

**Council, 28th June 2007**

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICIES DPD – PREFERRED OPTIONS**

### **Report of the Head of Community Regeneration**

**Statutory Powers:** Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Financial Implications:** None directly, but the Affordable Housing Policies DPD must be produced in accordance with the timescale shown in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable to avoid the loss of Planning Delivery Grant.

**Purpose:** To **seek Members approval to publish** the South Hams Local Development Framework (LDF) Affordable Housing Policies Preferred Options Document. The report sets out the purpose and scope of the document and the key issues it addresses. It also seeks delegated authority to complete preparation of the document and to publish in July 2007.

**Links to Council Priorities:** The Affordable Housing DPD will link to all Council Priorities and Commitments, particularly CP1- affordable housing.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **That Council RESOLVES that:**

- (a) the LDF Affordable Housing Policies Development Plan Document (Preferred Options) stage be published in July 2007, and,**
- (b) authority be delegated to the Head of Community Regeneration in consultation with the Leader and a nominated Member from the Minority Group to make necessary changes to its content.**

### **Introduction**

1. The Affordable Housing Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) is another priority document in the South Hams Local Development Framework (LDF) portfolio. It is designed to build on the strategic content of the Core Strategy providing more detailed policy advice through a suite of policies relating to affordable housing delivery mechanisms. It is also urgently required to replace the policies contained in the current 1996 adopted South Hams Local Plan which is becoming increasingly out of date.

### **Background**

2. This document is closely aligned to the Development Control Core Policies document which the Council is also publishing in July (covered elsewhere on this agenda). The Core Policies document is designed to build on the strategic content of the Core Strategy providing more detailed policy advice through a suite of development control policies split into four areas – sustainable communities, economy, transport and accessibility and the environment.

3. The affordable housing element has deliberately been separated out from the Core Policies document in order to urgently address affordable housing in a single issue document and avoid undue delays that might result from the complexity of the Core Policies document. It is hoped that this will enable the document to be progressed as quickly as possible through the statutory plan-making processes.
4. The LDF Core Strategy was adopted in December 2006. It includes a strategic affordable housing target of 50%. The affordable housing DPD further develops this policy by considering how the strategic target will be achieved with reference to the different site options for delivering affordable housing: allocated sites, windfall sites and exception sites. These three delivery options are considered in turn, with a separate approach being required for each.
5. Early work which informed the formulation of the draft Affordable Housing policies included: the draft Local Plan Review (January 2002), the Issues and Options consultation (October 2004), external consultation with GOSW, internal officer consultation and two Member workshops. However, more recently (November 2006) the Core Strategy Inspector's Report and the long awaited publication of PPS3: Housing have established a new context for and reaffirmed the need for urgent progress with the document.
6. The Affordable Housing and Core Policies DPDs are running in tandem and both are now at Preferred Options stage. There is thus a further stage at which to refine and finalise these policies further prior to their Examination (public inquiry).

### **Affordable Housing Policies**

7. General advice on the scope and content of LDF policies is contained in PPS12: Local Development Frameworks, and PPS3: Housing. PPS3 advises that local planning authorities should set out policies detailing under what circumstances affordable housing (by direct provision, and/or a commuted sum) will be required. Any thresholds must be included in an LDF document. PPS3 also advises that local planning authorities in rural areas should include a rural exceptions policy in their LDF.
8. Where supplementary information is needed this should be provided in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). An SPD providing further details on how the affordable housing thresholds and other affordable housing policies will be implemented is also currently under preparation. This is scheduled for consultation following approval by Council in September 2007 and adoption in January 2008. Unlike the Affordable Housing LDF document, the SPD does not need to go through an Examination prior to its adoption by the Council. The Affordable Housing Policies DPD is contained at Appendix A

## Strategic Risk Assessment:

Risk	Mitigation
Failure to produce the Affordable Housing DPD document urgently would have significant consequences for ensuring the Council has an up to date, robust and effective policy framework to help deliver the Council's key priorities and within which to make development control policy decisions.	Progression of the Affordable Housing Policies document in line with the programme set out in the LDS is essential to deliver the Council's key priorities and ensure a robust basis for development control decisions.
Failure to deliver the Affordable Housing DPD in line with the programme set out in the LDS will have consequences in relation to securing Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) for plan making.	Need to progress the Affordable Housing DPD in accord with the milestones set out in the approved LDS to ensure that the Council receives the maximum level of PDG for plan making.

## Conclusion:

9. The Affordable Housing DPD is another key document in the South Hams LDF portfolio and is urgently required. The document is attached at Appendix A and approval to publish in July 2007 is sought.. Delegated authority is also sought to make any necessary changes to this document prior to publication.

Rachel Bland  
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Council  
28<sup>th</sup> June 2007

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## Background Documents:

South Hams Local Plan Review (January 2002)  
Adopted LDF Core Strategy (December 2006)  
Approved Local Development Scheme (April 2007)  
The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004  
Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)  
Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2006)  
Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (2004)  
Town and Village – Area Action Plans/Site Specific Allocations – LDF Issues and Options (October 2004)