

## CITY OF PLYMOUTH

<b>Subject:</b>	Local Development Framework: Sustainable Neighbourhoods Including Key Site Allocations Development Plan Document
<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	18 January 2011
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Fry
<b>CMT Member:</b>	Director for Development & Regeneration
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<b>Ref:</b>	DBT/LDF/5/13
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Part:</b>	I

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### Executive Summary:

The report relates to the preparation of the Sustainable Neighbourhoods (including Key Site Allocations) Development Plan Document (SNDPD), as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) programme.

The DPD is being prepared under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. This includes a new process for submitting a document, which includes:

- Continuous community engagement on the spatial strategy and the consideration of alternatives.
- Publication of an Issues and Preferred Options document for consultation, leading to-
- Publication of a draft (pre-submission) version of the DPD for the purposes of consultation
- Submission of the draft document to the Secretary of State, who will appoint an independent Planning Inspector to test the soundness of the plan.

Work on understanding the issues and opportunities within Plymouth's neighbourhoods began in 2005 with the production of the Sustainable Neighbourhood Assessments. These documents looked at a wide range of social, economic, environmental issues to see how neighbourhoods performed against a number of standard indicators. These documents formed the basis of subsequent public consultations.

More detailed work on the DPD started in each neighbourhood in 2007 with an extended Issues and Options consultation based on the broad framework for change provided by the adopted Core Strategy. This initial consultation stage was completed with a city wide 'Big Picture' consultation event in July 2008. However, the work programme was delayed by the need to respond, through further evidence base studies, to the Secretary of State's then proposed revisions to the Regional Spatial Strategy, which proposed considerable increases to the housing allocations for both Plymouth and Plymouth's Urban Fringe (in South Hams).

Pamphlets have now been produced for all of Plymouth's neighbourhoods, excluding those that fall within areas covered, or proposed to be covered, by Area Action Plans. These documents articulate

the key issues raised through the previous consultations and invite community involvement in setting the neighbourhood planning agenda in accordance with the Government's localism agenda. This consultation will take place during February / March 2011 and will enable the preparation of the Sustainable Neighbourhoods DPD for formal submission to Government during 2011/12.

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**Corporate Plan 2010-2013 as amended by the four new priorities for the City and Council:**

This DPD supports the delivery of Corporate Improvement Priority (CIP) 12, which relates to the delivery of sustainable growth, and the new 'Growth' priority of the Local Strategic Partnership and City Council. It forms part of the Local Development Framework, which is a key driver of the growth agenda, and will help to ensure that the city's shopping centres continue to meet the needs of the local community.

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**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:  
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The publication and consultation costs will be met from the existing Spatial Planning budget. Financial and manpower savings will be achieved by co coordinating the consultation of this document with three other LDF documents. These are the Derriford & Seaton Area Action Plan and Shopping Centres Supplementary Planning Document, both of which are being reported to this Cabinet, and the Urban Fringe DPD which is being jointly prepared with South Hams District Council, and Devon County Council and is subject to a separate approval route through a Joint Member Panel.

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**Other Implications: e.g. Section 17 Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Equalities Impact Assessment, etc.**

The LDF will directly support the promotion of community safety through the provision of policies to influence the design and nature of physical development. Equality impact assessments are undertaken for each Development Plan Document, usually at submission stage.

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**Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

1. Approve the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Development Plan Document consultation pamphlets for the purposes of public consultation and as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

**Reason:** To enable the Council to progress the DPD in line with targets in the Local Development Scheme.

2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Development & Regeneration (Planning Services), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development, to agree the final publication format of the consultation pamphlets.

**Reason:** To enable the Council to progress the DPD in line with targets in the Local Development Scheme

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### **Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:**

The alternatives relate to the content and options that are put forward in the neighbourhood pamphlets themselves, which will in turn help to determine the final recommendations on the content of the Development Plan Document.

