

Item 8

REPORT TO CABINET

28 February 2008

REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE & ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Portfolios: Planning and Development & Learning and Employment

DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 4: PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The draft Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development (draft PPS4) was published in December 2007. This document has been published in response to the recommendations put forward in the Barker Review. Once finalised, PPS4 will replace Planning Policy Guidance Note 4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms (1992), Paragraph 53, 54 and Annex D of Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (2001) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 8: Telecommunications (2001) except the appendix and annexes.
- 1.2 The draft PPS4 encourages positive and proactive plan making to be developed from a strong and robust evidence base. However, it is also emphasised that policies need to be flexible in order for local planning authorities and regional planning bodies to respond to changing market conditions.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Cabinet examines and endorses the response to Draft PPS4.

3 DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 4

Overview

- 3.1 The Government's key policy outcomes as set out in draft PPS4 are to:
 - Raise productivity of the UK economy;
 - Maximise job opportunities;
 - Improve economic performance of the Regions;
 - Deliver sustainable development; and,
 - Promote regeneration and tackle deprivation.
- 3.2 Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities are expected to plan to encourage economic growth. Policies are to be flexible enough to respond to globalisation and technological advances. Draft PPS4 stresses that the planning system needs to deliver economic development, whilst being sensitive to the challenges of climate change.

- 3.3 Draft PPS4 covers a much more broad view of economic development than existing PPG4. For instance, housing, energy and tourism development sit alongside traditional forms of economic development, such as office and business uses. Once finalised, it is expected that PPS4 will be taken into account together with the relevant topic Planning Policy Statement e.g. PPS4 should be read alongside PPS3: Housing with regard to housing and PPS6: Planning for Town Centres with regard to retail.

Sustainable Development

- 3.4 Together with economic development, draft PPS4 seeks for shared visions that will help deliver homes, jobs and infrastructure as well as social and environmental improvements in line with the Government's Place Shaping Agenda. This is considered to be key in the promotion of opportunities for regenerating deprived areas that have suffered from economic restructuring (such as the former Durham coalfield).

It is recommended that Sedgefield Borough Council:

- **Welcome the balance between economic, social and environmental considerations including economic restructuring opportunities to help deliver sustainable development in deprived areas.**

Evidence Base

- 3.5 In order to plan positively and respond to the needs of businesses there is a strong emphasis on the necessity of a robust and reliable evidence base both for the formulation of planning policy and for development control decisions. Together with Employment Land Reviews, land use reviews are introduced and should be undertaken across established Housing Market Areas. The need to undertake a land use review will require significant staff resources and will be an issue that will need to be addressed in the formulation of the new Authority.

It is recommended that Sedgefield Borough Council:

- **Support the emphasis for a robust and reliable evidence base. A robust and reliable evidence base will help to ensure that both development control decisions and the formulation of new criteria based planning policies will help to deliver sustainable economic development across the Borough. However, more detailed information is required on the content of land use reviews and simplified planning zones.**

B1 Offices

- 3.6 Offices falling within B1 of the Use Class Order are to be encouraged in town centre or edge of town centre locations in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres (PPS6). However, there is also a recognition that market demand may influence office location. The encouragement of B1 office development within town centres or on the edge of town centre may help to increase footfall into the town centre thus improving the viability and vitality of the town centre.

It is recommended that Sedgefield Borough Council:

- **Supports the preference of sites in or on the edge of town centres. More guidance is required as to whether planning applications for B1 offices are to be subject to the sequential test as required by PPS6.**

Rural Areas

- 3.7 With regard to rural areas, it is suggested that accessibility is a key consideration for economic development although a site may be acceptable for economic development without being publicly accessible. This stance needs to be broadened in line with Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS7), to acknowledge that in such instances new development is supported through improvements to public transport, cycling and walking in partnership with the developer. This strengthening of the current text will ensure that the challenges of climate change are considered together with any other social and environmental impacts.

It is recommended that Sedgefield Borough Council:

- **Seeks for the strengthening of the proposed approach towards economic development in rural areas to ensure that where sites are not publicly accessible, measures are sought to improve the accessibility of a site.**

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no resource implications associated with this report.

5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 The consultation period for Draft Planning Policy Statement 4 closes on 17 March 2008.

6 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Links to Corporate Objectives / Values

The review of PPS 4 will have an impact upon how the Council meets the Aims, Objectives and Key Activities identified in the Corporate Plan 2007-2010.

6.1 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6.2 Risk Management

The revision to PPS 4 will have implications upon the delivery of Sustainable Economic Development for both the Borough Council and the new authority. In order to ensure there is a sound evidence base for the preparation of Local Development Documents and for Development Control Decisions, there will be a further requirement to undertake Land Use Reviews.

6.3 Health and Safety Implications

No additional implications have been identified.

6.4 Sustainability

Draft PPS4 has a broader focus to ensure economic development is sustainable and is sensitive to the challenges of climate change.

6.5 Equality and Diversity

No additional implications have been identified.

6.6 Social Inclusion

No additional implications have been identified.

6.7 Procurement

There are no procurement issues.

7 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None

8 LIST OF APPENDICES

None

Contact Officers: Chris Myers & Richard Horniman

Telephone No: (01388) 816166 ext **4328 & 7756**

Email Address: cmyers@sedgefield.gov.uk & rhorniman@sedgefield.gov.uk

Ward(s)

All

Key Decision Validation: This is not a Key Decision as the report relates to a consultation document

Background Papers

HM Government, Draft Planning Policy Statement 4 "Sustainable Economic Development", December 2007

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>