

North York Moors National Park Authority Development Plan Working Group

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on 20 September 2012.

Present: Mr Scoffin, Mrs Mitchell, Mr Bowes, Mr Hugill, Mr Bailey, Mr Tindall, Mrs Swiers

Apologies: Mr Jeffels, Ms Fisher

Officers in attendance: Chris France (Director of Planning), Caroline Skelly (Planning Policy Officer), Andrea McMillan (Planning Policy Officer)

Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

01/12 Election of Chairman

Resolved:

That Mr S Scoffin be elected Chair of the Development Plan Working Group to take office until the first meeting of the Development Plan Working Group following the Annual General Meeting of the Authority.

Steve Scoffin In The Chair

02/12 Election of Deputy Chairman

Resolved:

That Mr M Bowes be elected Deputy Chair of the Development Plan working Group to take office until the first meeting of the Development Plan Working Group following the Annual General Meeting of the Authority.

03/12 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2012, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

04/12 Members Interests

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interests relating to any agenda item prior to its consideration.

05/12 **The National Planning Policy Framework and Assessment of Local Development Framework Policies**

Considered:

The report of the Policy Manager

The officers in attendance presented a summary of the report. Members were reminded that an initial report on the contents of the NPPF had been presented to Planning Committee in July 2012. Officers confirmed that, whilst there had been provision in the draft NPPF for authorities' to obtain a certificate of conformity, there was no such provision or requirement within the final NPPF. The assessment carried out is therefore undertaken only for the Authority's own purposes.

Officers explained that under the NPPF full weight can be given to the policies in the Core Strategy and Development Policies Development Plan Document until 27th March 2013 and that after then the degree of consistency with the NPPF becomes more significant. There is no provision to 'fast track' amendments to the Core Strategy and Development Policies in order to ensure compliance by 2013. The Development Plan still has primacy – the NPPF is a material consideration.

Officers explained that the report included a summary assessment however a more detailed version was available on the Authority's website. A copy of the detailed assessment was handed out to Members. The assessment highlights any gaps, inconsistencies or areas where additional evidence would be needed prior to a review of the Core Strategy being carried out in the future. Gaps have emerged following the loss of former Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance notes which were relied on in place of specific policies in the Core Strategy and Development Policies. Officers explained that the degree of significance in the table relates whether it is an area of policy likely to be frequently used and/or the potential impact from the type development which the policy covers. It was explained that the assessment has not highlighted a need to review the Core Strategy and Development Policies.

Before moving on to the conclusions discussion was held around each of the points in the table which was attached to the report (Summary of assessment of NPPF against North York Moors National Park Local Development Framework), using the full assessment for reference. Members discussed the following points:

NPPF paragraph 28:

In response to a Member's question it was explained that these terms are often confused but it could be assumed that 'rural areas' does not mean open countryside in this instance. In terms of whether it is cheaper to develop a new build than a conversion, the Authority is not being criticised over its current approach of not supporting new build in the open countryside for economic use. The NPPF should be viewed in the context of National Park purposes.

NPPF paragraph 51:

Should argue 'strong economic reasons' in terms of safeguarding small rural businesses - particularly community facilities and those supporting tourism. Members had concerns that lots of rundown tourism accommodation could be converted. In the Core Strategy and Development Policies the emphasis is on maintaining economic use rather than supporting conversion to residential, therefore difference of approach.

NPPF paragraph 55:

Loss of guidance on agricultural workers' dwellings is a procedural rather than policy gap. Members agreed that the gap needs to be addressed. Officers stated that a Planning Advice Note would be produced.

NPPF paragraph 65:

It was considered that any potential implications from this policy could be over-riden by the parts of the NPPF which relate to the National Park and by the fact that the paragraph appears to contradict itself.

