

Update on the Borough of St Edmundsbury's Core Strategy

Agenda Item 15

Portfolio Area: Cllr Harley Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Culture
Report Presented by Emma Boaler Planning Policy Officer

Background Papers:

- Borough of St Edmundsbury Core Strategy
- Haverhill Transport Assessment
- LDF Panel Minutes 19th September 2009

Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report.

Options: To note the information update

Risks: None

Executive Summary

Since Members of the LDF Panel agreed to object to the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy, further evidence has been submitted which addresses the concerns of this Council. This further evidence does not demonstrate a need for a relief road to the north-east of Haverhill, between the A143 and the A1017. Officers have, (with the approval of Cllrs Harley and Scattergood), submitted a further statement to the Planning Inspector, who is examining the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy, stating that if references to the relief road are removed, Braintree District Council will withdraw its objection.

Decision

Members are asked to note the further developments relating to the Borough of St Edmundsbury Core Strategy.

1. On the 30th September 2009, the LDF Panel agreed to submit an objection to the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy submission document. The document included a proposal for a growth location of 2,500 dwellings and associated community facilities to the north-east of Haverhill and included in policy CS12 Haverhill Growth Locations, a bullet point which stated that the development would *“Deliver a north-east relief road for Haverhill between the A143 and the A1017 and the local distributor road network”*.

2. The objection was on two issues:-

- St Edmundsbury had not completed a transport assessment, to show whether the proposed growth could be accommodated without adverse transport impacts on surrounding areas, including Sturmer.
- There was no evidence of the need for the proposed relief road, which was likely to be located partly within Braintree District.

3. The St Edmundsbury Core Strategy was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in January 2010, with the public hearing sessions scheduled for the end of April. Braintree District Council had been requested by the Inspector to appear at the hearing to discuss the objection.

4. On the 4th March, officers received additional evidence from St Edmundsbury in the form of a Haverhill Transport Assessment, which concludes that the transport associated with this development could be accommodated on the road network and that there was no requirement for a north-east relief road. Instead, a spine road linked to Coupals Road (north of the Haverhill golf course) is being suggested.

5. A copy of the Transport Assessment was sent to Essex County Council. Highways officers concluded that it addressed Braintree District Council's major concerns about the proposal being satisfactorily accommodated on the road network and that it did not support the need for the a relief road between the A143 and A1017. However, they concluded that there were still issues to be resolved regarding the site and its impact on Sturmer and highlighted the need for ECC and BDC to be involved in further stages of the development e.g. the development of an Area Action Plan/Master Plan.

6. An opportunity for the submission of further statements in the light of this new evidence ended on the 6th April. Braintree officers submitted a further statement, which agreed that the Haverhill Transport Assessment provided evidence that the proposal could be accommodated on the road network and that requested that all reference to the relief road between the A143 and A1017 be deleted by the Inspector, as the evidence did not show the need for it. Providing this was done, BDC were happy to withdraw their objection to the Core Strategy, but wished to be involved in the preparation of further plans relating to this area. This course of action was approved by Councillor Harley and by Councillor Scattergood (as Deputy Chairman of the LDF Panel in the absence of Councillor McCrea).

7. Sturmer Parish Council had also been consulted on this matter by the Borough of St Edmundsbury and has responded that they concur with and welcome the conclusions of the Haverhill Transport Assessment. The Parish have also been kept apprised of the BDC position and planning officers will continue to liaise with them on this matter.

Corporate Implications	
Financial:	No direct impact. Highway infrastructure schemes will be funded by developer contributions, ECC and the Highways Agency.
Legal:	LDF Planning Policy Guidance and Regulations
Equalities & Diversity:	n/a
Customer Impact:	The highway and junction improvements suggested will have an impact on existing residents.

Environment & Climate Change:	All development sites will need to encourage sustainable travel. However there is a recognition that many journeys will continue to be made by private vehicle.			
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Local Committees		Partners	✓
	Public		Staff	✓
Key Decision:	No			
Public/Private Report:	Public			
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