

## Planning Committee Report

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### London Thames Gateway Development Corporation

#### Comments on Three Development Plan Documents relating to LB Barking and Dagenham's Local Development Framework

##### Report of the Director of Planning

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#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's formal response to LB Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) on three Pre-Submission Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which have been prepared as part of their proposed Local Development Framework. These are – Core Strategy, Borough Wide Development Policies and the Proposals Map.
- 1.2 It is important to comment on these matters given the significance of planning policies when considering planning applications and regeneration initiatives being put forward by the Corporation. Suggested comments are highlighted through the report and additional comments from Members would be welcomed.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Core Strategy and Development Policies have been consulted on previously and the Map reflects the current version of the documents. The documents are "Pre Submission" in that, after this round of consultation, they will be submitted to the Secretary of State for the formal Examination in Public and then adoption.
- 2.2 Linked to these documents is a comprehensive Pre Submission Consultation Statement which is required by the LDF regulations. This sets out details of which organisations, including the Corporation, and individuals responded to previous consultations and how the policies and associated statements in the current documents have taken the responses into account. *The previous comments of the LTGDC have been responded to satisfactorily.*
- 2.3 The Corporation's Board on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 discussed a report on some of the more strategic aspects of the LDF documents. The following comments were agreed for consideration by the Planning Committee –

- 2.3.1 There is a need to make clear reference to the Corporation's Planning Obligations Community Benefits Strategy within both CC3 and CC4 of the Core Strategy.
- 2.3.2 The identified transport projects and associated Policy CM4 are supported and this should include the land necessary for these to be safeguarded
- 2.3.3 Policy CE4 includes reference to the Sustainable Industries Park. This should also be referred to in paragraph 2.17 as part of the "Opportunities facing the Borough" section.
- 2.3.4 Regarding the proposal that a new C2C station at Renwick Road be provided, it is fully recognised that the Corporation has already accepted a consultant's report that an alternative location for a C2C station at Beam Reach be promoted, and that work is underway. However, in view of the current uncertainty over the DLR extension to Dagenham Dock it is sensible that the business case be reviewed so as to substantiate any comments to the Borough but this work needs to be done as soon as possible.

### **3. Analysis**

#### **Core Strategy**

- 3.1 This comprises various sections – background, spatial vision and objectives, the LDF spatial strategy including the key diagram (see Appendix 1), then policies for each of the five spatial strategy themes followed by the monitoring and implementation framework and housing trajectory.
- 3.2 There are thirteen Strategic Objectives which are focused on delivering the vision and cover broad topics. These include housing needs and growth, reducing inequalities, promoting improved public transport, enhancing employment opportunities, ensuring main development areas benefit both new and existing residents and businesses, design and sustainability issues, health and well being. *The statements within these Objectives are welcomed.*
- 3.3 The Spatial Strategy is built around five themes. These are Managing Growth; Sustainable Resources and the Environment; Creating a Sense of Community; Ensuring a Vibrant Economy and Attractive Town Centre and Creating a Sense of Place. The policies within these five themes are the key aspect of this report.

#### **Managing Growth**

- 3.4 There are five policies – General Principles for Development; Managing Housing Growth; Green Belt and Public Open Space; Strategic Transport Links and Town Centre Hierarchy. *With regard to the main areas of development, these reflect the Corporation's priorities, namely Barking*

*Town Centre, Barking Riverside and South Dagenham.* Housing growth figures are based on the requirements of the London Plan whilst recognising the resultant pressures on both physical and social infrastructure.

- 3.5 Policy CM4 on Strategic Transport Links is obviously a key one, notwithstanding the Mayor of London's recent announcement in respect of Thames Gateway Bridge and DLR extension – two of the key projects listed. *Support for all the projects should be reiterated including the ongoing safeguarding of the land required for the projects. The only caveat concerns the fact that whilst improvements to the C2C service are supported the Borough is still advocating a new station at Renwick Road. The Corporation has already taken the decision to support the alternative location for a new station at Beam Reach, just over the borough boundary in LB Havering, and is taking that project forward. A re-evaluation will be needed if funding can not be secured for the DLR extension as the Business Case for the choice between the two locations stations would change. At this stage, it is not possible to say whether the previous conclusion would change.*

#### Sustainable Resources and the Environment

- 3.6 There are four policies – Climate Change and Environmental Management; Preserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment; Sustainable Waste Management and Flood Management. *The role that the Sustainable Industries Park (SIP) could play in this policy area should be highlighted. It is best placed within the third policy rather than the first which is more about general principles.* The development of that policy will be through the Joint Waste DPD which the borough is developing with the LBs of Newham, Redbridge and Havering.

