



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOODS COMMISSION
27 JULY 2010

Report of the Strategic Director of
Neighbourhoods

ITEM 9

Regional and Local Planning – Changes implemented and proposed by Central Government

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To note the report and the emerging implications for local planning.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Government has made a number of important changes to the planning system and indicated its intention to make further changes based on the principles of the Conservative's Green Paper 'Open Source Planning'. This report highlights the main changes to date and the emerging implications for the Council's local planning.
- 2.2 On 6 July, Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, revoked all Regional Strategies, including the East Midlands Regional Plan. In the longer term, the legal basis for Regional Strategies will be abolished through the Decentralisation and Localism Bill. The Regional Plan provided 2026 housing growth targets for each district council and a strong steer as to where this growth should be accommodated. In the case of the Derby Housing Market Area it specified that significant growth should be provided in the form of extensions to the Derby urban area, including substantial areas beyond the city boundary, mainly in South Derbyshire
- 2.3 The Government has published a guidance note on how to proceed following revocation, stressing the importance of Local Authorities continuing to deliver Local Development Framework (LDF) plans. The guidance confirms that it is now the responsibility of Local Authorities to determine the right level of housing provision for their area through their LDF. It is up to individual Local Authorities to decide whether to retain the housing targets previously set out in the Regional Plan or review these.
- 2.4 The abolition of the RSS provides an opportunity for local authorities and their communities to formulate more locally based strategies for future development in their areas. The Government has intentions to reform the local plan making system, but meanwhile this opportunity must be realised through the existing arrangements, especially Core Strategies. These plans will also provide the basis to take forward any aspects of the Regional Plan policies that we may not want to lose, for instance preserving the Nottingham-Derby Green Belt.

- 2.5 It will therefore be a key task for the Core Strategy to reassess and consult on options for the overall amount of housing required for Derby and the best way this can be delivered. This means that we will need to take a step back from the Core Strategy Options consulted on earlier this year before moving forward with a preferred strategy. As many of the issues extend beyond the City boundary, much of this work will be best done in partnership with our local authority neighbours. The Derby HMA Joint Advisory Board recently reaffirmed its commitment to continued joint working and to the coordination and alignment of our respective core strategies.
- 2.6 The Government has confirmed that encouraging and increasing housing delivery will remain a national goal and the requirement to maintain a 5 and 15 year housing land supply remains. Locally derived housing targets will therefore have to take account of evidence of housing need and be based on a credible methodology. We will need to have regard to population projections, household formation rates and economic trends, as well as the availability of suitable land and the capacity of the city to accommodate new housing.
- 2.7 Official forecasts of population and housing needs projections point to substantial growth. The forecasts are mainly being driven by international and internal immigration trends established prior to the recession, increased birth rates, more one-person households and people living longer.
- 2.8 In the light of the probable abolition of regional development agencies, local authorities and business leaders have been asked by Government to consider how they might work together as Local Enterprise Partnerships. These bodies would have an economic development focus, but it has been suggested that they may also have an interest in sub-regional housing, planning and transport issues. More detailed Government proposals are expected to be published soon.
- 2.9 On 9 June 2010 the Government issued a revised version of Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing. This introduced two changes. Firstly, domestic gardens have been reclassified as greenfield land, with the intention of making it easier for local authorities to resist unwanted 'garden grabbing'. Secondly, the national minimum housing density policy (30/hectare) has been removed. This does not however affect the minimum density policy in our current Local Plan.
- 2.10 Finally Government has also indicated its intention to develop a new national policy framework, to be in place by April 2011. These will replace the existing PPS's and PPG's. It has also confirmed its intention to abolish the Infrastructure Planning Commission and replace it with a new infrastructure planning unit within the Planning Inspectorate.

For more information contact:

Name Andrew Waterhouse 01332 255023

Background papers:

e-mail andrew.waterhouse@derby.gov.uk

Revocation of Regional Strategies – letter from CLG to Local Planning Authorities in England 6 July 2010

List of appendices:

Open Source Planning Green paper No. 14

Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 None arising from this report, although the longer term implications of the localism agenda for plan making needs to be considered once more is known about the Government's proposals.

Legal

- 2.1 Local Authorities need to be aware that they can no longer rely on policies established through the Regional Plan. Councils will need to exercise their new responsibilities reasonably and ensure they are not open to legal challenge.

Personnel

- 3.1 None arising from this report.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 A more locally based plan making system will enable the Council to consider impact on all its communities more closely.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 5.1 Developing integrated local land use and transport strategies is a corporate objective (CG2). The need to develop local housing targets as a result of the Regional Plan's revocation will however delay the timetable for the Core Strategy's preparation.