



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PANEL

9.30am to 12.15pm

20 June 2012

Present: Councillors Bremner (chair, following appointment), Carlo (vice chair, following appointment), Brociek-Coulton, Grahame, Grenville, Lubbock, Sands (M) and Stammers

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Bremner as chair for the ensuing civic year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Carlo as vice chair for the ensuing civic year.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Lubbock declared a personal interest in item 6, site allocations plan, in that she had been involved as an Eaton ward councillor in making representations in relation to Bartram Mowers and Cricket Ground Road.

Councillor Grahame declared a personal interest in item 6, site allocations plan, as a member of the Support Wensum Lodge/King street etc

Councillor Bremner declared a personal interest in item 6, site allocations plan, in relation to site allocation involving the University of East Anglia because family members were employed at the site.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2012.

5. INCREASING RECYCLING RATES

The projects officer and the environmental services development manager presented the report and answered members' questions. Additional information relating to the door knocking programme was circulated at the meeting.

Members welcomed the programme to improve participation in recycling in priority areas. Members also noted that the rate of recycling was good for an urban area. During discussion members considered the measures to provide assisted collections for residents and noted the difficulty that some residents in flats had in carrying refuse and waste recycling from their flats to the communal bins. The environmental services manager said that these cases were referred to housing services to review the resident's care package and housing needs. Members also noted that some people discontinued using food caddies because of the cost of the corn starch bags. Officers advised that newspaper could be used and that as part of the door knocking programme officers were supplying bags to as an incentive to start using the caddies. Caddies (both internal and external) and green boxes could be provided to residents. It was noted that the green boxes were difficult to carry and that a container with a handle or a bag might be more suitable for the collection of glass. Members were also advised that leaflets were available in other languages. Officers also explained the use of the different bins to residents.

The projects officer advised members that the outcome of the programme would be reported back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report and that the outcome of the project will be reported to the panel as it progresses;
- (2) thank the environmental services development manager, project officer and colleagues for their work towards improving the council's recycling target toward the corporate target of 50%;
- (3) record the panel's appreciation of the residents of the city for their contribution in improving recycling rates.

6. SITE ALLOCATIONS AND SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

The head of planning services introduced the report and referred to the plan and the sustainability appraisal. The policy team leader (projects) presented the report, and together with the head of planning services and the policy team leader (planning) answered members' questions.

During discussion members considered the definition of leisure and community use and that the provision for new dwellings provided included a buffer of 440 dwellings in excess of the provision required under the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). Members also considered that there needed to be a balance between housing and infrastructure. Members were advised that the plan was strategy driven and that the JCS and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supported the development of social infrastructure (schools, doctors, employment etc) alongside the provision of housing. In response to a question, the head of planning services explained that the disadvantage in splitting up larger development sites was that the developer would avoid the policy requirements for providing affordable housing. The provision of start up units for businesses was acknowledged. The head of planning services confirmed that the provision of more grade A office space was an important part of the sustainability of the city.

The panel then agreed to consider the following four site allocations and policies in detail:

R37 - Land adjacent to and including 349a and 349b Dereham Road

Members were satisfied that the transport planners had confirmed that measures could be implemented to ensure that the developer of this site provided safe access/egress.

CC9 – King Street Stores and Sports Hall

The head of planning services introduced the proposal and circulated extracts from the plan, consultation responses and sustainability appraisal to the panel.

Councillor Grahame, Thorpe Hamlet ward councillor, said that the business plan for the retention of the sports hall for community use was dependent on the income stream from the car park. She said that the sports centre could be improved and challenged the statement of Sport England that the building was in “poor condition”. The head of planning services said that the comment on sports hall being in a poor state of repair was an objective statement and that minor amendments to the text could be amended

Discussion ensued on the original separate allocation of the Kings Street Stores. The allocation of the sports hall had been one of the late additions included in the public consultation in 2011. During discussion members noted that there would be a lot of development in this area as supported by the emerging south city vision and investment plan. Members were advised that there was capacity to provide off-site sports provision by co-locating with existing provision at the Riverside Centre or Notre Dame High School or to develop the site and improve the existing facilities. The provision of surface level car parking on the site was not in accordance with parking policy and a member suggested that under-croft parking could be provided. Councillors Grahame and Carlo expressed concern that the allocation of the sports hall site for housing would mean that the cost of the land would increase and therefore the community group would not be able to purchase it. The sustainability appraisal had made no reference to the viability of Wensum Lodge without the use of a car park and that there was some scepticism that the site could be developed by 2013/14 given the state of the market.

(Councillor Brociek-Coulton left the meeting at this point.)

R45 – Land west of Bluebell Road, Bartram Mowers Limited

The head of planning services introduced the proposal and circulated extracts from the plan, consultation responses and sustainability appraisal to the panel.

Councillor Lubbock said that this proposal for housing for the elderly was an intrusion into the Yare Valley and contrary to the council's policy to protect the Yare Valley from encroachment by development. Previous planning applications for this site had been refused and appeals against refusal had

been upheld. There was no guarantee that the development would be single storey or that the allocation would be only for over 55's. Other members expressed concern that the development would be detrimental to the natural landscape and could set a precedent for other development which would encroach on to the natural landscape of the river valley. Members were concerned that the development of the site could also generate increased traffic on Bluebell Road. It was also noted that there was a lot of local concern about the inclusion of this site in the site allocations plan.

(Councillor Lubbock left the meeting at this point.)

R6 – Former Lakenham Sports and Leisure Centre, Cricket Ground Road

The head of planning services introduced the proposal and circulated extracts from the plan, consultation responses and sustainability appraisal to the panel.

The chair read out the summary of the comments made in response to the consultation from the Eaton/Lakenham Liberal Democrat Focus Team.

Members noted that the policy suggested that consideration was given to the potential to convert the former pavilion, which was not listed or locally listed, as part of the development or if not practical to reflect its former use as the home of Norfolk Cricket Club.

During discussion members considered the access to the site particularly from Geoffrey Road. The panel was advised that the tree at the end of Smithfield Road would not prevent cycle or pedestrian access. It was considered that the access was not a constraint and that the site could be included for consultation.

Members noted that the consultation responses contained support for housing on the site and suggestions that the site was divided to retain more of the open space. It was noted that the proposed amount of open space was greater than would the usual provision for a development of this size (35% of the site being designated for a community park or allotments). Members also noted that the site had been in private ownership for some time and that there was no covenant on the land to ensure that it was retained for community use. It would be difficult to justify the exclusion of the site in the absence of a community group coming forward with a plan for funding to purchase the site and its maintenance. Councillor Carlo pointed out that the market value of the land could rise if it was allocated for housing. Members noted that the site had been vacant for some time and that this proposal included open space provision.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report and the relevant supporting information including:
 - (a) consideration of representations made to date on the emerging site allocations plan and how they have been addressed;

- (b) the draft sustainability appraisal of the emerging plan and reasonable alternatives to it;
 - (c) a report setting out justifications for the allocation of each of the preferred sites.
- (2) endorse the emerging plan and recommend that cabinet approves it as amended by the changes set out in annex 2, for pre-submission consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012, and in respect of:
- (a) **CC9 – King Street Stores and Sports Hall**, with 4 members voting in favour (Councillors Brociek-Coulton, Carlo, Grahame and Stammers), 1 member voting against (Bremner) and 3 members abstaining (Councillors Grenville, Sands and Lubbock), to recommend cabinet deletes the area of the Lincoln Ralphs sports hall and car park from the allocation and that the allocation reverts to the original allocation for King Street Stores as proposed in the draft site allocations plan in January 2011, for the following reasons:
 - loss of the existing sports facilities was overwhelmingly opposed by local residents, a residential allocation on the land was considered to potentially harmful to the continued use of the facility and it would not be easy to replace the facility either on site or elsewhere in the immediate vicinity;
 - loss of the car park would impact on the use of the sports centre and may also harm the use of Wensum Lodge;
 - taking the sports hall and car park out of the allocation site would still enable the allocation of the remainder of the site (the King Street Stores site);
 - (b) **R45 – Land west of Bluebell Road, Bartram Mowers Limited**, with all members present voting in favour, (Councillors Lubbock and Brociek-Coulton having left the meeting at this point) to delete this site from the plan for the following reasons:
 - the policy is contrary to the council's long-term approach to the resisting development encroaching into the Yare Valley;
 - that the proposed development could potentially damage the landscape in a sensitive location on the slopes of the Yare Valley;
 - whilst the policy set out to minimise the impact of development on the site by proposing single storey buildings; it could not stipulate the height and scale of future development;
 - the proposal for housing for over 55s could set a precedent for more general housing;
 - residential redevelopment could lead to undesirable traffic regeneration;

- (c) **R6 - Former Lakenham Sports and Leisure Centre, Cricket Ground Road**, with the majority of members present voting in favour, to support the inclusion of the plan.

7. SOUTH CITY CENTRE VISION AND INVESTMENT PLAN

The city development and growth co-ordinator said that city council in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency would be launching the consultation on the Norwich South City Centre vision and investment plan on 22 June 2012.

David Lock Associates had been appointed to conduct the work and would be hosting a number of workshops for the business sector and the public. The draft plan would be available in the autumn and out for statutory consultation in December 2012. The city development and growth co-ordinator answered members' questions on the workshops and confirmed that all local businesses would be invited to attend.

Members considered that a site visit in the future, particularly late at night, could be useful.

RESOLVED to note.

CHAIR