

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 1**

**Held on Tuesday, 5 February 2008 at 10.00 am in  
The Gallery Bar, Watton Sports Centre, Dereham Road, Watton**

**PRESENT**

Mr J.D. Rogers (Chairman)	Mr K. Martin
Mrs M.P. Chapman-Allen	Mrs P.A. Spencer
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mr A.P. Joel (Vice-Chairman)	

**Also Present**

Mr W.P. Borrett	Mr B. Rose
Councillor Claire Bowes	Mrs A.L. Steward
Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris	

**In Attendance**

Mark Broughton	- Scrutiny Officer
Sam Hubbard	- Planning Policy Assistant
Andrea Long	- Environmental Planning Manager
Jamie Smith	- Environmental Planning Assistant
David Spencer	- Principal Planning Policy Officer
Elaine Wilkes	- Senior Committee Officer

**1/08 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2/08 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. R. Childerhouse, Mr. I.A.C. Monson, Mrs. P. Quadling and Mrs. D. Irving.

**3/08 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Mr. J.D. Rogers declared a personal interest in regard to LDF and planning matters relating to Carbrooke as Ward Member and with business interests.

**4/08 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

The following members were present:

Mrs. A.L. Steward – Executive Member (Environmental Planning)  
Development Control Committee members:

- Mr. W. Borrett
- Councillor C. Bowes
- Mr. M. Kiddle-Morris
- Mr. B. Rose

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**5/08 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

The Planning Policy Assistant presented the report, which was submitted for members' information, and explained that the assessment formed part of the evidence base for the Breckland Local Development Framework. The assessment included an audit of all open space provision within Breckland as required by the Government's Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17). A detailed qualitative and quantitative assessment was made on outdoor sports facilities and children's play facilities, and the results of this assessment had helped to formulate local standards for outdoor sports provision and children's play provision. The report also outlined proposed developer contributions and on-site provision for outdoor sport and children's play areas. The assessment was developed with input from the Community Engagement Team and the assessment had provided evidence for the Breckland Play Strategy. The standards proposed in the Open Space Assessment should also help deliver the goals of the Breckland Play Strategy.

Maps illustrating the location and types of outdoor playing space within the District were shown and details of the results of the audit and assessment were explained.

During discussion, the following issues were highlighted:

- The need for provision of multi-sports facilities, such as an athletic track, to serve the towns and villages. It was felt that this would offer more inclusive scope for sports and play provision. In the case of Thetford, Growth Point status offered opportunities to consider the question of providing for a multi-sports facility to serve the surrounding area and this could be factored into the Area Action Plan. There was an indicative response that this would not conflict with the terms of the PFI.
- So far as off-site provision in relation to developments of less than 30 dwellings was concerned, the proposed standards adopted a sequential approach and only where it was not practical to make provision on-site would off-site provision through the use of commuted sums be considered. Provision needed to be agreed at an early stage in the planning process and the LDF sought to address this.
- Provision was generally conditioned through Section 106 Agreements. It should be reasonable to put a covenant in a Section 106 Agreement that outdoor play space was implemented as developments took place. In connection with the issue of Section 106 Agreements, the Council was currently undertaking a review of this process and a visit was to be made to Colchester which was a Beacon Authority on Section 106 and a report back would be made on the findings of this visit.
- Grouping of villages in relation to outdoor play space provision had to have regard to local wishes and accessibility. It was confirmed that the proposal for grouping villages would be subject to consultation with the parishes. The initial groupings took into account issues such as transport links and were centred on those

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villages where development was taking place. The initial groupings had not been centred on the towns.

- Consideration needed to be given to provision for teenage outdoor play space. In this connection, members felt much more could be achieved through use of schools' outdoor facilities; it was recognised, however, that there were health and safety issues from such use that would need to be addressed and the support of the schools themselves for such provision would be needed.
- In relation to community funding bids through Lottery Grant under the Council's Play Strategy, it was noted that details of future funding opportunities were awaited and would be reported when known. It was suggested schemes should reflect Ward areas where the resource of Ward Members could be utilized in helping to define bids.
- There were risks that the financial thresholds for contributions for outdoor space provision on developments in addition to those for education, fire, policy and other infrastructure would affect house prices or lead developers to land-bank and could deter small or single-dwelling developers.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**6/08 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Principal Planning Policy Officer presented the report, which was submitted for members' information, and explained that national and regional planning policy required local planning authorities to undertake comprehensive assessments of the landscape character of their areas.

The report informed members of two studies undertaken that collectively provided a detailed Landscape Character Assessment of the District.

Volume 1 was a District-wide Landscape Character Assessment of the rural landscapes across Breckland.

Volume 2 was a supplementary Settlement Fringe Study which assessed in detail the landscape at the edge of the five towns and 12 candidate Local Service Centre villages.

The two studies formed part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and should be considered as key information for developers and planning officers in terms of the location, scale and design of new developments.

Maps illustrating details of the two studies were shown and details of the findings were explained.

The two studies provided a refined and comprehensive evidence base to support the Core Strategy and policies of the LDF.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**7/08 PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT: PLANNING AND CLIMATE CHANGE - SUPPLEMENT TO PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 1 (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The Environmental Planning Assistant presented the report, which was submitted for members' information and provided details of the key changes and implications for the Council arising from the recently published supplementary Planning Policy Statement on Planning and Climate Change (PPS1). The report outlined the issues of reducing carbon emissions and stabilising climate change and how the spatial planning system could contribute towards those objectives. PPS1 was now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications and the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF).

During discussion, the point was noted that the report described the national policy. The Council's Core Strategy put this into the Breckland context. Therefore, on the question of car use, for example, while the national policy referred to encouraging sustainable modes of transport other than by car, in the Breckland context the Core Strategy identified the reasons and evidence why car use would continue to be a necessary factor of development in the District.

In noting the relevance of Building Regulations to the issue of sustainability, the point was made that the Government was going to have to make changes to Building Regulations to support the measures for reducing carbon dioxide emissions from homes and encouraging sustainable building methods and materials. While a certain amount could be achieved through the planning process in the use of building materials, there were limits as to what could be enforced at the present time. While the LDF policies encouraged developers to take advantage of new technologies, their take-up would ultimately be dependent on the review and tightening of the Building Regulations.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**8/08 WORK PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The future work programme was noted.

A member stated that she understood that discussions were to be recommenced on the possibility of introducing a scheme for yellow school buses, which she felt was something to be welcomed. The Scrutiny Officer was asked to look into the position on this for report back to a future meeting.

**9/08 NEXT MEETING**

The arrangements for the next meeting on 11 March 2008 were noted.

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**Mark  
Broughton**

The meeting closed at 11.35 am

CHAIRMAN