

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 2.30 pm
on 28 FEBRUARY 2011**

Present: - Councillor A J Ketteridge - Chairman.
Councillors C A Cant and J F Cheetham.

Officers in attendance: - M Cox (Democratic Services Officer) R
Harborough (Director of Public Services), M Jones
(Principal Planning Officer), S Nicholas (Senior Planning
Officer), A Storah (Agency Planner) and A Taylor
(Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control).

LDF9 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E C Godwin, J I
Loughlin and H S Rolfe.

LDF10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 August 2010 were approved as a
correct record and signed by the Chairman.

LDF11 BUSINESS ARISING

**Minute LDF7 – Review of housing growth figures and future work
programme**

The working group was advised of the latest information in respect of the
Cala Homes legal challenge on the weight to be attached to the
proposed revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

LDF12 LOCALLY DERIVED HOUSING REQUIREMENT

The working group received a detailed report on the calculation of the
locally derived housing requirement. Officers had been asked to
ascertain population projections for the district that made appropriate
assumptions as to birth and death rates so that the council could
determine the housing allocation necessary to accommodate this
anticipated growth within the Core Strategy.

At the recent workshop sessions, members had considered the 2008-
based CLG household projections; these also made provision for
migration and were an indication of the likely increase assuming the
continuation of recent demographic trends. Members felt that additional
need generated by this provision was artificially high and had asked

officers to look at figures which excluded the migration component and restricted the projection to natural population change.

The population projections for the period to 2027 (the minimum 15 year requirement for the Core Strategy) indicated a net increase of 1600 persons by natural change. However, this figure did not assist in determining the changing need for housing in the district because individual births and deaths would not lead to the need for the allocation of more housing. This had been established by applying the assumed average household size in 2027 (2.3 persons per household) to the total estimated population at the time (excluding migration), to determine the number of households. Using this figure it was noted that if the existing number of dwellings and those with planning permission were taken into account, there would be an almost negligible requirement for more homes to the period 2027.

Officers stated that this approach not be sustainable and would not be acceptable to an inspector at the core strategy inquiry for a number of reasons:- house-builders could challenge the inherent assumption that in-migration is balanced by out-migration in this district; the future building rates would be relatively low when compared to what had been achieved in recent years and what had previously been proposed as the preferred LDF strategy, and it would be seen as a way of dispensing with the need to allocate any more land for residential development. This view stemmed from the attractiveness of the district as a place to live, its ready accessibility to major employment centres and the high cost of housing together with a relevant example of how an inquiry panel had concluded that it was right to take account of “with migration” projections in arriving at proposals for additional housing.

Officers had therefore put forward an alternative approach which aimed to meet local need, be acceptable to the council and be readily justifiable to the Inspector. This approach had also taken into account the new Affordable Homes Programme 2011 – 2015 which was about to be introduced.

On the basis of the SHMA the requirement for additional social rent housing would arise from the change in natural growth. An amount of additional market housing would be required to provide the amount of affordable housing at 40% of which 70% would be for social rent. This would lead to a dwelling requirement of 2500 homes. Additionally there were 2500 dwellings in the district for which planning permission had already been approved, giving a total dwelling provision of 5000. This would equate to a building rate of 295 dwellings a year, which would be 71% of the rate required to deliver the RSS allocation.

The members of the working group asked a number of questions on the report and the detailed figures. Councillor Ketteridge said he was satisfied with the proposed housing requirement and the process that had been undertaken in reaching this figure. He said that the Authority had a commitment to reduce the RSS figure and he felt that the figure

proposed could be justified to the inspector and would also be more acceptable to the electorate.

RECOMMENDED that the Environment Committee agree the locally derived housing requirement as above for inclusion in the emerging LDF and a report be made to the Environment Committee on 17 March 2011 accordingly.

LDF13 UPDATE ON THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The working group considered a revised version of the Local Development Scheme which set out the programme for the preparation of LDF documents 2010 – 2015. It was now envisaged to consult on the Core Strategy incorporating the revised Housing figure and how it would be distributed in Autumn 2011, the pre submission consultation in April/May 2012 and submission to the Secretary of State in the Autumn of 2012. This timetable was dependent on many factors including the Localism bill and any future changes to the LDF process.

LDF14 FUTURE MEETINGS

The next stage would be to look at options for housing distribution. Members felt that a workshop would be useful for initial discussion of this issue and suggested that a date be arranged following the May elections.

The meeting ended at 4.40pm