
REPORT TO:	Environmental & Development Services Committee	AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING:	4 October 2012	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Director of Operations	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Ian Bowen 01283 595821 ian.bowen@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Consultation on East Staffordshire Borough Council's Local Development Framework	REF: IB
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS17

1.0 Recommendations

That Members note the contents of the East Staffordshire Local Plan "Preferred Option" and the Borough Council be informed that:

- (i) the proposal to allocate sufficient sites to meet housing needs within the Borough, rather than attempting to rely on development at Drakelow Park in South Derbyshire addresses this Council's earlier objections and is welcomed;
- (ii) the reference at paragraph 6.37 to the likely availability of employment land at Drakelow be removed or clarified;
- (iii) in other respects, the Preferred Option document is considered to reflect ongoing cross-boundary issues in line with the 'Duty to Co-operate' and that the District Council would welcome further liaison.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To consider and formulate a response to consultation on East Staffordshire Borough Council's Local Plan: Preferred Option.

3.0 Background

3.1 East Staffordshire Borough Council have published for consultation a "Preferred Option" document as a non-statutory stage of their Local Plan (Local Development Framework ("LDF") Core Strategy).

- 3.2 The draft document presents a range of preferred site options for accommodating East Staffordshire's projected housing needs for the period 2012 – 2031.
- 3.3 The relevant documents are available to view at: http://eaststaffsbc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/preferred_option_local_plan/preferred_option_local_plan
- 3.4 Whilst the deadline for responses is 21 September 2012, an extension has been agreed to enable the matter to be brought to this Committee.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 The "Preferred Option" is a non statutory stage of consultation setting out the Council's view on scale and distribution of future growth and their preferred policies covering a wide range of issues. This will be followed up with a formal draft Plan next year followed by submission to the Secretary of State, a public examination and adoption anticipated in 2014.

The Duty to Co-operate

- 4.2 Members should note that following the introduction of the "Duty to Co-operate" under the Localism Act, it is now particularly important that neighbouring local planning authorities identify and, where necessary, reach agreement on issues of cross boundary significance. In this regard, the National Planning Policy Framework urges formal joint working where development needs cannot wholly be met within a particular local authority area.
- 4.3 Members will know that South Derbyshire District Council is working particularly closely – and aligning its local plan preparation – with councils in the Derby Housing Market Area. Nevertheless, liaison is also ongoing with ESBC on matters of common interest although there are no strategic planning issues of such significance as to demand joint working. In particular, our respective development requirements are capable of being met within our own respective boundaries.
- 4.4 There are, however, a number of issues of cross-boundary interest which require ongoing liaison and these are appropriately reflected in the draft document and covered in this report.

Scale of Housing Growth in East Staffordshire

- 4.5 In anticipation of the demise of regional spatial strategies, the Borough Council have commissioned a housing requirement study for East Staffordshire. Officers from this Council were engaged in discussions during drafting of their report.
- 4.6 It is clearly important to ensure that ESBC makes full provision for its projected housing needs to avoid undue additional housing pressures in South Derbyshire. This is particularly important given the strong local housing market relationship between Burton and Swadlincote.
- 4.7 ESBC propose to provide for around 8,900 additional dwellings for the period 20012-2031 (c470 per annum). In this regard, their conclusions have been based

on a moderated level of assumed international migration into the authority. Critically, however, in other respects the housing requirement has been derived from up-to-date projection data which assumes that the Borough will continue to accommodate net in-migration flows from other parts of the UK. This approach is consistent with the recent Housing Requirement Study commissioned for South Derbyshire and means that the Borough's proposed housing requirement appears reasonable and soundly based.

Housing Distribution in East Staffordshire

- 4.8 ESBC calculate the need to find land for an additional 6,712 dwellings between 2012 – 2031 when sites which already have planning permission are discounted from the overall need figure.
- 4.9 It is proposed to accommodate around 3,900 of these at Burton and around 1,050 dwellings at Uttoxeter. In addition, the council estimates these towns will yield a further 900 dwellings between them through brownfield "windfalls". Elsewhere, lesser scale provision is proposed at a number of key villages.
- 4.10 Crucially, the Borough Council no longer propose to rely on development at the former Drakelow Power Station (in South Derbyshire) as a way of meeting their strategic housing needs. Members may recall that this Council raised a strong objection in this regard in October 2011. It is therefore now being recommended that the Preferred Option approach of accommodating projected growth entirely within ESBC's boundaries be welcomed.
- 4.11 The consultation document also indicates that a site for 224 dwellings already has planning permission at Tutbury and that further levels of development will be supported as "windfall" development albeit at a much smaller scale. In view of this Council's own draft proposals to allocate land at nearby Hatton, there is the potential for cross boundary infrastructure issues arising. It is therefore being recommended that ESBC be informed this is a matter that would benefit from joint discussions through our ongoing liaison under the "Duty to Co-operate".

Employment Land

- 4.12 The draft document does not, at this stage, propose any numerical need for additional employment land but does set out some general principles in planning for new employment development.
- 4.13 However, paragraph 6.37 states that
- "As with Burton's housing market, the employment land that is likely to become available at Drakelow in South Derbyshire will need to be taken into account to avoid allocating more employment land in the area than demand is likely to justify".*
- 4.14 This statement is considered to be ambiguous and potentially contradicts the housing section of the document. Whilst the acknowledgement of likely cross boundary influences of any development around Drakelow is sensible, the wording appears to imply that a reduced supply of employment land may be needed in East Staffordshire.

- 4.15 The maintenance of a healthy supply of employment land across the wider area is of common interest to both councils and it is therefore being recommended that ESBC be requested to remove or clarify this reference. Further representations on this matter will need to be considered when ESBC publishes its employment land allocations next year.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 ESBC's overall housing target appears to be soundly based and can be welcomed. Similarly, the Borough Council's intention to provide for housing needs without relying on development at the former Drakelow Power Station can be supported, although an ambiguous reference to the availability of employment land at Drakelow should be removed or clarified. Ongoing liaison with the Borough Council under the "Duty to Co-operate" would be welcomed.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7.0 Corporate Implications

- 7.1 The Preferred Option's approach to meeting objectively assessed needs is essential in avoiding undue additional development burdens on greenfield land, services and infrastructure in South Derbyshire. The Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring LPAs is also now an important corporate priority and it is important to carefully assess emerging proposals and ensure ongoing liaison.

8.0 Community Implications

- 8.1 Emerging development plans in neighbouring areas have the potential to affect some communities in South Derbyshire and these are addressed in this report.

9.0 Background Papers

- 9.1 East Staffordshire Local Plan: Preferred Option.