



Sustainable development panel

09:40 to 11:00

19 September 2018

Present: Councillors Stonard (chair), Maguire (vice chair), Carlo, Fullman, Hampton, Lubbock and Maxwell (appointed to replace Councillor Trevor) and Stewart

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2018.

3. Local Development Scheme 2018-21

The planning policy team leader presented the report.

During discussion, a member asked whether there were proposals to update the sustainability appraisal (SA) report would need to be updated in line with changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) specifically in relation to affordable housing. The planning policy team leader said that the consultation on the SA had been completed in early 2018. The head of planning services said that there would be opportunities to comment on individual documents at each stage of the process.

Discussion ensued, in which members noted that work was underway on the affordable housing supplementary planning document (SPD). The planner explained the government's proposed changes to developer viability in the revised NPPF. Members were also advised that affordable housing was a wider definition than housing provided by registered social landlords ("social" housing).

During discussion members commented on the designation of a northern city centre area as a neighbourhood area. The head of planning services explained that the proposal for a neighbourhood area, comprising Cathedral Close, Magdalen Street and Anglia Square and with a boundary down the centre of Prince of Wales Road, had made little sense in planning terms. It was not based on local communities and split the principal road in the night-time economy.

Discussion ensued on the increase of purpose-built student accommodation and the production of non-statutory guidance. The planning policy team leader said that purpose-built student accommodation might alleviate pressure on the private rented sector and reduce houses in multiple-occupation (HMOs). The panel would be considering a report on purpose built student accommodation later this year. A member commented that he was not convinced that with the body of evidence that supported the recent increase in purpose-built student accommodation. Another pointed out that there was a historic shortage of accommodation and that the current provision and planned schemes were catching up with current demand, easing the burden on the private sector for families and young professionals. The chair pointed out that the universities were beneficial to the local economy.

The head of planning services commented on the Brownfield Land Register for the city and said that it was not intended to produce a part 2 at present. This would require the equivalent amount of work as outline planning consent and without a fee.

RESOLVED to agree the Local Development Scheme and recommend that cabinet approves it for publication under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011).

4. Retail Monitor 2018

The planner presented the report. This was the first monitor since 2016.

During discussion members considered the performance of district centres. A member pointed out that despite the proposed development of Anglia Square, it was meeting the needs of local people, with a thriving café and shops. The planner said that district centres such as Bowthorpe and Hall Road were showing some decline with an increase in vacant units and alternative uses to A1. Overall it was a positive picture with local centres faring relatively well.

Discussion ensued in which members noted the trend for less car use from city centre residents and that this was impacting on out of town shopping centres. A member pointed out that non-city residents were attracted to the shopping centres, with free car parking, such as Riverside and Longwater, but these centres were not served by Park and Ride. The head of planning services said the decline in car use was part of a broader trend in a competitive market for supermarkets, together with high street brands opening large stores to sell furniture and large items, at out of town shopping centres. There was also a move to increase the leisure offer within the city centre. One of the difficulties was that these trends were moving faster than it was possible to adjust planning policy.

The head of planning services responded to a member's comment and explained that the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) sought to promote the city centre as a retail centre. There was no policy support in the JCS which promoted Longwater as an out-of-town shopping centre. He said that the retail policy was not out of date. Retail should be based around sustainable transport. The policy would be reviewed next year as part of the LDP and that there should be clarity on the local hierarchy of centres.

In reply to a member's question, the head of planning services said that there was no local action which could be taken to address concerns about the impact of business

rates on retailers. Equity in local taxation was a national debate and online retailers were at an advantage compared to those on the high street. The planner said that the Grimsey review had cited several reasons for the Portas retail review not working.

The planner said that the recently completed improvements to the public realm on Westlegate had resulted in a significant increase in occupancy of the units in this location with high end retailers. The chair commented on the benefits of the scheme and that it added to the vibrancy of the city centre.

RESOLVED to note the findings of the retail monitor.

5. Greater Norwich Local Plan

The head of planning services updated the panel on the reports that would be considered by the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) partnership board at its meeting on 10 October 2018. The three items were: draft statement of consultation; Regulation 18 focussed sites consultation; and NPPF and the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

Following the call for sites, around 200 sites had been put forward, the majority of these were within Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council's areas as the city was essentially a built up area. The additional sites within Norwich included:

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| • Barrack St/Whitefriars | Residential-led, mixed use with retail. |
| • Prospect House | Planning brief drawn up – residential-led, mixed use with retail. |
| • Chapelfield | Increase number of uses to include leisure, retail and food and drink. |
| • Riverside District Centre | Greater mixed use of this site. |
| • Muspole Street/St Georges | Residential-led mixed use. |
| • Ber Street | Residential development (150 units) |

The head of planning services said that there were also two specific allocations at the University of East Anglia (UEA), the Congregation Hall and the Sainsbury Centre. Members were advised that a development framework strategy had been agreed with the university and that it would be reviewed. Members commented that it was important that the UEA had a good transport policy, including improved use of public transport. Colegate car park and land at Eastgate House were privately owned car parks which were being recommended for residential use. It was also proposed to include Boulton Street (adjacent to Rose Lane) as a community garden to reflect its current use. The cabinet would consider authority to consult on these sites at its meeting on 10 October 2018.

The second report was the draft statement of consultation. This would be submitted to the Secretary of State with the GNLP. All comments to the consultation were noted and relevant actions considered through the strategy and policy development and site allocation.

The final report summarised the key changes to the NPPF and the implications it would have on the GNLP. The revised NPPF included greater protection for ancient woodlands. Changes to the developer contributions would mean that viability assessments were made at the plan level rather than at the application stage. The government was also proposing a new standard methodology to assess housing need. The housing delivery test (HDT) was being introduced to ensure local authorities delivered housing within its targets. This would affect the partners of the GNLP who would need to consider whether to be assessed for the purposes of the HDT as separate local authorities or jointly.

During discussion, the head of planning services answered members' questions. He explained that purpose built student accommodation would be included in the assessment of housing delivery going forward. He said that in terms of strategic planning, Thamesgate in Oxford was a pilot to deliver housing and assist growth.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CHAIR