#### Creating a Sense of Community

- 3.7 Again there are four policies – Affordable Housing; Social Housing; Social Infrastructure and Achieving Community Benefits through Developer Contributions (ie S106 policy). For affordable housing the target is 50% dependent on the viability of each site, including the availability of grant with a 70:30 split between rented and intermediate but also subject to local circumstances, especially in Barking Town Centre. Schemes should provide 40% family accommodation (three bedrooms and more) dependent on the size and location of sites. A lower target of 30% is proposed for the Town Centre.
- 3.8 The final two policies both have references to achieving contributions from developers to achieve social and community benefits. The text for the fourth policy refers to the proposed introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) by Central Government and that in the meantime the Corporation's existing Planning Obligations Community Benefits Strategy will be applied where we are the planning authority. *The*

*reference to the policy should be expanded to include a short explanation as to what it is. Elsewhere the borough will assess on a case by case basis. Also the borough is developing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on community benefits. The SPD should have full regard to the Corporation's strategy and how any alternative arrangements proposed by the borough will relate. The third policy should also include a clear reference to, and explanation of, the Corporation's strategy.*

### Ensuring a Vibrant Economy and Attractive Town Centres

- 3.9 The four policies are concerned with – Vibrant and Prosperous Town Centres; Location of Office Development; Safeguarding and Release of Employment Land and Mix and Balance of Uses within Employment Areas. Much of the first two policies relate to Barking Town Centre with most of the detail to be provided in the AAP for that Centre. The Corporation has been fully involved with the AAP from the beginning. A new district centre is identified for Barking Riverside development. The existing retail warehouse parks at Abbey Road and Merriellands (South Dagenham West) are identified for a wider and more sustainable mix of uses in accordance with the work officers are involved in. The third policy on safeguarding and releasing employment land again dovetails with work officers are doing. The final policy makes specific reference to the Sustainable Industries Park and where large B8 warehouses should be located.

### Creating a Sense of Place

- 3.10 The three policies relate to Vibrant Arts, Culture and Tourism; Protecting and Promoting our Historic Environment and High Quality Built Environment. These policies and associated statements are supported and the first specifically refers to the Cultural Industries Quarter as a new opportunity.
- 3.11 The final two chapters regarding Monitoring and Implementation and Housing Trajectory are requirements of the LDF process and there are no comments to be made other than the obvious one regarding housing growth and dependence on the economic situation.

### Borough Wide Development Policies

- 3.12 These policies build on the Core Strategy and will be of particular use when considering planning applications. They are grouped under three headings – Sustainable Resources and the Environment; Creating a Sense of Community and Creating a Sense of Place.

### Sustainable Resources and the Environment

- 3.13 The fifteen policies in this section cover a wide range of environmental related matters including building and energy standards, transport related activities, contamination, noise and air quality and waste management.

Standards reflect guidance and requirements from both Central Government and the GLA as well as initiatives that the borough have been promoting or wish to promote. With regard to parking standards, whilst GLA/TfL standards are taken as a starting point, the circumstances of particular development sites are fully acknowledged.

- 3.14 Together the policies represent a wide ranging pulling together at various levels of existing and emerging policies relating to key environmental issues.

#### Creating a Sense of Community

- 3.15 These twelve policies cover a wide range of topics including housing, community facilities, health, utilities and crime prevention. There are no objections to the policies that impact on the Corporation's areas of responsibility and the text and supporting statements for key policies such as Delivering Affordable Housing, Accessible and Adaptable Housing and Health (and Wellbeing) are welcomed.

#### Ensuring a Vibrant Economy and Attractive Town Centres

- 3.16 The five policies relate to retail uses, developments within and outside town centres, the evening economy and offices. For retail uses there are different requirements for town, district and neighbourhood centres with regard to the percentage of properties used for non retail functions such as financial services and hot food type establishments. As with the previous draft there is an in principle support for promoting the diversification of the evening economy subject to safeguarding a range of amenity issues. This sector is seen as being particularly important to Barking Town Centre so the AAP has a specific policy in it – this links in with the Corporation's CIQ proposals.

#### Creating a Sense of Place

- 3.17 Again, given the function of this category, the eleven policies cover a wide range of topics including heritage matters, design, including a separate category of riverside development and housing density and space standards. There is a specific category for tall buildings which picks up on GLA and CABE guidance. There are very specific minimum space standards for different sizes of dwellings but these are for the aggregate of the cooking, eating and living areas for numbers of persons (bed spaces) rather than an overall figure for a dwelling. *It would assist if those overall figures are also provided as the aggregate figures appear to be a little low.* The policies on riverside development, housing density and urban design are welcomed.

## **4. Conclusions**

- 4.1 There are no significant areas of contention with regard to the documents. There are a few instances where comments have been highlighted in italics to be referred back to the Borough. As mentioned several times in

the above comments, those areas where the Corporation has key interest/involvement are satisfactorily dealt with. As has been reported to the Committee previously, the Barking Town Centre AAP will be a key document and that is not compromised by these documents. The overall approach to the production of the documents is to be commended.

## **5. Recommendations**

- 5.1 That the Committee agree to the highlighted comments in this report any other comments raised by Committee members as forming the formal response on the documents.

**Date:** 01 December 2008