

REGENERATION COMMITTEE

12TH JANUARY 2005

PRESENT	Councillor Townsend (Chair) Councillors Mrs Brown, Foote Wood, Grogan, Hayton, Laurie, Mowbray, Nevins, Perkins and Stonehouse.
APOLOGIES	Councillors Dobinson and Ferguson.
ADVISERS	R.M. Hope, Director of Regeneration and Mrs H. Wilson, Committee Administrator.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd November 2004 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

328. BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN CENTRE URBAN RENAISSANCE MASTER PLAN

Members received an update on the progress of the design based master planning exercise which Red Box Design Group had carried out on behalf of the Council in relation to the Bishop Auckland Town Centre.

Councillor Laurie believed the plan was very exciting and attractive with an interesting mixture of practical and ambitious ideas.

The Leader of the Council was pleased the plan was going ahead, but believed it was necessary to communicate effectively with the County Council and Ward Members regarding the proposals of traffic management. In response the Director advised that, the County Council were on the working group and mechanisms had already been put into place to ensure ideas were deliverable.

Councillor Foote Wood together with Councillor Stonehouse were of the opinion that when consulting the public it was necessary for the plan to be in plain English.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that in order that a public consultation exercise be carried out, the principles of the proposals outlined in the draft Master Plan, be endorsed;
 2. that at the Council Meeting on 16th February 2005 a full presentation of the proposals be received.

329. ELDON LAND HOUSING RENEWAL AREA: COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT THE HOLLOW

Members considered the initiation of compulsory purchase proceedings for land at The Hollow, Eldon Lane. They were reminded that significant interest had been apparent amongst private sector developers to redevelop the land, however, due to several plots never being registered with Land Registry potential purchasers had been deterred by a lack of certainty over ownership.

In response to Councillor Foote Wood the Director advised that finance would be available should any owner appear after the compulsory purchase had been finalised.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that use of compulsory purchase powers in respect of land at The Hollow, be approved;
 2. that in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services the Director of Regeneration prepare an order forthwith.

330. REGENERATION DEPARTMENT BALANCED SCORECARD

Consideration was given to the development and implementation of the regeneration service balanced scorecard.

The Director advised that the full use of capital allocation should have read £200,000 and not as stated, the necessary amendment was **AGREED**.

- RESOLVED**
1. that progress made against the Balanced Scorecard system within the Regeneration Service be endorsed;
 2. that six monthly reports on the subject be received.

331. 'VIEW: SHAPING THE NORTH EAST' THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE NORTH EAST: CONSULTATION DRAFT; NOVEMBER 2004

Members considered the consultation draft of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to determine the response to the consultation request.

The Leader of the Council expressed concern regarding the housing allocation put forward by the RSS, especially as one of the Councils objectives was to help create a balanced, vibrant and growing population across the whole of Wear Valley. The Director conveyed the apprehension from all the districts in the County regarding the projection of decrease in population.

Councillor Stonehouse believed it was necessary that all of the County Durham Districts worked together to ensure that the RSS recognised

that it was not acceptable to project a negative view of the prospect for growth.

Members expressed extreme concern over the role of the conurbations and it was AGREED that recommendation 2 be amended accordingly. In respect of the Eastgate project members welcomed any support together with sending a letter to the local MP's regarding their concerns.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that the report be approved;
 2. that the Director of Regeneration respond to the Regional Spatial Strategy consultation emphasising the points made as follows
 - express extreme concern over the role of the conurbations;
 - Formal objection to the housing allocations which will result in a drop in population in Co. Durham of some 3,200;
 - Objection to the emphasis on the conurbations at the expense of Co. Durham and War Valley in particular;
 - Objection to the proposed allocation of housing for Wear Valley as a suppression of the housing market, and rates of builds as a hindrance to the ability of the council and LSP to achieve sustainable communities through regeneration;
 - Emphasis on the need for positive support for key towns like Bishop Auckland and Crook as integral components of the city-regions, serving part of the latter and the rural fringe;
 - The issue of the de-allocation of industrial land is premature and in any event should be dealt with at a local level;
 - Welcome any support for the Eastgate Project;
 - The need for more attention to be given to rural issues;
 - East-West connectivity across the region needs more emphasis.

332. CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a review of the Authority's existing Contaminated Land Strategy.

