

PARISHES LIAISON MEETING: WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2012

ITEM 9a: CORE STRATEGY

1. The B&NES Core Strategy examination has been suspended in order to address the issues raised by the examination Inspector. The Inspector is of the view that the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) during the course of the examination rendered the B&NES methodology for assigning housing need non-compliant with national policy. He therefore states that he could not come to a conclusion on the level of housing. He requires the housing need to be re-assessed and plan amended to increase housing supply and/or enable some of the planned housing to be delivered sooner.
2. There are also a limited number of other policies on which the Inspector commented and the key issues are set out later in this paper.
3. With regard to housing, there are two main issues to address. Firstly to re-asses the housing requirement in an NPPF compliant way and then, if further housing land is required, to identify the most appropriate locations. The main steps required before the resumption of the hearings are;

	Date	Tasks
1	Now to December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Housing requirement (SHMAA review)• Consider options for increasing/accelerating housing land supply
2	Jan 2013	Reporting
3	Feb 2013	Council agrees changes to Core Strategy
3	March – April 2013	Public engagement on changes
4	May 2013	Assess results of consultation & prepare for resumption of hearings
5	June 2013	Hearings resume
6	Inspector's Report	September 2013?
7	Adoption	Winter 2013

4. Underpinning this work is the fact that the Council is seeking to make changes to a submitted Plan at examination and is not at preparation stage. This potentially limits the scope of options that can be considered because the final plan must not be fundamentally different to the submitted Plan. In addition a suspension is time limited which requires that the work needs to be expedited. This has procedural implications such as arrangements for community involvement. The public engagement on the changes scheduled for March April is not a conventional consultation. Its purpose is to publicise the Council's agreed changes to the submitted Plan so the Inspector has the benefit of public views on the changes. The Council will **not** be considering the comments and making changes

Assessment of housing requirement (SHMA review)

5. The key outputs required for the B&NES Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) review are listed in NPPF (159). The B&NES review will, in advance of a full-scale West of England SHMA and policy review, establish a housing requirement for the District. Cross boundary issues, may also be raised in the SHMA.
6. In line with requirements of the NPPF para 159, the SHMA review will identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that is likely to be needed over the plan period which:
 - meets household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change;
 - addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community;
 - caters for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand

Review Housing Land Supply

7. Following the identification of the housing requirement in a manner consistent with the NPPF, the Council will need to consider what changes are needed to the Core Strategy. NPPF para 47 states that local planning authorities should ensure that their Plans meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. This will include an update of the existing housing land supply in the Strategic Housing land Availability Study (SHLAA) and the identification of new locations if required.

SHLAA update

8. This includes reviewing the contribution of all sources of housing land supply such as sites already with permission, contribution from windfall sites, bringing empty properties back into use and the role of student accommodation. It will also include a review of potential sites in the SHLAA to ensure capacity and delivery assessments are still reasonable. This will be informed by a 'call for sites exercise'. This will ensure that the Council's evidence base is up-to-date.

Assessment of options

9. In the event that new greenfield locations are required, the Council must be able to demonstrate that it is pursuing "the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives based on proportionate evidence" (NPPF para 182). The Council will assess how options perform against the seven Core Strategy objectives (updated in light of the (NPPF) and the LDF Sustainability Appraisal criteria. This includes issues such as environmental impact; deliverability; minimising the need to travel; maximising the use of sustainable transport modes, capacity. This work is linked to the review of the SHLAA.

Other Core Strategy Policies

10. The inspector also expressed concern about four other Core Strategy polices, of particular note was the Affordable Housing policy. The Inspector considered that a

blanket application of an average of 35% affordable housing across the District didn't appear to reflect the evidence on differences in sub-district viability and that an area based approach may be more justified. The Council will review the evidence and the implications for this policy.

Next Steps

11. As set out in the programme above, B&NES is scheduled to agree changes to the Core Strategy in February 2012. There is some benefit in discussing the emerging results on housing and other policies with Town and Parish Councils beforehand and appropriate arrangements will be made.