NPPF paragraphs 143, 144 and 147:

Members agreed that, to address the gap in relation to detailed minerals policies, it would be necessary to produce a new minerals plan. Officers are to investigate the possibilities of working with other Minerals Planning Authorities. In the meantime, it was agreed that an interim approach should be established – possibly by using and adopting relevant parts of the Regional Spatial Strategy (Yorkshire and Humber Plan). It was confirmed that the meaning of the Major Development Test is still the same.

Setting of the National Park (no relevant NPPF paragraph):

Members supportive of seeking to ensure adjoining Authorities' plans contain a policy which would conserve the setting of the National Park. It was considered unlikely that more distant Authorities' plans should contain such a policy.

NPPF paragraphs 173 and 174:

Officers explained that the NPA is working with Ryedale and Selby District Councils on a joint Community Infrastructure Levy tendering process. Members had concerns about whether affordable housing policies were viable, however this is yet to be tested through applications. One Member highlighted the approach of other authorities which are being specific about what should be provided through Community Infrastructure Levy, for example a new post office.

NPPF paragraphs 14, 15, 49 and 151:

CLG have told Officers to work through the NPPF as there are enough caveats which allow the National Parks to demonstrate why they are different. In terms of the second part of paragraph 14 in relation to decision taking, where there may be policy gaps, the Authority can refer to the footnote on page 4.

NPPF Paragraph 47:

Officers stated that CLG have suggested there is enough in the NPPF to support National Parks not meeting full needs, an 'articulation' of the NPPF to this effect to be agreed between ENPAA, CLG and PINS. In terms of the timescale for this the Director of Planning is awaiting responses on the draft 'articulation' from other National Park Authorities and it is hoped confirmation will be received next month.

NPPF paragraph 54:

Paragraph 54 refers to allowing some market housing on exception sites to facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs. Officers felt that the word additional is sufficient to maintain the existing 100% affordable housing approach which has been very successful, while allowing scope for a departure where this would make scheme viable. Members had concerns about the future funding mechanisms for affordable housing delivery however in the immediate future funding for rural schemes remains a priority for the HCA.

In response to Members' questions it was explained that affordable housing in the larger settlements would also be subject to Section 106 agreements, which restricts occupancy to people from the local area.

Paragraphs 94, 99 and 106:

The Authority needs to consider strategies for the relocation of the properties at risk from coastal erosion in a review of the policies.

Paragraph 95:

The approach in the Core Strategy and Development Policies Document is based on the RSS targets. Paragraph 95 requires a building's sustainability to be consistent with the Government's zero carbon homes policy and adopt nationally described standards, however continues to meet the broader aims of the NPPF.

Pollution issues:

Development Policy 1 doesn't go into as much detail as the PPSs. However the Government has committed to a review of all the guidance which supported the PPSs and further consideration will take place once this has been published.

The conclusions in sections 6 and 7 of the report were not revisited as these issues had already been discussed when going through the table.

Recommendation:

That Members:

1. Note the content of the Self Assessment in Appendix 1 and agree the approaches suggested, particularly for the areas where there could be significant implications for decision taking as listed under paragraph 6.2 of this report.
2. Note the position in relation to housing provision and that an approach to housing provision in the National Park is developed and agreed with the constituent Districts and at a sub regional level.
3. Note the position in relation to minerals and waste policies including oil and gas exploration and authorise officers to explore the options for a joint approach to developing new policies with other authorities in York and North Yorkshire.

Resolved:

1. The Group noted the content of the self assessment and agreed the approaches suggested.
2. The Group noted the position in relation to housing provision and the 'articulation' which is underway and agreed to liaison with constituent Districts to agree the position locally.
3. The Group noted the position in relation to minerals policies and agreed that officers will investigate options for producing a minerals plan. In the interim officers will investigate the possibility of adopting relevant parts of the Regional Spatial Strategy. A report will be presented to Planning Committee shortly.
4. The Group agreed that Planning Committee be presented with the self assessment and main conclusions at their October 2012 meeting.