Members were reminded that the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA placed a statutory duty upon local authorities to produce, consult and publish a Contaminated Land Strategy.

RESOLVED

1. that in order to comply with Part IIA of the Environment Protection Act 1990 the points being addressed under review and the existing Contaminated Land Strategy be updated and agreed;
2. that the remit of the Environment/LA21 Officer in working towards achieving the aims and objectives be noted.
3. that once the mapping problems have been resolved a further report on progress of the implementation of the Contaminated Land Strategy be received.

333. ELDON LANE HOUSING RENEWAL AREA: FUTURE WORK

Consideration was given to proposals regarding future work within the Eldon Lane Housing Renewal Area. Members were reminded that Accent Regeneration had been appointed to undertake survey work and act in an advisory capacity regarding future improvements to be undertaken in Eldon Lane.

In response to Councillor Foote Wood the Director confirmed there would not be any demolitions in Randolph Street and that a copy of the plans would be made available.

RECOMMENDED

1. that the overall approach be endorsed;
2. that a facelift scheme for Randolph Street, as detailed in the report, be carried out;
3. that in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules, competitive tenders be invited;
4. that the Director of Regeneration responds to the Mid Term Review of the Renewal Area and report back to the Regeneration Committee when finalised.

334. EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE

Members were advised of the current position in relation to the future of Single Regeneration Budget, European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and other external funding / initiatives and the potential impact upon regeneration activity in Wear Valley over the next 2 years.

In response to Councillor Foote Wood the Director advised that in future reports the Dene Valley Ward would be referred to as such and not the Coundon Grange Ward.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that the content of the report be noted;
 2. that the approach adopted by the Department be endorsed and that when the situation is clarified further updates be received.

335. EASTGATE CEMENT WORKS – REDEVELOPMENT

Members were advised of the progress made regarding the redevelopment of the Lafarge Cement UK Eastgate site and geothermal drilling contract.

In response to Councillor Hayton the Director advised that any housing regeneration which could arise from the development of the site may require an exemption from the Regional Spatial Strategy.

RECOMMENDED that the progress made to date be endorsed and that further reports be received on the redevelopment in due course.

336. NORTH PENNINES AONB: INSURANCE FOR PARTNERSHIP/ STAFF UNIT

Members were advised of the outcome of discussions regarding the proposed course of action to resolve insurance problems.

RECOMMENDED

1. that the report be approved;
2. that to meet insurance obligations the proposal be accepted.

337. DURHAM DALES HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

Members considered proposals regarding a lease agreement for a property in Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland from which the Home Improvement Agency could deliver its service.

RECOMMENDED that the lease be signed and that once incorporated it be assigned to the Home Improvement Agency.

338. “ELFINWOOD” – HIGH WEST ROAD, CROOK PROSECUTION FOR NON COMPLIANCE WITH ENFORCEMENT NOTICES

Members were advised of the successful prosecution for non compliance with enforcement notices.

RECOMMENDED that the decision in relation to the prosecution be noted for future reference.

339. POLICY FOR DEALING WITH AMENDMENTS TO APPROVED PLANS

Members considered a policy for dealing with amendments to approved plans.

Councillor Foote Wood moved the following amendment to the category 1 Amendment, "That a new application be required". This was seconded Councillor Grogan.

RECOMMENDED 1. That the following policy for dealing with amendments to approved plans be adopted;

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| Category 1 Amendments | That a new application be required; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where the changes raise new issues or affect the conditions of the permission.• Have a material effect on the surrounding area (ie larger built area or volume (except for cases referred to in Category 2), windows or doors in different positions)• Relate to an essential feature of the site.• Where there have been previous objections. |
| Category 2 Amendments | These can be approved by letter, referencing the approved plan, under the scheme of delegation; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where the changes have a lesser or nil effect.• Where an increase in area or volume of up to 5% is proposed and the site is isolated or the increase would have no adverse effect on neighbouring occupiers. |

RESOLVED that under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraphs 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

340. CAR PARKING IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Members considered the intended car parking improvement works in Bishop Auckland.

RECOMMENDED 1. that the remaining amount as stated in the report of the Car Parking Improvement Budget for 2004/05 be used to undertake the refurbishment of the Victoria Avenue car park;

2. that in accordance with Standing Orders competitive tenders be invited.

The meeting concluded at 8.00pm

CHAIR