

Planning Committee

Wednesday, 6th June, 2018

SPECIAL MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Councillors Dorrian, Hussey, Johnston,
Lyons, Magee, McAteer and Mullan.

In attendance: Mr. A. Thatcher, Director of Planning and Building Control;
Mr. K. Sutherland, Development Planning and Policy
Manager;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mr. D. O’Kane, Principal Planning Officer; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McGimpsey and Councillors Armitage, Carson, Hutchinson and Nicholl.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Item

The information contained in the following report is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Local Development Plan (LDP) Draft Strategy

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th April, it had agreed to defer consideration of the report so that Members could review the LDP Draft Strategy further and requested that a special meeting be scheduled in May to discuss the matter.

The Committee was also reminded that, at its special meeting on 17th May, it had agreed that Members’ comments or amendments in relation to the Local Development Plan Draft Strategy document be submitted to the Planning Department for consideration and any further revisions to the document would be published for review at another Special Meeting on 6th June.

The Development Planning and Policy Manager provided an overview of the Local Development Plan Draft Strategy and explained that, following feedback from Members, Appendix 1 outlined the proposed changes to the previously circulated Local Development Plan (LDP) Draft Strategy document. He advised that, if agreed, the proposed changes would be included within a final document to be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd June.

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The Principal Planning Officer presented the main issues which had been raised since the last workshop and highlighted the following main changes to the document:

- Pages 5-7 (up to p.43 of draft Plan Strategy(dPS)) – Minor text changes to Volume 1 to reflect Belfast Agenda and comments relating to draft policies;
- Pages 7-24 – Changes proposed to the Shaping a liveable place section, including:
 - HOU3 (p.76 of dPS) – Clarification re: protection of existing residential stock;
 - HOU5 (p.81-84 of dPS) – Reworked policy on affordable housing;
 - HOU10 (p.94 of dPS) – Change to HMO policies in response to concerns re implementation;
 - DES3 (p.111 of dPS) - Tall Buildings threshold increased to 35m following new evidence;
 - RD3 (p.121) – Criteria introduced to limit sub-divisions to properties over 150m (linked to HOU10 changes – see above)
 - Section 7.6 – Changes to reflect comments on equality, community cohesion and good relations; and
 - Section 8.1 – Minor changes to section to reflect aspirations for ‘inclusive’ economic growth.

During discussion, Members raised concerns in relation to the Policy HOU5 and the minimum affordable housing provision of 20% regarding the criteria to achieve this and the effect it might have on communities and developers.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that additional detail of how Policy HOU5 would be assessed and implemented would be provided in the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). He advised that a list of all of the SPGs were outlined in the original Local Development Plan (LDP) Draft Strategy as Appendix E (page 321, copy available [here](#)). He clarified that affordable housing would be secured by way of section 76 planning agreements, which should be in place in advance of planning permission being granted and the policy ensures that applicants cannot artificially divide or phase sites to avoid affordable housing obligations.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Hussey, and
Seconded by Councillor Johnston,

That the Committee, in relation to the proposed changes to Policy HOU5 – Affordable Housing, agrees to revert back to the policy statement as outlined in the original Local Development Plan Draft Strategy (published as part of the 17th May Planning Committee, page 81, copy available [here](#)).

On a vote by show of hands three Members voted for the proposal and four against and it was declared lost.

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The recommendation to approve the proposed changes to Policy HOU5 – Affordable Housing was then put to the Committee and it agreed to approve the changes as outlined in Appendix 1 (page 35).

During further discussion, the Committee was provided with further information in relation to affordable housing viability assessments, review timescales of the LDP, EQIA Assessments, enforcement, regulation of hot food bars and the safeguarding Belfast Hills.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the proposed changes outlined in Appendix 1 (copy available [here](#)), subject to the following amendments:

1. In relation to the proposed change under section 7.6.3, p.143 of the Local Development Plan Strategy (page 21 of Appendix 1), the insertion of the words “primarily” and “as well as” in the second paragraph, to read:

*“There are clearly economic and social advantages of maximising safe shared spaces, such as improving quality of life and creating good physical access to jobs, which make a huge contribution to prosperity, health and well-being. A diverse, healthy, resilient population is able to contribute to the growth of the city and secure the benefits of a peaceful society. Addressing community cohesion is therefore important in ensuring **primarily** equality of opportunity in accessing housing, **as well as** employment opportunities and local services.”*

2. In relation to the proposed change under section 8.1.6, p.157 of the Local Development Plan Strategy (page 25 of Appendix 1), the insertion of the words “social economy” in the final paragraph, to read:

*“The LDP’s economic strategy also recognises the important role the five Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) play in education, upskilling, generating innovation and economic activity, creating jobs and contributing to GDP. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME’s), the community and voluntary sectors, **social economy** and creative and cultural sectors all play varying roles in driving inclusive economic growth.”*

Chairperson