

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP  
MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON  
WALDEN on 29 JULY 2011 at 9.30am**

Present: Councillor J Ketteridge – (Chairman)  
Councillors S Barker, C Cant, J Menell, E Oliver, V Ranger  
and D Watson.

Officers in attendance: J Burnham (Housing Enabling and Development  
Officer), R Harborough (Director of Public Services), M  
Jones (Principal Planning Officer), S Nicholas (Senior  
Planning Officer), R Procter (Democratic Services Officer),  
A Storah (Planning Officer) and Andrew Taylor (Divisional  
Head of Planning and Building Control).

**LDF5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Cheetham, D  
Crome, J Loughlin and H Rolfe.

**LDF6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2011 were received and  
signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

**LDF7 FIVE YEAR HOUSING SUPPLY**

The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control gave a  
presentation on the five year housing supply. He said that at the last  
meeting the Working Group had agreed the Council should take a  
proactive approach in order to address the deficit. This would mean  
releasing some land now; and Members had set some criteria for  
identifying potential sites. Using these criteria, officers had identified  
sites which were now brought before the Working Group to be selected.

In reply to a question from Councillor Barker, the Divisional Head of  
Planning and Building Control said if a particular site were accepted for  
the five year housing supply, it would be open to the Council to reduce  
the time for commencing planning consent, and it would be possible to  
tie in 'frontloaded' infrastructure payments subject to viability  
considerations.

The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control described the  
approach taken by officers in drawing up the list of possible sites. He  
said officers had gone through the Strategic Housing Land Availability  
Assessments ('SHLAA') and had identified the most highly scoring sites,  
which were now presented to the Working Group. There was a broad

range of sites across the District, and it was for Members to consider which should be included.

Members then considered in detail the schedule of sites and identified those which in their view should be explored further. Sites for a total of 925 homes were selected.

In reply to a question from Councillor Oliver regarding the implications of the localism bill, Councillor Barker said that by addressing the housing supply the Council could fend off more vigorously other more speculative proposals.

Councillor Menell asked whether the housing supply figures were to include the building of affordable housing by the Council. The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control said building of affordable houses would be likely mainly to take place only on exception sites. The Director of Public Services said the building of council housing was one of the issues where reform of council housing finance would have implications. This topic would be the subject of full reports to Members shortly.

LDF8

## **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME TIMETABLE**

The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control explained that the current timetable for the local development scheme was no longer viable, due to the housing land deficit and the CALA judgment. Recent guidance on the Government's direction of travel also had to be taken into account, as would the enactment of the localism bill next year. By June 2012 the Council needed to be in a position to develop locally derived housing targets, which would require significant consultation. Consequently a revised timetable was presented for Members to consider.

Councillor Barker said she had agreed to a request by Councillor Morson to ask about the localism bill requirement on the Council to account for inward migration in determining housing figures.

The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control said this plan policy framework was in draft; it was pro-growth, and was looking at forcing councils to provide for housing.

The Director of Public Services agreed with this analysis, and said there was a high probability that the Council would need to review the locally derived housing target, taking into account demand.

Councillor Cant suggested a whole-Council workshop would be beneficial.

The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control said guidance also indicated that where a council's plan was old or silent, then a planning

application that met the criteria in the national framework should be approved. It was therefore important to progress the plan, in view of the short timescale.

The Planning Officer said the guidance also indicated councils must take into account forecast population growth and migration.

Members asked various questions regarding the implications of the CALA judgment in terms of updating this Council's local plan; and the work which was continuing on the regional spatial strategy. The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control said the Council would need to show it had taken the CALA case into account; and that it would be necessary to make strategic decisions prior to going forward to consultation in 9 months' time.

It was noted that a report on the Local Development Scheme would be presented to Cabinet at the next available meeting.

Councillor Barker said the issues were complex for those Members who did not form part of this working group. The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control said there was a role for any Members who had an understanding of the issues to explain to their fellow councillors, to ensure the Council secured an approach which reflected the necessary direction for the District.

LDF9

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was agreed meetings should be arranged for the next six months on a monthly basis from September onwards.

The meeting ended at 11.55am.