

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Cabinet  
**Date of Committee** 28th April 2005  
**Report Title** Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan - Proposed Modifications

**Summary** To provide an update on the progress of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough's Local Plan and seek Member approval for the proposed changes.

**For further information please contact** Suzanne Osborn  
 Tel. 01926 412538  
 susanneosborn@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** Yes/No  
 None

**Background Papers**

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** *Details to be specified*

- Other Committees  Cabinet 11th June 2002
- Local Member(s)  Councillor A J Farnell – for information  
(With brief comments, if appropriate)
- Other Elected Members  Councillor L W Forsyth )  
 Councillor Mrs E M Goode ) for information  
 Councillor M Heatley )
- Cabinet Member  Councillor I C Bottrill - approved for consideration  
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member) by Cabinet
- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  I Marriott – agreed
- Finance  .....
- Other Chief Officers  .....

- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

## Cabinet - 28th April 2005

### Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan - Proposed Modifications

#### Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy

##### Recommendation

That Cabinet endorses the views expressed by its officers in this report on the Proposed Modifications of Nuneaton and Bedworth's Borough Local Plan, and confirms the officer advice sent to the Borough Council (see **Appendix A**).

## 1. Background

- 1.1 In June 2002 Cabinet considered a report on the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan Second Deposit Draft and consequently the Borough Council was advised that their Second Deposit Draft was not in general conformity with the Structure Plan (WASP), as it proposed one large employment allocation in the Green Belt, at Griff East.
- 1.2 Following this second period of consultation the Borough Council commenced its Public Inquiry (3rd June to 17th July 2003). County Council officers gave evidence to the Inquiry in support of the County Council's views on the allocation of Griff East in the Local Plan.
- 1.3 The Inspector published his report on 5th January 2004 and recommended that the Borough Council remove Griff East from its employment allocation. The Borough failed to convince the Inspector that there was an 'exceptional needs case' for this site to be exempt from protective Green Belt policies. The Inspector recognised that the site had good links to the transport network and was located within the Coventry and Nuneaton Regeneration Zone. However, the Inspector's view was that the Borough Council had failed to appreciate the significant loss of literary heritage and the associated impact on tourism this development would have on the Borough. He recommended that the release of such a large site in the Green Belt should be considered as part of a strategic sub-regional review.

## 2. Proposed Modifications

- 2.1 In response to the Inspector's report the Borough Council produced its Proposed Modifications to the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan. Within these

modifications the Borough Council has removed Griff East from its employment allocations. However, (on the Inspector's advice) the Borough Council has allocated another much smaller site in the Green Belt as an extension of Prologis Park.

2.2 The decision to allocate the Extension to Prologis Park can be supported for the following reasons:-

- (i) Borough Council needs to allocate more employment land in order to meet Structure Plan (WASP) targets.
- (ii) There is strategic support for the regeneration of the former Coventry Colliery (today known as Prologis Park) in WASP (see Policy GD5).
- (iii) It can benefit from infrastructure that has been built as part of an existing regeneration project.
- (iv) It is considerably smaller than Griff East (26 hectares) as it is only 4.5 hectares.

### **3. Process**

3.1 Following the publication of Nuneaton and Bedworth's Borough Local Plan Proposed Modifications, there was a 6-week period during which to submit comments (11th March to 22nd April 2005). In order to meet the 22nd April deadline officers will be sending comments to the Borough Council (see **Appendix A**) pointing out that any additional or amending views will be forwarded on consideration of this report following Cabinet.

3.2 Members should note that the issues for the County Council to comment on are not matters of general conformity, as the Inspector has supplied an impartial judgement on all objections, including non-conformity issues. This is simply an opportunity for the County Council to guide the Borough Council in dealing with its proposed modifications.

### **4. Conclusion**

4.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan is nearing the end of the plan review process. As strategic planning authority, the County Council has played a significant role in guiding the new plan towards a satisfactory reconciliation of strategic policy with local objectives.

4.2 As part of that process your officers consider that it is appropriate to support a small extension of Prologis Park into the Green Belt as an adjunct to a successful regeneration of the former Coventry Colliery site.