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### **Background papers:**

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008, HMSO, June 2008.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning, HMSO, June 2008

National Planning Policy Statements -

- PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, 2009
- PPS6 Planning for Town Centres, 2005

Plymouth First Deposit Local Plan, Plymouth City Council, 2001

Sustainable Neighbourhoods Studies 2005

Adopted Plymouth Core Strategy, Plymouth City Council, April 2007 (including associated evidence base)

Summary of responses to Your Place, Your Future, and Big Picture Events 2007/2008

LDF Local Development Scheme, Plymouth City Council, December 2008

Plymouth Neighbourhood Profiles (2020 Partnership) 2008

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment September 2009

Student Housing in Communities Report (Arup) 2010

Mowhay Road Site appraisals (Arup) 2010

Local and District Shopping Centres Study November 2010, Cushman and Wakefield

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## Sign off:

Fin	10110 034	Leg	10317/ RVV	HR	n/a	Corp Prop	n/a	IT	n/a	Strat Proc	n/a
Originating SMT Member Paul Barnard, Assistant Director for Development & Regeneration											

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) process was launched in February 2005. Since then considerable progress has been made in both agreeing a long term vision for the city, as well as providing the delivery mechanisms to enable these aspirations to be turned into reality, through:

- The publication of a comprehensive set of key evidence base studies. These establish the facts about the city's current position, the realities of what can be delivered and how this can be achieved so as to make Plymouth a better and more prosperous place to live in.
- A continuous process of engagement, together with formal consultation periods, enabling the input of all interest groups, key stakeholders and the general public into the plan making process.
- The adoption of an overall framework to guide the city's long term development, together with the plans to facilitate its delivery. The Council has now successfully adopted more LDF documents than any other local authority in the country, with ten Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and three Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), as follows: Statement of Community Involvement, Core Strategy, the Waste DPD and Area Action Plans (AAPs) for North Plymstock (including a Minerals DPD), Millbay and Stonehouse, Devonport, Sutton Harbour, Central Park and the City Centre & University, Planning Obligations & Affordable Housing SPD, Design SPD and the Development Guidelines SPD.)
- This level of progress has brought a high degree of certainty to the development process and helped with the delivery of major developments, which in combination has allowed the Council to make considerable progress towards achieving its long term aspirations for the city.
- In order to complete this process, and provide comprehensive plan coverage for the city, five more LDF documents need to be progressed to adoption, as set out in Council's adopted Local Development Scheme.

1.2 These remaining LDF documents will be progressed under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. This supports a process of continuous community engagement with key consultation stages at the Issues and Preferred Options stage, the Pre-submission stage, followed by submission of the draft plan to the Secretary of State who will appoint an independent inspector to examine its 'soundness' before it can be adopted.

1.3 It should be noted that a key objective of the LDF process is ensure a community based, bottom up approach to the plan making process. This is particularly important in preparing the Sustainable Neighbourhoods DPD, where we are developing a collaborative approach with communities to assess what the priorities are for their area and potential ways of delivering them. This approach has a considerable degree of synergy with the Coalition's focus on localism. The City Council's approach to the LDF, and the SNDPD in particular, has already begun to demonstrate some of the key principles of localism, enabling local people to work together in partnership with elected members to develop an agreed plan for their area.

## **2. CONTEXT FOR PREPARING THE SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS (KEY SITE ALLOCATIONS) DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT.**

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to progress the Sustainable Neighbourhoods (including key site allocations) Development Plan Document (SNDPD), to its next stage in the plan preparation process - the Issues and Preferred Options consultation stage. This not a draft plan, but rather an opportunity for the community to continue to shape the eventual plan that is prepared for their area.
- 2.2 The consultation document will comprise a set of pamphlets, covering each neighbourhood outside the AAP areas, and set out the key issues and potential options for meeting identified local needs. These pamphlets, attached as an appendix to this report, bring together key elements of previous consultations processes, and suggest different ways in which the needs of each neighbourhood can be met. It is important to stress that at this stage no decisions have been made on any changes to the neighbourhoods. *This consultation stage is simply looking for guidance from communities as to what they want to see happen in their areas and how this could be delivered.*
- 2.3 The outcomes from this consultation stage will be used to create a plan which will demonstrate how future proposals can contribute to delivering agreed community aspirations.

## **3. WORK UNDERTAKEN TO DATE**

- 3.1 The production of the SNDPD commenced in 2005, and has involved a great deal of work to understand the issues affecting local areas and whether there are any potential development options that might help address these matters. The general public and interested parties have been engaged throughout this process. Key stages have involved:
  - The preparation of a Sustainable Neighbourhood Assessment for all 43 of Plymouth's Neighbourhoods. These assessments considered the area's facilities, how it functions, its character and made an assessment of how 'sustainable' the area was. These documents have been made available for public comment and updates.
  - A year long process of engagement, involving 60 consultation events and keeping in regular contact with at least 5,000 people registered on the consultation database. These events focused on informing people as to what was going on, building their capacity to contribute, involving people in the process, listening to the issues they raised and developing partnerships to help address matters of concern.
  - As part of this year long engagement process we have undertaken:
    - Councillor led walkabouts for each neighbourhood, providing an opportunity for Councillors to advise us on particular matters that they consider need to be addressed.
    - Day long workshops with representatives and key stakeholders from each community, to establish their perceptions of key issues and opportunities in their neighbourhood
    - Public displays at a wide range of venues to publicise the findings so far about each neighbourhood, and give the general public an opportunity to contribute their thoughts about the future of their area.
  - We have also sought contributions from landowners on potential development sites. Some of these have come through work undertaken on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (a required evidence base document), or may have been directly communicated to us via owners, or agents.