ITEMS 9b and c: PLACEMAKING PLAN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Introduction

1. This briefing note updates town and parish council on the purpose, scope and preparation programme for the Placemaking Plan. It also comments on the potential for and added value of preparing Neighbourhood Plans.

Placemaking Plan: Purpose, scope & timetable

Purpose

2. The **Placemaking Plan** complements the Council's Core Strategy by setting out the development aspirations and the planning requirements for the delivery of development sites, and updating and reviewing the planning policies used in the determination of planning applications. It is focussed on creating the conditions for better places, and on providing greater clarity to enable developments to be delivered. It will provide the detail to show how development can benefit and enhance local communities.
3. Within the context of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the Placemaking Plan will ensure a robust and up to date planning policy framework is in place for the period up to 2031

Scope

4. The Placemaking Plan will:
 - facilitate the delivery of development sites by providing the necessary level of policy guidance and site requirements to meet Council objectives.
 - safeguard and enhance the quality and diversity of places in B&NES and identify opportunities for change.
 - set out how the housing supply and other development commitments are to be delivered.
 - be prepared in a collaborative way to ensure that it responds to the aspirations of other parts of the Council, stakeholders and local communities.
 - address how infrastructure requirements will be met and other obstacles to delivery of development sites will be overcome.

Timetable: Key stages

5. The programme for the main stages of preparation is set out below. This programme was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 12th September.

Issues and alternative options consultation	Spring 2013
Publication of draft Plan	December 2013
Submission to Secretary of State	April 2014
Hearings	August – September 2014

Receipt of Inspector's Report	December 2014
Adoption	March 2014

Current Stage: Issues and Options

6. Research and collaborative internal working is currently underway to:
 - Identify evidence gaps in site knowledge and policy
 - Evaluate effectiveness of existing development management policies, and identify requirements
 - Generate placemaking themes , opportunities and options for places or groups of sites
 - Formulate site specific development principles and requirements, development and infrastructure requirements

7. Within the context of the Core Strategy the Placemaking Plan will need to set out a planning policy framework to help shape the future of the towns and villages across the District. This work needs to be undertaken with the involvement of local communities, including through Town and Parish Councils. A process of engaging the Town and Parish Councils needs to be developed in order to secure input into the options stage of the Placemaking Plan, and to ensure that a widespread understanding of the issues is achieved. Issues that are likely to require discussions include:
 - a. Achieving sustainable development in the villages that meet the criteria of Core Strategy policy RA1 (the draft Core Strategy suggests development of around 30 dwellings at these villages)
 - b. Reviewing the Housing Development Boundaries of RA1 villages, RA2 villages and those washed over by the Green Belt.
 - c. Delivering Affordable Housing.

8. In order to start engaging Town and Parish Councils in this work and to help develop a clear process for on-going involvement a briefing/workshop event with Town and Parish Councils is being set up for November. Following this initial session it is hoped that the input of Town and Parish Councils will help to ensure the Placemaking Plan sets out a spatial planning framework for villages reflecting local community aspirations.

Neighbourhood Planning

9. The Neighbourhood Planning Protocol, which was approved by Cabinet in September, sets out information on planning at the neighbourhood level and outlines the various different forms this can take. These include the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Town and Parish Councils can choose to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan to help guide and shape future development of their communities. However, experience elsewhere has shown that the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is a time consuming and is likely to be financially costly.

10. The Placemaking Plan provides the opportunity for I Town and Parish Councils to work with B&NES to secure and establish much of what can be set out in Neighbourhood Plans. Inputting into and helping to prepare the Placemaking Plan has three main benefits:
 - More cost effective than preparing a number of individual Neighbourhood Plans
 - Policy framework for a village/neighbourhood becomes part of a strategic plan
 - Efficient use of Council expertise/resources to deliver community aspirations

11. The November briefing session /workshop will assist both B&NES and the Town and Parish Councils to facilitate collaboration in advance of the wider consultations on the Placemaking Plan scheduled from Spring 2013. This will include discussion of the SHLAA update.