

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

**23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2008**

**WHITE YOUNG GREEN SECOND STAGE REPORT**

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Responsible Portfolio Holder | Councillor Jill Dyer |
| Responsible Head of Service  | Dave Hammond         |
| Key Decision                 |                      |

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report details the findings of the second stage Study into the Future Growth Implications of Redditch carried out to inform the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase 2 revision.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Members note the conclusions of the study and the implications for Bromsgrove.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 As Members will be aware the phase 2 revision of the RSS proposes an additional 3300 dwellings to meet the needs of Redditch to be accommodated in Bromsgrove and/ or Stratford adjacent to the boundary of Redditch. Currently the revision does not specify how this requirement should be split between the districts, which present a challenge for the authorities in progressing their respective Core Strategies. In order to move to the latter stages of Core Strategy production the District Council needed to have more clarity on the levels of development potentially required in Bromsgrove for Redditch's growth needs.
- 3.2 Government Office and the Regional Assembly have indicated that they expect robust arrangements to be put in place to determine the split in the housing and employment land targets between the authorities' areas to provide greater certainty in the preparation of Core Strategies.
- 3.3 To support the preparation of the RSS, Worcestershire County Council, Redditch Borough, and Bromsgrove and Stratford District Councils commissioned consultants White Young Green to undertake a 'Joint Study into the Future Growth of Redditch Town to 2026'. This study was completed in December 2007 and forms a key part of the evidence base for the RSS.
- 3.4 This 1<sup>st</sup> stage study is strategic in nature and provides an independent view on (i) the potential capacity of Redditch Town to accommodate additional growth; and (ii) taking account of that capacity, to give a view on the scale of

and likely implications of growth in the surrounding districts of Bromsgrove and Stratford that will be required to meet Redditch Borough-related growth needs. Having considered areas of search the study provides sufficient evidence for a view to be formed on the broad balance of development required between Redditch Borough and the surrounding two districts of Bromsgrove and Stratford-on-Avon; the key infrastructure issues such levels of growth are likely to give rise to and which will need to be addressed; and the key policy implications that will need to be addressed such as the impact the levels of growth will potentially have on the Green Belt and its purposes.

- 3.5 However, there was general agreement between the authorities concerned that the Joint Study was insufficiently detailed to allow district level splits of Redditch Borough-related growth to be identified. At a meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 attended by the Leaders and senior officers of all the Local Authorities it was agreed that additional work needed to be done to augment the broad study findings.
- 3.6 White Young Green were subsequently commissioned to undertake this work on behalf of the West Midlands Regional Assembly, Worcestershire County Council, Redditch Borough, and Bromsgrove and Stratford District Councils.
- 3.7 This additional work was to investigate the following elements
  - a) Whether Redditch Borough can accommodate more than its 3300 dwelling designation within its boundary and the optimum split of the remaining designation between Stratford and Bromsgrove districts, together with a phasing programme based on two scenarios firstly the Preferred Option figures for housing and employment land together with a second scenario of a 30% increase on these figures;
  - b) Provide detailed information on the likely impacts of development (including different scales of development) on the priority of sites to be developed. This will relate to the areas of search considered within the existing Joint Study (or parts of them), in terms of the natural environment, including sensitive sites and opportunities for protection and enhancement (i.e. a more robust and detailed SWOT type analysis). This should include reference to the Worcestershire/Warwickshire Landscape Character Assessments and the application of a sensitivity analysis.
  - c) The suitability or otherwise of the areas of search (or parts of them) in relation to the existing Redditch Town form, in particular accessibility to essential Town Centre facilities and transport nodes. An accessibility profile for areas of search (or parts of them) would need to be established to allow comparisons;
  - d) The key infrastructure issues to be faced, particularly with regard to the two concerns identified within the Joint Study regarding new transportation and foul water infrastructure. This would need to address the issue of

which areas of search (or parts of them) are most likely to be deliverable, or are preferable for development given the scale of infrastructure needs and likely costs. This should examine the scale of development and associated infrastructure required in various areas to justify unlocking them. In terms of transportation this would involve more detailed analysis throughout the sub-region of trip rates, the implications of growth on the proposals for the Studley by-pass, the Bordesley by-pass and future rail plans particularly along the cross city line between Redditch and the conurbation.

- e) The implications of development in the areas of search (or parts of them) in respect of one another in terms of specific impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt and in helping to deliver the aims of the RSS (e.g. urban renaissance of the MUAs and local regeneration), including for example an appraisal of the proposed development on the strategic function of the Green Belt;
- f) Thorough/rigorous consideration of the capacity of the Areas of Development Constraint and White Land (Winyates Green Triangle) within and adjacent to Redditch;
- g) Detailed scrutiny of the capacity of the urban area, both the Town Centre and more widely in terms of the adopted open space standards in Redditch;
- h) Sustainability Appraisal to consider likely sustainability impacts of the scale of development required and the implications, for example in terms of infrastructure needed.

