aligned Core Strategies, for a further period of Representation scheduled to start in June 2012.
- 3 Although Rushcliffe Borough Council has decided to prepare a separate Core Strategy, there has been continuing close working between all authorities. The situation in Ashfield is slightly different, as only the Hucknall part of the District is within Greater Nottingham.
- 5 The draft Aligned Core Strategies set a strategic planning framework for Nottingham City to 2028, including the broad scale and location of housing and economic growth over that period, together with supporting infrastructure and how environmental matters will be considered.
- 6 Core Strategies are part of the statutory Development Plan that all local planning authorities must prepare by law. 'Publication' is the first formal stage in the production of the document, and follows several stages of informal consultation.
- 7 The Core Strategies are part of this framework and provide the strategic vision for development across Greater Nottingham until 2028. Prior to its adoption, the document must go through a number of formal and informal consultation stages. Publication represents the first formal stage of preparation, and follows extensive informal consultation on the Issues and Options (2009) and the Option for Consultation (2010). Following publication of the plan for a formal period of representation, the Council will submit it to the Secretary of State for examination.
- 8 The City Council, together with Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling and Rushcliffe Borough Councils published the "Option for Consultation" draft of their Aligned Core Strategies in February 2010. Following the election of coalition Government, and their announcement in May 2010 that

Regional Strategies were to be abolished, all the Councils commissioned further evidence to determine whether the level of housing provision set out in the Regional Strategy and included in the Aligned Core Strategies continued to be appropriate. Following a consultation exercise over the summer of 2011, the Boroughs of Broxtowe, Erewash and Gedling and the City Council have agreed that the evidence indicates that the levels of housing provision included in the Option for Consultation document continue to be appropriate.

- 9 However, Rushcliffe Borough Council have decided to take a different approach, and have determined a housing provision different from the Option for Consultation document. Accordingly, they are now preparing a separate Core Strategy, albeit aligned in most other respects.
- 10 The Duty to Cooperate, introduced through the Localism Bill, requires councils to work with their neighbours to address planning matters of cross boundary significance. By the Councils continuing to work closely, this Duty is addressed.
- 11 As Councils will be going through their own approval processes which are expected to be finally concluded in May, parts of the plan may be subject to change, and there may also be a need to make further minor editing changes to ensure consistency and accuracy. In addition to this, it is anticipated that the government will publish the final version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) prior to publication, should this prove to be the case it will be opportune to ensure the Core Strategy is consistent with the NPPF, which may entail some changes.
- 12 The 19 policies address the following strategic spatial planning issues:
 - Climate Change
 - The Spatial Strategy
 - The Nottingham-Derby Green Belt
 - Employment Provision and Economic Development
 - Nottingham City Centre
 - Role of Town and Local Centres
 - Regeneration
 - Housing Mix and Choice
 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People
 - Design and Enhancing Local Identity
 - The Historic Environment
 - Local Services and Healthy Lifestyles
 - Culture, Tourism and Sport
 - Managing Travel Demand
 - Transport Infrastructure Priorities
 - Green Infrastructure, Parks and Open Spaces
 - Biodiversity
 - Infrastructure
 - Developer Contributions

- 13 Since the Option for Consultation draft, the policies have been subject to some amendment as a result of consultation responses, Sustainability Appraisal outcomes, other statutory appraisal processes, and to ensure they continue to reflect government planning policy. In most cases these changes are minor, but Policy 1 'Climate Change', Policy 2 'The Spatial Strategy' and Policy 4 'Employment Provision And Economic Development' have been more substantially redrafted. New policies covering the Green Belt (due to the Regional Strategy being abolished) and the Historic Environment (at the request of consultees, including English Heritage) have also been added.

What Happens Next?

- 14 Subject to approval by all the partner councils, programmed between February and May, the Strategy will be published as soon as practical for a formal statutory public representation period.
- 15 The representations will be considered and detailed drafting changes may be proposed if any factual or other minor inaccuracies emerge. This is not, however a consultation stage. If the councils wish to make any substantial changes to the draft in response to the representations or other key factors, then it is likely that these will need to be subject to further consultation before a new draft is prepared for a further period of public representation. This would result in delays.

The Examination

- 16 The draft Core Strategy, along with all representations received will then be submitted to Government to allow an independent Examination by an Inspector. The Inspector will examine the whole plan for its 'soundness', irrespective of whether or not any representations are received. The Examination is likely to include a public hearing session, when parties making representation may, at the Inspector's discretion, present their views in person.

Adoption

- 17 The Inspector will issue a report that will either declare the Core Strategy sound or unsound. If sound, the Council can adopt the strategy. If the strategy is unsound, then it cannot be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report.

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