

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 September 2011**

**Present:**

Councillor K H Turner (Chairman)  
Councillor S Y Goss  
Councillor A F Knight  
Councillor M A Smith

Councillor C Morgan  
Councillor B Heywood  
Councillor K J Ross

**Members in Attendance:**

Councillor A P Hadley  
Councillor K M Mills  
Councillor D J Sanders

Councillor E May  
Councillor P H Murphy  
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew

**Officers in Attendance:**

Ian Timms, Group Manager – Housing & Community  
Martin Wilsher, Principal Planning Officer, LDF  
Toby Clempson, Principal Planning Officer, LDF  
Tim Durant, ARUP (Item 7)  
Krystyna Kowalewska, Meeting Administrator

**LD7 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence from members of the Panel.

**LD8 Minutes**

(Minutes of the Local Development Panel held on 28 June 2011 – circulated with the Agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Panel held on 28 June 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

**LD9 Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Description of Interest</b>	<b>Personal or Prejudicial</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Cllr K H Turner	All Items	Brompton Ralph	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Councillor S Y Goss	All Items	Quantock Vale	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Councillor C Morgan	All Items	Quantock Vale	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Councillor P H Murphy	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke
Councillor K J Ross	All Items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew	All Items	Crowcombe	Personal	Spoke

In addition, Councillors S Y Goss and C Morgan declared a personal interest relating to Agenda Item 7, Progression of the Hinkley Point SPD, as they were ward members.

#### **LD10 Public Participation**

No member of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

#### **LD11 Consultation on the draft National Planning Policy Framework**

The Principal Planning Officer (T Clempson) briefed the Panel on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with particular reference to its implications for the emerging Core Strategy policies. He identified the most significant NPPF issues that needed to be addressed and how they would have an impact.

It was reported that the consultation period for the draft NPPF ends on 17 October and that an officers' response would be made and would be reported to the Local Development Panel at its next meeting in October.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- A number of matters contained in the draft NPPF were already embodied in the Core Strategy that was currently being produced.
- Further work was required in justifying the level of housing provision in the Core Strategy on the basis of the latest housing needs assessment. Members supported liaison with neighbouring local authorities in order to seek ways of helping to meet the whole level of need identified.
- Infrastructure improvements were urgently required and the scale of developments were not sufficient to resolve highway problems. It was highlighted that issues arose due to lack of finance and not a lack of willingness.
- Preserving the high street was a concern amongst members and more flexibility should be explored to meet the needs of the local community.
- It was understood that as a result of government's introduction of the Localism Bill, Planning Inspectors examining Core Strategies / Local

Plans would now only be able to *recommend* policy changes to West Somerset Council, they would not have the power to impose them.

- Clarification was sought on the term 'sustainable rural tourism' and it was explained that it meant tourism schemes which worked in terms of the character of the area and its transport provision.
- An addition to the Core Strategy would be proposed in connection with cross-subsidy to help the delivery of rural affordable housing.
- Neighbourhood development plans would be prepared in the context of the Core Strategy / Local Plan.
- Masterplans could be used to help implement areas of strategic development identified in the Core Strategy / Local Plan.
- It may prove necessary to consider the adoption of some of the technical guidance in PPS25 Development and Flood Risk unless the Environment Agency took on the publication of this material as its own guidance.

**RESOLVED** that the tabled summary of issues in the draft National Planning Policy Framework and their implications for the Council's Core Strategy be noted.

**LD12 Refining the draft LDF Core Strategy, Preferred Strategy policies and strategic development locations**

The Principal Planning Officer (T Clempson) briefed the Panel on the amended draft Core Strategy policies for the preferred strategy. He advised that in the emerging Government guidance, the term 'Core Strategy' was being replaced by "the Local Plan". It was suggested that all references to the Council's Core Strategy should be changed to read the 'Local Plan' instead with an appropriate explanatory paragraph to explain the change of title. (This was agreed by the Panel).

During discussion on the policy subjects, the following comments were made:

- SC4 Affordable Housing:  
Members raised concern about the specified thresholds for small sites and queried whether it should be increased in order to provide the appropriate ratio of rural affordable housing. It was agreed to include two alternative sections SC4 1D for consultation which are to read:
  - 'D. Elsewhere on sites of 1 or more dwellings', or;
  - 'D Elsewhere on sites of 3 or more dwellings'.
- The Local Plan would contain a Key Diagram (a diagrammatic map showing the general locations of strategic development provision) and a detailed Proposals Map (defining development boundaries, nature conservation areas etc. based on an amended version of the existing saved West Somerset District Local Plan proposals map).
- A number of transport conditions had been removed, to be replaced by cross references to transport policy TR2.
- Policy CC2 had been divided up into 3 separate policies relating to flood risk management, coastal change management areas and protection of the coastal zone landscape respectively.

- Developers should be encouraged to consider alternative forms of energy and although these matters were dealt with under building regulations policy CC1 dealt with some of the issues concerned.
- The essence of the relevant saved local plan policies had been incorporated into new policies NH5 and NH6 concerning the protection of best and most valuable agricultural land, and development in relation to pollution, contaminated land and unstable land.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to an amendment to Policy SC4 Affordable Housing as set out above, the amended draft Core Strategy policies should be developed into a draft Local Plan Preferred Strategy document.

**LD13 Progression of the Hinkley Point SPD**

(Report No. WSC115/11, circulated with the Agenda and, following updated legal advice, revised recommendations circulated at the Meeting).

Tim Durant from ARUP presented to Members the main consultation comments received in relation to the Draft Hinkley Point C Project Supplementary Document (HPC SPD), together with Officers recommended responses and proposed changes to the document. It was intended that a final version of the document would be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in October 2011.

During discussion of this item, the following comments were made:

- Construction working hours could not be stipulated in the SPD.
- Members fully supported Sedgemoor District Council in their application for a bypass in Bridgwater.
- Concern was expressed regarding the visual impact on other areas of the district, e.g. Minehead Seafront, and whether localised landscaping improvements could be specified.
- A request was made as to whether the wording for the bullet point relating to the restoration of land (within Box 19) could be rephrased and strengthened and to replace "...should, where possible,..." with the word "must".
- The range of community facilities for Williton detailed in the document was inaccurate and needed to be reworded.
- A request was made as to whether the wording in Box 23 relating to the range of facilities available in Stogursey could be reworded.

Councillor C Morgan proposed the recommendations and they were seconded by Councillor S Y Goss.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the Local Development Panel accepts the need for a clear approach in dealing with the proposed development of a new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point C plus any associated development arising from this project. Accordingly it approves the document in its current draft form and as part of the evidence base that will;

- i) inform policy formulation related to future energy development proposals of this type in West Somerset through the emerging Local Development

Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and any subsequent Local Development Documents (LDD's); and,

- ii) be capable of providing information that can constitute a material consideration at the present time and potentially a SPD by the Council's Development Management Officers and Planning Committee, subject to review.
- iii) provide information that can inform the Council's preparation of a Local Impact Report (LIR) to be submitted to the IPC; and
- iv) be capable of providing information that may constitute a material consideration by the Infrastructure Planning Commission.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the Local Development Panel recommends that the status of the final document, either as a material consideration or as an adopted SPD is decided by Cabinet and Full Council.

**LD14 Date of next Local Development Meeting**

It was advised that the date for the next meeting of the Local Development Panel would be Tuesday 18 October 2011, starting at 10.00am (due to the Council Chamber not being available in the afternoon).

The meeting closed at 5.12 pm.