

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

CABINET

21 FEBRUARY 2008

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER - ENVIRONMENT

DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 4: PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, DECEMBER 2007

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the consultation draft document PPS4, Planning for Sustainable Economic Development and to respond to the Department for Communities and Local Government by 17 March 2008.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Department for Communities and Local Government be informed that this Council;

- i). has no major objections to the contents of draft PPS4;
- ii). welcomes the recognition given for local authorities to promote economic regeneration in deprived areas and those experiencing economic underperformance, particularly in former coal mining areas such as Cannock Chase, but would welcome further clarification from DCLG of this policy in the context of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the West Midlands, in which priority for economic regeneration, particularly retailing and offices, is given to the Major Urban Areas.
- iii). Supports the greater flexibility proposed to introduce local maximum parking standards, but would ask the DCLG to provide further clarification on how the balance in weight between national and regional policy might be applied at the local planning authority level.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The aim of PPS4 is to encourage local authorities to plan effectively and pro-actively for economic growth and to achieve a proper balance between economic opportunities and environmental and social considerations. The planning system should therefore be made more responsive to economic development.
- 3.2 The main purpose of PPS4 is based on the premises that sustainable economic development is fully considered and planned for and consequently there is a need to rationalise the data and indicators used in drawing up plans so that national, regional,

sub- regional and development plans can be better integrated. It also suggests that planning authorities need to have a better understanding of the changing needs of business at a local level.

- 3.3 PPS4 asks local authorities to fully factor in the costs and benefits of economic development, alongside other costs and benefits, while at the same time being sensitive to climate change issues. It therefore needs to be read in conjunction with PPS1, Delivering Sustainable Development.
- 3.4 It confirms that planning authorities should develop flexible policies which are able to respond to economic change and capable of being co-ordinated with infrastructure and housing provision which might mean the use of local development orders and simplified planning zones which can remove the need for separate planning applications.
- 3.5 On adoption, PPS4 will supersede two paragraphs and Annex D of PPG13, Transport, 2001, which details maximum parking standards for specified types of development. This will have implications for the Council's existing Parking Standards SPD, adopted in 2005, which will need to be revised accordingly. While maximum parking standards are to be retained, it will offer the flexibility for the Council to set more appropriate standards at a local level. However, this strategy may need further clarification on how the balance in weight between national and regional policy might be applied at the local planning authority level. The Preferred Options version of the RSS was published for consultation between 7 January and 28 March 2008 and now extended to May. Within this, Policy C7, Car Parking Standards and Management, urges local authorities to work together to develop sub-regional maximum standards.
- 3.6 In general, PPS4 can be considered to be helpful to the Council's objectives, as the District looks to promote economic development as a means of addressing weaknesses in its economy. The Council recognises the need to be proactive in regenerating its deprived areas and in those where economic under-performance has been recognised, such as the former coal mining areas like Cannock Chase. To this end PPS4 is in tune with the Council's own objectives. However, the DCLG should be asked to provide further clarification on PPS4 to ensure that it is not at variance with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands, and its emphasis on directing economic regeneration, particularly retailing and offices, to the Major Urban Areas (MUAs), i.e. Birmingham, the Black Country, the North Staffordshire Conurbation and Coventry.

REPORT INDEX

Background	Section 1
Details of Matters to be Considered	Section 2
Contribution to CHASE	Section 3
Section 17 (Crime Prevention) Implications	Section 4
Human Rights Act Implications	Section 5
Data Protection Act Implications	Section 6
Risk Management Implications	Section 7
Legal Implications	Section 8
Financial Implications	Section 9
Human Resource Implications	Section 10
Conclusions	Section 11
Background Papers	

Section 1

Background

The Barker Review of Land Use Planning in 2006, argued that planning authorities did not always give sufficient weight to economic considerations when considering new developments and broader local development plans. The Government subsequently signalled its intention to reform the planning framework to ensure that the planning system responds more positively to economic development.

