

Subject: Update of the Evidence Base for the Local Development Framework

Status: For Publication

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 22nd July 2009

Report of: Planning Manager

Portfolio

Holder: Regeneration

Key Decision: Yes

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To make members aware of the results of studies commissioned to update the evidence base for the Local Development Framework and, in particular, the Core Strategy. Approval is also sought to delegate to the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to approve the use of the documents for Development Control purposes, where appropriate.

1.2 The Studies commissioned are:

- Rossendale Retail and Town Centre Update
- Rossendale Employment Land Review (Stages 1 and 2)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1)

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:-

- Delivering quality Services to our customers
- Delivering regeneration across the Borough
- Encouraging healthy and respectful communities
- Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe
- Promoting the Borough
- Providing value for money services

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- The studies have been commissioned to provide a professionally informed view of the position within Rossendale relating to flood risk, employment land, as well as retail and the Borough's town centres. The findings of the Reports will underpin the direction of and the policies contained in the Core Strategy, which will influence development in the Borough over the next 15 years. It is expected that the findings of these studies will be examined by the Planning Inspectorate at the Examination of the Core Strategy, due next year.
- **The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** was undertaken by Scott Wilson. It highlights that flood risk is most significant along narrow strips of land adjacent to water courses, due to the well defined watercourse channels, their steepness and small size. 2.6 % of Rossendale falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3a and 3b (ie. potentially at risk of flooding). The findings of this report have implications for the Core Strategy, identifying areas where further investigation may be required, prior to promoting sites for development for certain types of uses. This Study will also help in Development Control applications, identifying where extra information, in the form of a flood risk assessment, may be needed.
- **The Retail and Town Centre Study**, undertaken by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners updates their 2004 Study. It involved a household study of residents, requesting information on shopping and leisure trips. This Report identifies the primary shopping areas for the town centres in line with government guidance and can guide development control decisions. The Report enables the Council to establish and project retail demand to 2024.
- **The Employment Land Review** was undertaken by Nathaniel Lichfield and updates the 2004 Study. This stage identifies the amount of land required for employment uses. The second stage, due later this summer, identifies the portfolio of sites. The economic overview was considered along with the current stock of employment space, and the commercial property market. Several economic scenarios for Rossendale have been identified.
- A Report is appended which details the findings of these three Studies.
- The consultants will be presenting the findings of these studies later this summer.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 All studies have been commissioned from nationally renowned firms, with particular expertise in their fields, which rely on data provided by Rossendale Borough Council, or partners such as the Environment Agency. Should members choose not to agree to the findings of the Studies, it will be necessary to commission and pay for additional studies.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 There are no material adverse budget implications for Council arising from the report.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 An updated evidence base will ensure that the Local Development Framework is robust and sound and will support the preparation and development of the Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

- 7.1 No human resource implications.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The studies provide an informed snapshot of Rossendale and identify key issues for the Core Strategy to address.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 9.1 That Members approve the content of the Studies updating the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.
- 9.2 Members also to agree to delegate to the Portfolio Holder to approve the use of these studies upon their completion for Development Control purposes.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 Core Strategy Working Group.

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Community Impact Assessment required Yes

Is a Community Impact Assessment attached Yes

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required Yes

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached Yes

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (including map; Retail and Town Centre Study Update and Appendices (including Town Centre Boundaries); Employment Land Review (stages 1 and 2).	Forward Planning Section, One Stop Shop All of the documents are available in full online at www.rossendale.gov.uk/ldfevidencebase