


**Report of:** Head of Legal and Democratic Services

**To:** Executive Board


**Date:** 17 July 2006



**Item No:**

**Title of Report :** Call-in: South East Plan



**Summary and Recommendations**




**Purpose of report:** To advise the Executive Board of  Housing Scrutiny Committee's comments arising from the call-in of the Board's decision on the  South East Plan (minute 11).



**Key decision:** No


**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor John Goddard

**Scrutiny Responsibility:** Environment and Housing




**Ward(s) affected:** All


**Report Approved by:**  
 Legal and Democratic Services: Jeremy Thomas  
 Finance and Asset Management: Mike Baish






**Policy Framework:** Homelessness Strategy



**Recommendation(s):**



 Review the decision contained in minute 11 in the light of the comments made by the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

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1. At its meeting held on 19 June 2006 the Executive Board considered a  report of the Planning Services Business Manager concerning the South East Plan (attached at Appendix A). The Board resolved that:

“the Examination in Public Panel be advised that the City Council’s response to the draft South East Plan was as follows: -

- (i) *Green Belt. (Policy CC10a)* - there is a case for a strategic review of Green Belts within the region;
- (ii) *Overall Housing numbers (Policy H1)* - the South East Plan should make provision for 36,000 dwellings per annum, as indicated from the demographic and economic forecasts prepared by SEERA;
- (iii) *Central Oxfordshire (Policy CO2)* -the Plan should make provision for 2,000 per annum (40,000 in total) to meet the demographic and economic forecasts prepared by SEERA;
- (iv) *Sustainable Development* - the Plan is commended for its policies on sustainable development (Policy CC1), climate change (Policy CC2) and sustainable construction (Policy CC4) as these complement those of the City Council;
- (v) *Economy (Policy CC8b)* - the priority given to regional hubs is supported
- (vi) *Town Centres (Policies TC1 and 2)* - support is given to the recognition of Oxford as a Primary Regional Centre;
- (vii) *Central Oxfordshire Policy CO5* - support is given for the recognition given to the Castle development, West Gate redevelopment and the wider West End rejuvenation;
- (viii) the City Council considers that local government should once again be allowed to build council housing, and that a ‘fourth option’ of direct investment into existing council housing should be provided by central government.”

2. Councillors Turner, Paskins and Price and Cook called in the decision to the Housing Scrutiny Committee on the grounds that: -

“The decision of the Executive Board to water down the Council's previously stated commitment to an urban extension to Oxford fails to do justice to the weight of evidence for housing need in the city of Oxford, and over-estimates the ability of the city area alone to meet that need. Location of housing at locations farther from Oxford, without provision closer to the city, will prove unsustainable, as well as inadequate, in meeting housing need.”

3. The Housing Scrutiny Committee considered the call-in on 5 July 2006 and an extract from the draft minutes is set out below: -

“Councillor Turner said that there was an enormous amount of housing need in Oxford and the County Town Strategy of the County Council did

not do this justice and he felt that an urban extension to Oxford was needed.

Councillor Phelps said that he was not convinced that all of the brown field sites had been exhausted for housing. He said that areas such as the undeveloped part of the Oxford Business Park could have homes built on them. He said that he could support an urban extension if he was confident that all of the brown field sites had been used up.

Michael Crofton-Briggs in response to questions and comments said that Oxford was a primary regional centre and that the Council was offering to support this policy in its response. He said that the South East Plan sought to secure the maximum number of housing units on brown field sites. He further added that employment land identified in the Local Plan at the Oxford Business Park, but not yet built, on had already gained outline planning permission for employment use.

Councillor Sanders said that people wanted more housing closer to Oxford and that this had been highlighted at a consultation exercise that she had recently attended at County Hall. She said that an urban extension was vital and that there was the land available for this.

Councillor Brundin said that any urban extension had to be done in conjunction with a review of the Green Belt, the two issues could not be separated.

Councillor Cook said that a lot of the Green Belt lay outside the city boundaries and to take this land meant having to deal with other authorities, but this did not necessarily mean that the proposal could not be made. Councillor Murray added that the City Council owned the land off Grenoble Road, however this fell outside the City boundaries and in the boundaries of South Oxfordshire District Council.

The Committee agreed:

- (a) To up-hold the Call-in;
- (b) To endorse the Executive Board's support for a review of the Green Belt around Oxford;
- (c) To support an urban extension as the most suitable and sustainable option in Central Oxfordshire and to include this in the response to the Examination in Public Panel;
- (d) To inform the Executive Board accordingly."

4. The Board is asked to review the decision set out in minute 11 in light of the above comments of the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

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**Background papers:** None