JOHN DEEGAN  
Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy  
Shire Hall  
Warwick  
13th April 2005

## Cabinet - 28th April 2005

### Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan - Proposed Modifications

**direct line** (01926) 412538  
fax (01926) 491665  
minicom (01926) 476817  
email [planningstrategy@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningstrategy@warwickshire.gov.uk)  
your ref  
my ref  
your letter rec'd  
date 12 April 2005

**Department of Planning, Transport  
and Economic Strategy**

PO Box 43  
Shire Hall  
Warwick  
CV34 4SX

DX 723360 WARWICK 5

Ms J Russell  
Chief Executive's Office  
Town Hall  
Nuneaton  
CV11 5AA

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

Dear Joanne

#### **NUNEATON & BEDWORTH BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN - PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS 2005**

Thank you for the copy of Nuneaton & Bedworth's Proposed Modifications. We have set out some comments below, which we hope you will find helpful. Please note that these are only officers' views and do not necessarily represent the views of our Members. We will be informing our Members at the earliest opportunity and will write again either confirming or amending this letter in the light of Members' comment

#### **HOUSING: Introduction**

Page 16 paragraph 4 states quite correctly that "housing figures are not disseminated to district level for post 2011". However the Minister's letter advises Local Authorities to carry forward Structure Plan proportions for calculating district-level housing figures in the absence of any better information. Applying Nuneaton & Bedworth's proportions under WASP (i.e. 18%) to the region's total figure of 6,750 dwellings between 2011 and 2016 gives Nuneaton & Bedworth an estimated 1,215 dwellings to provide for during

this period. Using the table on page 15 this indicates that Nuneaton & Bedworth is supplying 1,010 dwellings between 2011-2016. Given the conservative windfall figure this seems an entirely adequate level of provision.

Previous comments made with regard to the 10% discounting factor still remains. We suggested that this required further justification, especially in the light of the inserted 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph on page 18 which highlights that Camp Hill Urban Village has actually increased its densities rather than bringing forward less than originally anticipated.

### **HOUSING: Policy H3**

We welcome the introduction of a threshold of 15 dwellings or more/over 0.5 hectares but consider the wording around the desired proportion of affordable housing to be rather weak. It is not clear whether the 25% is a minimum figure or not. This may give applicants an opportunity to exploit the weakness in the policy by not providing a reasonable proportion of affordable housing on the site. The explanatory text offers applicants further scope to avoid delivery of affordable housing, if negotiations reveal that the policy needs to be revised, "This may trigger a change in this policy and this will be issued as new guidance as required. Such guidance will be subject to public consultation." Such a loose policy may well delay development or fail to deliver affordable housing.

### **HOUSING: Policy H11**

This policy refers to 'good public transport facilities'. It may be helpful to add 'good public transport facilities *and services*'. This is simply to ensure that the high density development is close to regular bus services rather than simply a bus shelter with perhaps one daily service.

### **EMPLOYMENT: The Requirement**

Page 33 and paragraph 1 mentions that it may be necessary to consider Greenfield windfall sites and that these applications will be assessed against Policy EMP3. We consider that Policy EMP3 needs to be revised to take into account its role in assessing possible Greenfield windfalls e.g. inserting a criterion that ensures all other previously developed sites are undeliverable.

### **EMPLOYMENT: Policy EMP1**

We welcome the deletion of Griff East (26 hectares) from the list of new allocations and although the extension to Prologis Park is also in the Greenbelt we accept that this has certain mitigating circumstances e.g. existing infrastructure; strategic support for the regeneration of an old colliery and considerably smaller than Griff East i.e. only 4.5 hectares.

### **EMPLOYMENT: Policy EMP14**

Although we do not object to the principle of protecting employment land against losses to housing developments, government guidance does advise that such a policy must be based on a review of employment sites. ODPM's Guidance Note on Employment Land Reviews (December 2004) states that any safeguarding of both new and existing employment areas should be based on a review of an authority's employment site

portfolio. The guide also refers to PPG3's requirement to review all non-housing allocations to determine their suitability for housing.

### **ENVIRONMENT: Policy ENV2**

Policy ENV2 appears to now only have one criterion, rather than several criteria in the earlier 2<sup>nd</sup> Deposit Draft. Perhaps change the wording of the policy to reflect this, "development will only be permitted where the following criterion can be met."

### **ENVIRONMENT: Policy ENV3**

Generally this policy seems to be rather loosely worded. Perhaps you could ensure that points i) ii) and iii) relate to a) b) and c) by using more explicit wording. At the moment it reads as if points i) ii) and iii) only relate to c).

Could you add the following criteria under points i) ii) and iii):

- iv) there is no loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- v) the development will not be detrimental to the ecological, geological or archaeological value of the area;
- vi) the size, siting and design of buildings and other structures (if they meet criteria a) are appropriate to the local landscape character.

Part a) of the policy is well-worded and specific, relating to particular uses as well as giving some flexibility under 'other enterprises'. However, part b) doesn't seem to add anything to part a) apart from opening the policy up to any development where there is a 'demonstrable need'. This may lead to development outside the specification under part a) and possibly unsuitable for a countryside location.

### **ENVIRONMENT: Policy ENV17**

The supporting text protects railway lines as providing, "wildlife corridors, links and stepping stones that help to maintain the range and diversity of habitats..." (Page 71, paragraph 2). Supporting text should be inserted on how the protection of natural habitats can be achieved without prejudice to any future railway lines re-opening as a transport corridor.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Osborn  
Senior Planner