

## **Report from the Planning Committee**

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**Summary:** The Planning Committee met on 21<sup>st</sup> February. The following items were discussed: updates for the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide review and the Chilterns Roofing Materials Technical Note; the Annual Planning Forum; the AONB Management Plan review; responses to DCLG consultations on Draft PPS 'Planning and Climate Change' and 'Building a Greener Future'; response to the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the East of England Plan; Development Plans responses, and an update on responses to planning applications.

**Purpose of Report:** To bring to the attention of the Board the items considered by the Planning Committee and decisions taken under delegated powers.

### **Updates – Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and Chilterns Roofing Materials Technical Note**

1. The issue of how planning authorities can adopt the Guide and Technical Notes as Supplementary Planning Documents had not been resolved and advice has been sought from the Government Offices, the Regional Assemblies, Planning Inspectorate and DCLG. The Roofing Note was being printed and would be launched in Chesham and at Matthews' Brickyard in Bellingdon on 29 March 2007.

### **Annual Planning Forum**

2. It was resolved that the Forum should be cancelled due to declining attendance and other methods of involving council officers should be investigated. The Planning Officer continued to give lunchtime seminars to officers at Local Authorities and talks to Council Committees as well as Parish Councils and other groups.

### **AONB Management Plan Review**

3. The review of the AONB Management Plan was discussed and will feature as a standing item on the Planning Committee's agenda for the time being. There was discussion about indicators and the need for these to be properly addressed so that these could be fed into the Local Development Frameworks (LDF) which Local Authorities are preparing. The Management Plan review will need direct input from the local authority planning officers who are being advised of the current review programme.

## **DCLG Consultations – Draft PPS ‘Planning and Climate Change’ and ‘Building a Greener Future – Towards Zero Carbon Development’**

4. Two DCLG consultations were discussed – the supplement to PPS1 dealing with Planning and Climate Change and the ‘Building a Greener Future – Towards Zero Carbon Development’ document. Both of these have positive messages about the need to provide more forms of renewable energy generation within major developments and greater use of energy saving technologies. However, the Committee considered that the need for renewable energy generation should be met from all developments, not just large ones, and much greater consideration needs to be given to the energy efficiency of, and water usage within, the existing building stock. Greater use should be made of more sustainable building materials which will lead to economies of scale. The Government is proposing that the Sustainable Homes Code will become mandatory in the future which is supported.

## **Secretary of State’s proposed changes to the East of England Plan**

5. The Secretary of State’s proposed changes to the East of England Plan were also subject to discussion. The two main issues that were commented on relate to: the need for pragmatism with regard to car parking provision associated with new developments in rural areas that are poorly served by public transport (i.e. more parking spaces are needed to avoid the street being clogged by parked cars), and the need to recognise the damaging effects of using certain building materials (concrete for example) and the environmental effects of the embodied energy of new buildings. Greater recognition should also be given to the proximity of the AONB in connection with proposed growth at Hemel Hempstead.

## **Development Plans Responses**

6. All responses had been prepared and sent under delegated powers.

## **Wycombe DC Pictsmede Non Statutory Brief for redevelopment**

7. The site of 5.7 ha. is situated adjacent to Picts Lane and the Railway Station at Princes Risborough and is expected to accommodate at least 75 houses and business units. It is mostly outside, but immediately adjacent to, the AONB. The key issues that need to be addressed are: the site’s proximity to, and partial inclusion within, the Chilterns AONB; the likely effects of development in the immediate locality; design and materials; reference to the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide; very careful consideration of high density development (particularly in connection with height and bulk), and decking of the car park would need careful consideration.

## **Dacorum BC LDF Growth at Hemel Hempstead Issues and Options**

8. As part of the production of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy significant additional growth of several thousand houses at Hemel Hempstead and St. Albans has been proposed in the Secretary of State’s Proposed

Changes (see above). An Issues and Options paper was produced that details various possible sites for growth around Hemel Hempstead.

9. The AONB boundary is some distance away from the potential locations and if they were to be implemented then there would probably be limited visual impacts on the AONB. The edges of two sites would have to be subject to very careful treatment to ensure that the wider landscape is not affected.

#### Dacorum BC Local Development Scheme 2007/08 to 2009/10

10. The Board supported the Council's approach in seeking to retain (save) all planning policies beyond three years if necessary and in seeking to retain supplementary planning guidance.
11. The Chilterns Buildings Design Guide is detailed as 'Saved Supplementary Guidance' and is given a medium priority for review – this, and reference to the ongoing review, was supported by the Board. The recently produced Roofing Materials supplementary technical note should also be included in the list of documents produced by the Board.
12. The Board has sought inclusion of a policy for the AONB within the Core Strategy, and the Development Control DPD if appropriate. Sustainability issues should also be addressed in the Core Strategy.

#### Dacorum BC Site Allocations DPD Issues and Options

13. Consultees were asked if any change was required to the existing boundary of Aldbury. The Board would only favour a change if this was to allow for small-scale development that would meet identified local housing needs, and which was designed to the very highest standard.
14. The Board welcomed the fact that the Council would look to discount new sites put forward for development if they would have a detrimental impact on the Chilterns AONB and the approach to prioritising new sites was supported.
15. Gypsy and traveller sites were also considered. Though there was mention of constraints such as Green Belt, the Board could find no mention of the Chilterns AONB and this omission should be addressed. The Board agreed that new sites should have good access to local services and facilities, should avoid local concentrations and should be in previously developed land in preference to greenfield sites.
16. The Miswell Lane employment area at Tring was included in the consultation. This is in very close proximity to the Chilterns AONB and is already considered to have a detrimental impact on the setting of the AONB. The Board would only favour retention of the site at its current extent for employment purposes or its re-designation as a housing site.
17. A possible extension to Tring Station car park was suggested. The Board would not favour this. Decking of the current car park would probably be

appropriate but to extend the car park into the area that had previously been used on a temporary basis would be objected to.

18. The Board considered that the issue of design should be extended to cover the whole Borough (not just concentrate on urban areas) because development still takes place in the rural areas.
19. Further detail on the development plans responses can be found in the Committee report which is available on the AONB website. See the following link:

[http://www.chilternsaonb.org/downloads/board\\_meetings/Planning\\_agenda\\_papers\\_210207.pdf](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/downloads/board_meetings/Planning_agenda_papers_210207.pdf)

### **Planning applications update**

20. In the year from 1 April 2006, the Board has been consulted on 163 applications, and has made formal representations on 25. Of these applications 22 have been determined, with 18 being decided in line with the Board's comments (82%). The situation with regard to the proportion of applications determined in line with the Board's comments is being monitored and will be reported on at a later date.

### **Recommendation**

1. **The Board notes the report.**