Draft PPS4 has therefore been developed in response to the Barker Report, together with the White Paper, 'Planning for a Sustainable Future', May 2007 and the 'Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration', July 2007.

Section 2

Details of Matters to be Considered

Draft PPS4 contains six national planning policies as follows:-

Policy 1 - Positive plan-making for economic development.

Local planning authorities are urged to plan positively and proactively to encourage economic development, in accordance with sustainable development principles. Policies should be flexible and able to respond to economic change and the need for co-ordination with infrastructure and housing provision.

Policy 2 - Using evidence to plan positively.

Local planning authorities should use a wide evidence base to understand business needs and likely changes in the market, to prepare policies to support sustainable economic development in their area.

Policy 3 - Recognising the needs of business

As local authorities cannot anticipate all economic changes, they should plan for and facilitate a supply of land able to cater for the differing needs of business and for expected employment needs but which is flexible enough to respond to a changing economy or to new business requirements. Therefore local authorities should avoid designating sites for single or restricted use classes wherever possible and avoid carrying forward existing allocations where this cannot be justified.

Local planning authorities should set criteria based policies and safeguard, where necessary, land from other uses and should identify a broad range of sites able to facilitate a broad range of employment uses and promote mixed use developments in appropriate locations. If there is no reasonable prospect of a site being developed in the plan period, wider employment uses, or alternative uses, such as housing, should be considered.

Policy 4 - Efficient and effective use of land.

Due to the increasing demands on land available for development, local planning authorities should seek to make the most efficient and effective use of land and buildings, especially vacant and derelict buildings. As anticipated, PPS4 makes it clear that 'brownfield' (previously developed) land should take priority in terms of re-use.

Changing work patterns should be taken into account together with price differentials between land designated for differing uses when deciding on the most productive use of land.

Policy 5 - Securing a high quality and sustainable environment

Local planning authorities should seek to ensure that economic development, regardless of location, is of high quality and inclusive design. It is noted that good design supports economic development in that it helps attract and retain business.

Policy 6 - Development control

Local planning authorities are urged to adopt a positive and constructive approach towards proposals for economic development, in the context of the plan-led system.

In PPS4 the growth presumption and the new set of requirements for planning is expressed as follows:-

'Changes in the local economy, or technological innovations which lead to new ways of working, may result in proposals coming forward that were not anticipated when the development plan was drawn up.....local planning authorities should consider these proposals favourably unless there is good reason to believe that the economic, social and/or environmental costs are likely to outweigh the benefits'.

On adoption, PPS4 will also supersede two paragraphs and Annex D of PPG13, Transport, 2001, which details maximum parking standards for specified types of development. This will have implications for the Council's existing Parking Standards SPD, adopted in 2005, which will need to be revised accordingly

Section 3

Contribution to CHASE

The provision of employment land in the Council's development plan documents, as well as promoting economic regeneration, accord with the CHASE objective with respect to promoting Access to Skills and Economic Development, by helping to provide new jobs in the District.

Section 4

Section 17 Implications

The provision of employment can help to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

Section 5

Human Rights Act Implications

There are no identified Human Rights Act implications identified in the report.

Section 6

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of the Data Protection Act arising from this report.

Section 7

Risk Management Implications

The Council's Local Development Framework has to be consistent with national planning policy as detailed in Planning Policy Statements, as well as being in general conformity with the West Midlands Regional Strategy. Failure to achieve this could result in the Council's spatial plans being found unsound at any subsequent Examination.

Section 8

Legal Implications

Once PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Development has finished the consultation process and is issued by government the Council will have to take it into account in preparing development plans and it may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals

Section 9

Financial Implications

There are direct financial implications for the Council as a result of this report.

Section 10

Human Resource Implications

There are no identified implications.

Section 11

Conclusions

Draft PPS4 seeks to ensure that planning becomes demand led, anticipating and responding to the requirements of the economy. Its publication is timely with regards to the preparation of the Council's own development plan documents, which recognise the importance of providing employment land to meet the District's own needs.

Background Papers

Consultation Paper on a new Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development, Department for Communities and local Government, December 2007.