

Item no.



District of **easington.**

Report to: Executive
Date: 15 January 2008
Report of: Executive Member for Regeneration
Subject: Easington Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report
Ward: All

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the Easington Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report for 2006/7.

2. Consultation

2.1 The Management Team have been consulted .

3. Background

3.2 Under the terms of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to submit a Monitoring Report annually to the Secretary of State before the end of December each year. The report is required to assess the implementation and the effects of planning policies, and to report on progress in meeting the programme of development plan preparation in the Local Development Scheme.

4. Position Statement and Option Appraisal

4.1 The Annual Monitoring Report is attached in Appendix 1. Part 1 looks at social, economic and environmental trends in the District and highlights studies being undertaken with regard to housing, derelict land/buildings, green space, wind energy generation and industrial land. This section helps define the policy objectives which the Local Development Framework will need to address.

4.2 Key issues and findings arising from Part 1 include:

- mid year estimates indicate population growth in the District; after decades of population decline, the District has seen population growth for three successive years. This needs to be encouraged through appropriate policy approaches.
- over 600 houses constructed this year; house building was exceptionally high and this is the fourth successive annual increase. House building has been much greater than housing targets in the Governments Proposed Changes to the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy, which is still being reviewed. The North East Assembly (NEA) has recently made representations on the housing figures in this Strategy and are seeking significantly higher housing figures for the Region and the District than are currently included. This would enable the Council to progress with much needed housing regeneration.
- even the cheapest houses in the District continue to become less affordable; social housing as a proportion of the total housing stock has also declined over the last three years. Meanwhile, waiting lists have risen. As an urgent response to this affordability problem the Council adopted an Affordable

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Housing Policy Statement requiring developers to provide 20% affordable Housing in new schemes over 15 houses.

- the District retains a deliverable 5-year housing land supply as required under the terms of Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing (PPS3);
- 88% of new housing has been delivered on previously developed sites, exceeding the regional target for 60% by 2008 and 65% by 2016;
- planning permission has been granted for industrial and employment development on seventeen hectares of employment land; around ten hectares of this was on the former Enterprise Zone at Dawdon where Enterprise Zone grants and incentives are still available. Planning permission for other employment development has been granted on around seven hectares of employment land at Peterlee North West, Seaham Grange, Seaview and Fox Cover. Only a limited amount of employment land remains available in the District in the short term but the new Hawthorn site will become available shortly.
- Conservation Area Appraisals have resulted in boundary extensions to the designated areas at Castle Eden and Seaham.

- 4.3 Since representations on housing provision were made by the North East Assembly, the Government has broadened its housing growth agenda with the publication of the Housing Green Paper 'Homes for the future - more affordable, more sustainable'. Northern authorities have been encouraged to bid to become 'growth points' where finance would be available for infrastructure provision to enable more housing to be delivered quickly. A joint bid with Sedgefield and Wear Valley based on the East Durham Coalfield has been submitted. This would include more houses than currently agreed with the NEA.
- 4.4 The new PPS 3 on housing now requires Local Development Frameworks to be supported by Strategic Housing Market Assessments and by Strategic Land Availability Assessments. Strategic Housing Market Assessments are to provide evidence on the amount of housing needed, both private and affordable, along with the type and size of houses required. A joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment is currently being prepared for the sub region of County Durham and will be completed early next year.
- 4.5 The Strategic Land Availability Assessment must identify potential sites available for housing, along with constraints that may limit their deliverability. An approach is currently being developed that will enable this to be achieved in a consistent way across the sub Region by next March. The findings of these assessments will support policy development in the Council's Local Development Framework.
- 4.6 An Employment Land Review is currently being prepared as evidence base to support employment policies in the LDF. It will review demand and supply of employment land across the District to inform policy decisions and future land allocations.
- 4.7 Wind Energy Schemes are presenting policy issues. County Durham has taken a very positive approach to wind energy development and has already exceeded its target for renewable energy generation to 2010, as defined in the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy. However, the number of schemes coming forward in East Durham is now raising serious concerns about landscape capacity and cumulative impact. A study has been commissioned to consider this matter. Findings will be incorporated into the Local Development Framework.
- 4.8 Part two of the Annual Monitoring Report highlights that the Council has missed its objective of publishing its Core Strategy and Development Control Document in

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September 2007. This has been delayed due to the need to adapt the document to a rapidly changing government agenda.

- 4.9 The policies in Easington District Local Plan lapsed on the 27th September 2007 but the Council received Direction from the Secretary of State that a list of policies agreed by the Executive in January 2007 could be 'saved' until the new LDF is in place. The Saved Policy Schedule was confirmed by District of Easington Council in November 2007 and is included in Appendix 5 of the monitoring report.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial

There are no financial implications.

5.2 Legal

There are no legal implications.

5.3 Policy

The outcome of this report will inform the development of future planning policy

5.4 Risk

As this is a technical report there are no risks.

5.5 Communications

The Annual Monitoring Report will be submitted to the Secretary of State and published on the Council's website.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities

The proposals contained in the report will contribute towards Corporate objectives for employment, decent homes, clean and tidy communities, and better transport.

6.2 Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications

6.3 E-Government

There are no e-government implications

6.4 Procurement

There are no procurement implications

6.5 Service Plan and other issues

There are no further issues arising from the matters in this Report.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Easington Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2006/07 be confirmed as submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

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Background Papers/Documents referred to

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
Green Paper, Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable (July 2007)
Easington District Local Plan 2001
Easington Local Development Scheme, March 2007
Draft Regional Spatial Strategy
Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing