
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	20th NOVEMBER 2008	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	IAN BOWEN (EXT. 5821)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	LDF ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2007/08	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS03

1.0 Recommendations

That :

- (i) The members note the contents of the LDF Annual Monitoring Report (AMR);
- (ii) The AMR be submitted to the Government Office for the East Midlands before the deadline of 31st December 2008; and
- (iii) A revised Local Development Scheme be prepared and brought before members before April 2009, reflecting the need for revisions to the timetable for the preparation of LDF documents in the light of recently revised government guidance in PPS12.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To consider and authorise the submission of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2007/08 to the Secretary of State, and to consider the need for a revision to the Local Development Scheme.

3.0 Background

3.1 The LDF Regulations require the submission of an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) by 31st December each year.

3.2 The AMR has two main purposes:

- i. to review progress in the preparation of LDF documents against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS); and
- ii. to assess the extent to which development plan policies are being successfully implemented through the use of a number of national and local indicators.

3.3 The AMR is, therefore, in practice a management tool to inform the need for the review of LDF policies, or revisions to the timetable for their preparation. In particular there is a requirement to report on the delivery of new housing through the inclusion of a 'Housing Trajectory' setting out past completions and anticipated future supply. Employment trends are another key area where the AMR can usefully report performance in the District. Development trends are examined in more detail in paragraphs 4.11-4.23 below.

4.0 Detail

4.1 The following paragraphs summarise the findings of the AMR for the period 1st April 2006 - 31st March 2008. However, attention is also drawn to significant issues which have arisen since the close of the monitoring period, which will be formally recorded in next year's AMR.

4.2 The full document runs to over 80 pages and copies have therefore been placed in the members' room and the group lounges. The final document will appear on the Council's website.

4.3 The headline findings of the AMR for 2006/07 are summarised briefly below:

Progress on LDF Documents - the Local Development Scheme 2007/08

4.4 The current Local Development Scheme (LDS3) includes one milestone within the monitoring period (April 1st 2007 – March 31st 2008). This milestone, the 'Preferred Options' consultation on the Woodville –Swadlincote AAP, was scheduled to take place in November 2007. However, as reported informally in last year's AMR, this consultation was initially delayed due to complexities in preparing the evidence on which the preferred options would be based, and later following the advice of the Government Office for the East Midlands who had drawn attention to recent procedural difficulties encountered by other planning authorities in the region seeking to progress AAPs in advance of their Core Strategy.

4.5 However, the need to secure the regeneration of the area covered by the AAP remains a priority and the strategic elements of the Area Action Plan are likely to need to be pursued through the Core Strategy.

4.6 In terms of the Core Strategy, members will know that the timetable for its preparation has been co-ordinated with those of the other local authorities in the Derby Housing Market Area (HMA) – i.e. Amber Valley and Derby City Councils. There were no formal milestones to be achieved in this monitoring period. Work has focused thusfar on collating the evidence base including, where appropriate, jointly at the wider HMA level. Arrangements have also been put in place for formal co-ordination and joint working at both officer and elected member level throughout the HMA including the establishment of a Joint Advisory Board.

- 4.7 However, shortly after the close of the monitoring year, the Secretary of State introduced new national planning policy advice through a revision of PPS12 which significantly changes the way that Core Strategies are required to be prepared. Rather than prescribing a specific process, more discretion is left to local authorities particularly in determining who to consult and how. In particular, the 'Preferred Options' stage of consultation has been removed from the process. Nevertheless, the principles of the new planning system requiring the preparation of 'Sound' DPDs remain.
- 4.8 A further particularly significant change in government thinking is that LDF Core Strategies should now make specific allocations for "strategic sites". This is an important shift as Core Strategies have thusfar been expected to deal only with matters of vision, strategy and principle.
- 4.9 As a result, some work which had been intended to be undertaken in 'Site Allocations' documents will now need to be accelerated and incorporated into the Core Strategy. This will require a refresh of the HMA authorities' LDSs to reflect the new process and content required for Core Strategies. It is therefore expected that revised co-ordinated LDSs will need to be agreed with the Government Office for the East Midlands early in 2009. Accordingly, it is being recommended that Committee resolve to follow this course of action. It is not anticipated that any significant revisions will need to be made to the overall timetable, although intervening milestones will inevitably need to be altered.
- 4.10 In the meantime, Core Strategy work need not be delayed pending a revision of the LDS and an initial 'Issues and Ideas' public consultation is programmed before the end of 2008.

Policy Performance

- 4.11 As in previous years, the range of indicators adopted in this AMR has been extended to become more comprehensive and will provide the framework for devising and monitoring emerging LDF policies. In addition, a revised suite of Core Output Indicators have been introduced and this AMR reports on these, where the collection of data has been possible.
- 4.12 Much of the information collected over the monitoring period suggests that the 'saved' policies of the Adopted Local Plan are being implemented to good effect with many policies still be used to inform development control decisions.

