

## **SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Report of:** Joint Policy Unit Manager

**To:** Joint Committee – 13 July 2012

**(Author:** Gary Alexander, Joint Policy Unit Manager)

**Subject:** Draft Revised Local Development Scheme for South East Lincolnshire

**Purpose:** To seek approval for a revised Local Development Scheme for South East Lincolnshire

### **Recommendations:**

- a) That members consider the contents of this report and the attached Draft Local Development Scheme (Draft LDS);
- b) That the Draft LDS, with or without revisions, be approved; and
- c) That the Draft LDS take effect from 31st July 2012.

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Members will recall that, at its meeting on 9th September 2011, the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (the Joint Committee) resolved to approve and submit its 'local development scheme' to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for consideration no later than 30th September 2011. Following due process this document came into effect on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

1.2 Officers have now prepared a draft revised LDS, attached as Appendix 1, for Members' consideration.

### **2.0 THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

2.1 Section 15 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended, requires that every local planning authority should prepare and maintain a scheme to be known as its local development scheme (LDS). In the case of the Joint Committee, the purpose of the LDS is to provide a public statement of its programme for the production of local development documents that will comprise its South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2.2 The LDS is basically a project plan and will be a living document that can be updated and amended as and when appropriate. The LDS for South East Lincolnshire covers planned work commencing in January of this year and running through to the first half of 2016 and sets out details of the documents whose preparation will be given priority during this period.

2.3 Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, there are new arrangements in place to govern the preparation of LDSs: in particular, all new and revised LDSs relating to areas outside London no longer need to be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration.

### 3.0 THE NEED FOR A REVISED LDS

3.1 Following a reappraisal of the plan-preparation process relating to the **Strategy and Policies** development plan document (DPD), officers consider that the inclusion of a more definitive 'Preferred Options' stage will serve to increase the robustness of the emerging DPD's proposals that will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration and, as a result, raise the probability of the document being declared 'sound'. Significantly, undertaking this stage permits earlier involvement by the public at large in discussion on emerging proposals. However, by 'front-loading' the process, there are clear opportunities to accelerate later stages of plan preparation and enable documents to be adopted on a timeline similar to the 2011 LDS.

3.2 In respect of the current work on the Strategy and Policies DPD, the LDS proposes the completion of the Preferred Options version of the document by the end of 2012 and despatch of the 'Submission' version to the Secretary of State for independent examination by the end of 2013. Subject to favourable circumstances, over which both the Joint Committee and the Joint Policy Unit have no control, it is hoped to adopt the DPD in the summer of 2014.

### 4.0 VIEWS OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND STRATEGY FOR BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, THE PLANNING MANAGER FOR BRECKLAND COUNCIL AND SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL, AND OTHER CONSULTEES

4.1 The Planning Manager, Breckland and South Holland District Councils has commented:

'The LDS presented to this Committee provides a robust project plan for Local Plan work. Importantly it reflects the NPPF, the new Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 and the current work programme agreed with the Local Plan Steering Group. The priority on delivering the Strategy and Policies document is important for South Holland and will enable a controlled transition from the saved policies in the South Holland Local Plan (pages 10-11 of Appendix 1) to a NPPF compliant Local Plan. The key milestones for the Strategy and Policies document should be supported and will allow for two key opportunities for meaningful participation. The approach of preparing a comprehensive 'preferred options' document by the end of 2012 will have

dividends by enabling the latter stages of plan production to be accelerated. Members should note that there are risks to the Local Plan timescales that are beyond the control of the Local Authorities. Principally, these risks relate to the volume and content of responses received at the consultation stages but to some extent because the Strategy is not identifying specific development sites the probability of this risk is low. The Committee also needs to consider that the Project Plan for the Joint Committee does not include milestones for CIL although the levy is addressed in paragraphs 5.5 and 5.6 of Appendix 1. A decision on CIL will need to be taken by Members in due course given the encouragement in the NPPF that CIL is prepared concurrently with the strategy. The evidence for CIL and initial consultation stages could be prepared under the umbrella of the Joint Committee but it will be for individual authorities to adopt their own charging schedule. Additionally, Members need to be aware that as well as the documents identified in the LDS, South Holland does have a duty, under the Localism Act 2011, to facilitate and support the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and the likely impact on resources is difficult to predict but could have an impact on the project plan.'

- 4.2 The Head of Planning and Strategy for Boston Borough Council has commented:

'The LDS is an important project plan for the delivery of the Local Plan. We need to get on with plan preparation as quickly as possible and to embrace the principles of the new NPPF. It is vital that the timetable is not permitted to slip, but at the same time it must be realised that the plan must be sound, robust and firmly based on evidence and be deliverable. Given the current financial climate and the prospects over the next several years it must also be acutely realistic in what it can achieve. The government places planning at the heart of its Localism Act and as a significant lynch pin in unlocking development and enabling communities and businesses to achieve their aspirations. We must ensure that the LDS is itself realistic and that all the appropriate resources are available to enable timescales to be met and a sound plan established.'

- 4.3 The Monitoring Officer for Breckland Council and South Holland District Council has been consulted and has offered no views.
- 4.4 The Monitoring Officer for Boston Borough Council has been consulted and has offered no views.
- 4.5 The s151 Officer for Breckland Council and South Holland District Council has been consulted and has offered no views.
- 4.6 The s151 Officer for Boston Borough Council has been consulted and has offered no views.
- 4.7 The Lincolnshire County Council Strategic Planning Manager, Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer have been consulted and have offered no views.

## 5.0 OPTIONS

5.1 Members can accept the contents of the Draft LDS or request amendments to it.

## 6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 There is a current statutory requirement for the Joint Committee to revise its scheme at such time as it considers appropriate.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 **Risk:** There are no direct risks arising from the recommendations to this report.

7.2 **Financial:** There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations to this report.

7.3 **Legal:** See para 6.1

7.4 **Equality and Diversity:** There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from the recommendations to this report. However, it is a requirement of the LDS, and indeed all Local Plan documents, that equality and diversity issues are fully considered and taken on board. The SCI ensures that all Local Plan documents involve widespread consultation and the full participation of residents and businesses within both Boston Borough and South Holland District. The views, needs and aspirations of each district's diverse population will in this manner be reflected in subsequent plans and policies aimed at meeting the various needs of all societal groupings.

## 8.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

8.1 The implications of the proposed new Local Plan documents affect all wards/communities.

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Background papers - None

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### Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix – Draft Revised Local Development Scheme