

**UPDATE TO THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet of a necessary revision that now needs to be made to the Local Development Scheme and to consider the related consequences for the submitted LDF Core Strategy and thereby the Council's overall current planning policy position.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a specific requirement of the new policy making system with the scheme setting out the range of planning documents which the Council plans to produce in order to guide the future development of Huntingdonshire. As well as informing the community and other stakeholders of the proposed program for policy production the timetabling element of the LDS is intended to assist with the project management of the LDF process.
- 2.2 As Members will be aware the Council had submitted its Core Strategy in April 2006 but the planned examination into its soundness was subsequently postponed, in September 2006, by the Planning Inspectorate in order that the Council could consider submitting additional supporting information regarding the 'spatial elements' of the proposed strategy.
- 2.3 The Planning Inspectorate has now however indicated that in their opinion the adoption of that procedure, because of the complex procedural requirements of the new planning system, would still leave the Council position open to possible successful challenge on the grounds of procedural unsoundness. Accordingly GO-East and the Planning Inspectorate have advised the Council that we should therefore now request the withdrawal of the submitted Core Strategy, whilst we still have the opportunity to revise our Local Development Scheme, and look towards fast-tracking an upgraded resubmission.

3. THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE SUBMITTED CORE STRATEGY

- 3.1 Having regard to the advice received from GO-East and the Planning Inspectorate there appears to be no alternative but to follow their recommended course of action. Therefore it is recommended that the Council pro-actively indicates to GO-East/The Planning Inspectorate that we would wish the Secretary of State to direct us to withdraw the submitted LDF Core Strategy and subsequently resubmit an updated version in line with the latest emerging guidance regarding the spatial content of such documents.

4. THE REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- 4.1 As a consequence of the above the Council now needs to resubmit a revised LDS (incorporating a robust timetable for delivering resubmitted Core Strategy and Development Control Policy documents) to the Secretary of State before the March 31st deadline.
- 4.2 The attached revised LDS therefore sets out our updated and projected timetable for the delivery of the Local Development Framework.

5. THE NEED FOR AN INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1 Accordingly the Council, acting in respect of its role as the Local Planning Authority, needs to provide for effective continuity in terms of providing a framework for the operation of its Development Control function. Therefore it is intended that the Council would move to adopt an interim planning policy statement outlining HDC's current thinking regarding its planning policies. It is intended that this Interim Planning Policy Statement will in essence be based upon the already consulted upon, and previously approved for submission, Key Principles and related policies as set out in Chapters 3 to 9 of the previously submitted Core Strategy plus relevant supplementary advice regarding the local affordable housing delivery mechanism.
- 5.2 It is intended that a further specific report regarding this issue will be considered by the Cabinet, the Development Control Panel and the Full Council in April.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Therefore as a direct consequence of the issues outlined above it is recommended that the Cabinet:
- a. Approves the attached revised LDS for submission to the Secretary of State.
 - b. Authorises the Head of Planning Services to request the Secretary of State via GO-East to withdraw the submitted Core Strategy Development Plan Document.
 - c. Notes that the Council will therefore need to adopt an Interim Planning Policy Statement in order to provide for effective continuity in terms of its Development Control function.

Background Papers:

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks, ODPM, 2004
Huntingdonshire's Submitted Core Strategy, 2006

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