3.8 This Stage 2 study was completed on 10 October 2008. The review of open space within Redditch identified 6 potential sites totalling 7.5 hectares, yielding capacity to accommodate 147 dwellings. The study also examined constraints on development in terms of the provision of infrastructure. 9 areas of search were investigated including:

1. The southern gap (Astwood Bank/Studley)
2. Beoley
3. The Eastern Fringe (Mappleborough Green)
4. Webheath
5. Brockhill
6. Bordesley Park
7. Foxlydiate Woods
8. Winyates triangle
9. Ravensbank

3.9 The general findings of the study are as follows:

- There are more suitable locations outside of Redditch Borough than the 3 previously designated ADR's at Brockhill, Webheath and A435
- Redditch Borough is not able to meet the RSS requirement of 3300 within its boundaries
- 2243 can be accommodated within Redditch's boundaries leaving 4357 to be accommodated in Bromsgrove( *this does not take into account the additional potential 2500 from NLP findings = 6857, please see separate report elsewhere on this agenda which addresses this issue*)
- None of Redditch's housing requirements should be met in Stratford District
- Approx 10 hectares of land at Winyates Green Triangle should be identified for employment purposes
- The Green Belt should be extended westwards in Warwickshire to include all the land between the A435 and the County boundary.
- The preference for development, in order, is:
  1. Bordesley Park
  2. Foxlydiate Woods  
and as a last resort:
  3. Brockhill ADR
  4. Part of the land in the A435 ADR (north of the junction with the A4189 Warwick Highway)

3.9 This study, together with the feedback from public consultation will be available to inform the Local Authorities response to the WMRSS Preferred Option and the NLP study by 8 December.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The costs for carrying out this study was £50,000 to be joint funded by Worcestershire County Council, Stratford District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Bromsgrove District Council and the West Midlands Regional Assembly. At the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive agreed to part fund this work to the sum of £10,000.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The RSS is the responsibility of the West Midlands Regional Assembly and is being prepared under the regulations of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; the district council also has an obligation under the act to prepare a Local Development Documents in line with the Local Development Scheme. The ability to prepare these documents is influenced by progress on the RSS.

## 6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The ability of the Council to deliver its objectives is affected by the status of the Local Development Framework (LDF). All documents produced as part of the LDF have to be in general conformity with the RSS, therefore the RSS will ultimately impact on these objectives and priorities. The table below indicates potential impacts.
- 6.2 The ability to implement the Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy is also highly dependant of the Local Development Framework. Many of the areas covered by the Sustainable Community Strategy cannot be delivered without formal planning polices.

|  |                                   |                              |                                |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Council Objective (CO)</b>  | Regeneration                      | <b>Council Priority (CP)</b> | 1. Town centre<br>2. Housing   |
| <b>Impacts</b>   |                                   |                              |                                |
| Policies in the RSS support the development of centres across the region, including those not specifically named as Major Urban Areas or, Settlements of Significant Development. The ability to regenerate the town are not adversely effected by policies in the RSS |                                   |                              |                                |
| <b>Council Objective (CO)</b>  | Improvement                       | <b>Council Priority (CP)</b> | 3. Customer service            |
| <b>Impacts</b>   |                                   |                              |                                |
| No impact  |                                   |                              |                                |
| <b>Council Objective (CO)</b>  | Sense of Community and Well Being | <b>Council Priority (CP)</b> | 4. Sense of community          |
| <b>Impacts</b>   |                                   |                              |                                |
| The RSS gives a strategic framework for planning across the region. Plans at a more local level can then create planning policies that provide developments which can enhance the sense of community and well being.   |                                   |                              |                                |
| <b>Council Objective (CO)</b>  | Environment                       | <b>Council Priority (CP)</b> | 5. Clean streets and recycling |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Impacts</b>  |
| In the Long term the RSS could help provide more waste management facilities in the district. |

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Inability to produce development plan documents which are judged to be sound by the planning inspectorate.

7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment

Key Objective Ref No: 6

Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

7.3 Progress on the LDF is monitored by the government through the Local Development Schemes and Annual Monitoring Reports produced by the Strategic Planning section. The progress on the Local Development Scheme is a key factor used to allocate Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Failure to progress the LDF inline with the Local Development Scheme could have short term financial implications. Consistent failure to produce LDF documents specifically the Core Strategy could result in the GOWM taking the strategic planning function away from control of the council. In this case they would employ other planning professionals to prepare the core strategy on behalf of the GOWM and then impose it on the District Council, whilst also requesting that the district council pay the consultancy fees accrued in the process.

## **8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Endorsing the agreement to carry out a further technical study will have no direct implications on the council's customers; however the implications of the work are likely to have a wide sub regional impact on customers as does the RSS.

## **9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 This study will form part of the evidence base to inform the Core Strategy. Consultation will be carried out with all sections of the community as the plan progresses.

## **10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The proposed study is to be jointly funded by a number of different bodies thereby distributing the costs, it is also hoped that White Young Green who

carried out the original work will also be able to complete the part 2 study thereby reducing the time and cost implications of a further procurement exercise.

#### 11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Procurement Issues   | None   |
| Personnel Implications   | None   |
| Governance/Performance Management                                    | None   |
| Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 | None   |
| Policy   | The policy decisions taken at a regional level directly effect the ability to generate local policies especially in relation to planning |
| Environmental  | As stated above their will be implications to the environment over a long period of time, the exact effects are currently unknown.       |

#### 12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Portfolio Holder                                | No  |
| Chief Executive                                 | No  |
| Executive Director - Partnerships & Projects    | No  |
| Assistant Chief Executive                       | No  |
| Head of Service                                 | Yes |
| Head of Financial Services                      | No  |
| Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services | No  |
| Head of Organisational Development & HR         | No  |
| Corporate Procurement Team                      | No  |

#### 13. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

#### 14. APPENDICES

Appendix A – White Young Green Second Stage Report October 2008

#### 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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