- In addition to these neighbourhood focused consultations, we have also published a number of other background studies and information pamphlets to fully inform the process. This work will also feed into the preparation of SNDPD.

#### **4. THE ISSUES AND PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 This consultation represents the latest stage in a bottom up approach to planning the city outside of the AAP areas. It builds on the work that has already been undertaken, and starts to focus the plan preparation process on the key priorities that need to be addressed, and test the acceptability of the different ways of dealing with these matters with the communities in the city.
- 4.2 A consultation document has been prepared for each of the 38 neighbourhoods outside the AAP areas. They have been written so that everyone can see what issues have already been raised in a neighbourhood, set out suggestions for some of the key principles that could be used to help guide future changes, and what this might mean in terms of possible interventions or developments opportunities. These options are identified on a street map base, along with some key questions that we are seeking further views on. These consultation pamphlets are attached as an appendix to this Cabinet report.
- 4.3 The purpose of these pamphlets is to enable everyone to make comments on their area, and /or the rest of the city. It is made quite clear that there are no hard boundaries, and it is recognised that many issues have effects beyond their neighbourhood. The documents also makes it clear that no decisions have been taken on any matters affecting a neighbourhood and that the purpose of the consultation is to gather views on the issues and potential options, so as to give communities the chance to influence decisions that could affect their area. In addition to seeking the views of the general public, the pamphlets are also intended to involve all key stakeholders and other agencies.

#### **5. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SNDPD AND THE URBAN FRINGE DPD**

- 5.1 The Urban Fringe DPD is a complementary document being prepared alongside the SNDPD. It is being jointly prepared by Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and Devon County Council. It deals with an area which immediately adjoins the city, in South Hams. It takes an identical approach to the SNDPD in terms of being a bottom up community based approach intended to deliver the local aspirations of communities and parishes on the edge of the city. It also is intended to provide a Green Infrastructure context for the area around Plymouth, providing an understanding of the city's relationships with its surrounding countryside.
- 5.2 Members will recall that it was agreed at the Cabinet Meeting of 7 April 2009 that a joint Member Panel, with representatives from the 3 constituent authorities, would guide the Urban Fringe DPD through its Issues and Preferred Options consultation stage. However, it was also agreed that decisions on the next Pre-submission stage will need to be taken by the Cabinets and Councils of the respective authorities.
- 5.3 The next meeting of the Urban Fringe Members Panel has been arranged for 6<sup>th</sup> January 2011, to agree the Urban Fringe consultation pamphlets and consultation arrangements. Both the SNDPD and UFDPD pamphlets will contain cross references so communities understand the relationships between these documents and can contribute to the overall debate. A copy of the draft pamphlets for consideration by the Panel are attached to this report for information purposes.

## **6. NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 Subject to approval by Cabinet, the SNDPD will be the subject of a six week statutory consultation period in February / March 2011. This will consist of a range of community engagement events across the city. In addition a number of special workshops are proposed in order to engage with hard to reach groups.
- 6.2 Following the receipt of representations, the matters raised as a result of the consultation will be used to inform the preparation of the Pre- submission version of the SNDPD, which is currently programmed for 2011 /12. Although this submission document would still be heavily community focused, the final document will also need to take into consideration the wider strategic view. There will, for example, be a need to demonstrate that the city is able to meet its overall housing targets and employment land allocations, as well as take a city wide view of green infrastructure provision etc.
- 6.3 While the Government is currently making changes to the planning system to incorporate the localism agenda, officers are confident that the process that Plymouth has followed, which relies heavily on continual community engagement and public consultation, will be able to be merged into any new system if needs be. As such publishing these pamphlets and taking the dialogue with local communities to the next level will not be abortive work should the City Council decide to move towards the new Local Plan system proposed by the Coalition Government. In fact it will mean that once again Plymouth will remain at the forefront of spatial planning in England.