Employment Development Trends

- 4.13 The average annual rate of employment land development since 1991 has been less than had been anticipated in the Derby and Derbyshire Structure Plan. However the rate of starts and completions has been greater in recent years than during the earlier period. Whilst the overall level of completions, sites under construction, commitments and allocations for the district as a whole exceeds the Structure Plan target, it should be noted that the total for the Swadlincote Sub Area in isolation falls some 8.5 ha short of the Structure Plan requirement. This underlines the need to protect established viable employment sites against redevelopment for other

purposes. There are few known service constraints affecting the major allocated sites and the situation will be kept under review. Outside of Swadlincote a small number of farm diversification and rural conversion projects have appeared as commitments in the current monitoring year. These are located at Radbourne, Stenson and Rosliston. The proposals may potentially contribute toward the diversification of the rural economy presenting new employment opportunities for those living in rural parts of the district.

Housing Development Trends

Past Completions and Overall Supply

- 4.14 In terms of housing, there have been 10,157 dwelling completions in South Derbyshire since April 1991, averaging (597 dwellings per annum). The required annual build rate for this period, as set out in the Derby and Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan, is 600 dwellings per annum. Whilst the Swadlincote Sub-Area has almost met its requirement to build 5,500 dwellings by 2011, there is a shortfall in meeting the Derby Sub-Area requirement of 6,500 as a result of the withdrawal of the draft Local Plan. Supply will be increased, however, by the outcome of the conjoined inquiry into five major housing sites in the north of the District, which was held between May 2007 – February 2008. The Secretary of State's decision is expected in January 2009.
- 4.15 Future housing supply will also be enabled through a number of unimplemented Local Plan allocations and planning permissions. The adopted Local Plan includes 3 major housing allocations. The former Hilton MOD depot has seen 1,671 housing completions and a further 281 completions are expected. The larger number of dwellings than originally expected is due to continued emphasis in Government guidance on making efficient use of land.
- 4.16 The allocation of 1,000 dwellings at Church Gresley is under construction and 358 dwellings have been completed on the site so far.
- 4.17 The bulk of the Stenson Fields allocation has been completed. A planning application for approximately 100 dwellings is currently being considered for the remainder of the site.
- 4.18 In terms of unimplemented planning permissions, there were 423 dwellings under construction as at 31 March 2008 with a further 1,699 dwellings that have not yet been started.
- 4.19 Looking further forward, the emerging East Midlands Regional Plan, once finally issued, will set growth requirements for the period 2001–2026. The Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the draft Plan following the Public Examination have indicated an average annual requirement of 610 dwellings. This is to be split between the Derby "Principal Urban Area" (PUA) and the remainder of the District, mainly around Swadlincote. In the short-term, however, it seems likely that the current global economic slow-down will result in lower annual completions and this is reflected in the housing trajectory. However, the full requirement will need to be provided and current Local Plan allocations and unimplemented planning permissions will be insufficient to meet that need in both the PUA and non-PUA parts

of the District. New sites will therefore need to be identified through the LDF process to meet this requirement.

Rolling Five-Year Supply

4.20 Local Authorities are required to identify and maintain a rolling 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, on the basis of annual development requirements. “Deliverable” sites are those which are available, suitable and achievable at any given point in time. Currently, when comparing South Derbyshire’s supply to the revised emerging RSS requirement, the District has 3.65 years supply of housing. Again, this is attributable to the withdrawal of the draft Local Plan and will be remedied initially through the conjoined inquiry and, in the longer term, via the LDF.

Residential Densities

4.21 The Government identifies the efficient use of land as a key consideration in planning for housing and indicates an average minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare. In South Derbyshire, residential density is monitored annually on the basis of wholly completed large sites (i.e. sites of 10 dwellings or greater). The monitoring year April – March 2007/08 saw an increase in the number of dwellings built at less than 30 dwellings per hectare. However, this is due to one longstanding large site, which gained permission prior to the national policy on minimum densities, finally being completed. Accordingly, this has skewed the figures somewhat for the reporting year. There has, however, also been an increase in the number of dwellings built at more than 50 dwellings per hectare.

Affordable Housing

4.22 The provision of affordable housing is a key government priority and completions in South Derbyshire are increasing. In the period April – March 2007/08, 41 affordable dwellings were completed, compared to 16 dwellings in 2006/07 and 8 in 2005/06. Leaving aside any short-term impact the current credit crisis may have on housing development generally, it is expected that delivery of affordable housing will continue to increase significantly as new large sites come on stream – particularly resulting from the Secretary of State's decision on the conjoined inquiry sites.

Development on Previously Developed Land

4.23 A further key Government priority is the re-use of land that has been previously developed. The percentage of residential completions on previously developed land in South Derbyshire has dropped back from 86.2% to 76% within the monitoring period. However, this decline is not surprising given the diminishing availability of brownfield sites in the District, and this has been anticipated in previous Annual Monitoring Reports. Nevertheless, the proportion of new homes on previously developed land in South Derbyshire remains significantly above the national and regional target of 60%.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6.0 Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The LDF will be important in achieving key corporate objectives particularly in ensuring sustainable development. The submission of the AMR by 31st December is also a statutory requirement.

7.0 Community Implications

- 7.1 The LDF will be the key mechanism for shaping future sustainable communities in South Derbyshire. The AMR assists in managing and monitoring that process.

8.0 Background Papers

South Derbyshire District Council Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2007/08