

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

LDP STAKEHOLDER PANEL MEETING

Thursday 24th August 2006, 5:30pm
Oasis Centre, Bryn Road, Cefn Fforest, Blackwood

Draft Meeting Minutes

Present

Mr Douglas Easterbrook
Ms Joy Edwards
Mr Rob Gough
Mrs Lynda Healy
Mr Stephen Thomas
Ms Becky Lewis
Mr Gareth Lewis
Ms Susan Lewis
Mr Conrad Lucas
Ms Caroline Maguire
Mrs Vivienne Pearson
Ms Debbie Powell
Mr Richard Price
Ms Zowie Purves
Mr John Soos
Mr Russel Thurlow
Ms Stella Williams

Apologies were received from:

Ms Jan Walsh
Ms Clair Stonelake
Ms Jane Carpenter
Mr Richard Mann
Ms Ann Fritter

1 WELCOME

- 1.1 Kelly Collins welcomed all to the second meeting of the LDP Stakeholder Panel and emphasised that the importance of the panel's task at this stage was to debate the alternative strategy options and guide the creation of the Preferred Strategy for the Caerphilly Local Development Plan.

2 PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

- Provide an update on the Local Development Plan (LDP) process.



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- Inform the Stakeholder Panel of the Strategic Alternatives for the LDP.
- Invite the Panel to identify the key strengths and weaknesses of the three Strategic Options.

3 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 In considering how the Local Development Plan (LDP) for Caerphilly County Borough should guide and manage future development, it is important that an appropriate land use strategy is adopted to guide future development in the County Borough over the next fifteen years. The preparation process requires consideration of alternative suitable strategies for the LDP.
- 3.2 An important new feature of the LDP system is the emphasis placed on identifying and testing realistic strategic options that will help the county borough achieve the Vision agreed for the Plan. As an integral part of this process the Council will need to have regard for regional trends, cross border implications and the role and function of Caerphilly County Borough within the wider geographical context.
- 3.3 In order to develop realistic strategic options, a number of stakeholder workshops, including this one, have been held during July and August. The discussions held at these workshops will enable the Council to determine in consultation, what type of strategy options and what scale of future housing development would result in the most sustainable future for Caerphilly County Borough.

4 WORKSHOP SESSION

- 4.1 The briefing paper called the “Development of Alternative Strategic Options” which had been previously sent to the group formed the basis of the meeting held in a workshop session.
- 4.2 Kelly Collins, began the workshop session by delivering a power-point presentation which informed the group of the progress made to date on the LDP, set the scene for the workshop discussions in giving an introduction to past and future population growth characteristics, and described the basis for the alternative Strategy Options.
- 4.2 The attendees were split into two groups for the purpose of the workshop. Each group was guided by a facilitator from the Strategic and Development Plan Team to assist in answering any planning queries that the group might have.
- 4.3 Three strategy options were introduced to the groups:
- Strategy Option A: Continuation of the UDP Strategy;
 - Strategy Option B: Urban Containment Strategy;
 - Strategy Option C: Sustainable Growth Strategy.



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- 4.4 The two groups were asked to examine each strategy option in turn. These options were assessed in terms of studying their key components. The groups were asked to identify one strength and one weakness for each component in turn. Finally, after each group had assessed each of the strategy options, they were asked to pick the six strongest and the six weakest components out of all three options. The aim was to identify the strongest characteristics on which a new strategy could be built while avoiding the weaker aspects.

5 WORKSHOP FINDINGS

Component Strengths and Weaknesses

- 5.1 Having identified one strength and one weakness for each component in turn, and taking the results of all groups together, the following points can be made:

Strengths

- All groups provided that the redevelopment of brown-field sites was a significant strength of all the Strategy Options. It was recognised that this would result in the remediation of problematic sites and reduce the pressure of green-field intake. There were, however, some concerns over the potential loss of brown-field sites that hold high ecological value and the uneven dispersal of brownfield sites throughout the Borough.
- All groups agreed that the *'developers to provide necessary infrastructure improvements'* was a key strength of all Strategy Options. It was identified that this would work well in the south where demand for development is high, although it may result in areas with less demand missing out.
- All groups agreed that to *'Sustain existing service provision'* was a good objective of Strategy 'B', it was identified that this was not only likely to maintain existing service provision but was also likely to generate improvements to service provision.
- All groups agreed that *'Targeting development to reflect the role and function of settlements'* was a good component of Strategy C. It was felt that development of this nature would meet the needs of individual settlements, whilst respecting the character, context and culture of an area, thus enhancing the distinctiveness of communities whilst reinforcing their role within the borough.
- It was also agreed that *'Pro-actively targeting growth in the Mid Valleys and Upper Valley Areas'* was a good objective of Strategy 'C' as this would encourage the regeneration of the areas most in need. However it was noted that greater emphasis should be placed on the Upper Valley Area and spreading prosperity further north.



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