

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – JOBS, ECONOMY AND
TRANSPORT

10 SEPTEMBER 2013

Report of the Acting Strategic Director – Environmental Services

**RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS: CORE
STRATEGY – FURTHER PROPOSALS FOR NEW HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT AND DRAFT RUSHCLIFFE GREEN BELT
REVIEW**

(1) **Purpose of the Report** To agree the County Council's response to Rushcliffe Borough Council's (RBC) consultations on its Core Strategy – Further Proposals for New Housing Development and Draft Green Belt Review.

(2) **Information and Analysis** In October 2012, RBC submitted the Rushcliffe Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD) to the Secretary of State for an Examination in Public (EIP). The Planning Inspector appointed to examine the Core Strategy, however, wrote to RBC in February 2013 expressing concerns about its soundness. In particular, he raised concerns about:

- the level of proposed new housing in the Core Strategy which, at 9,600 dwellings between 2011 and 2026, was considered to be insufficient to meet the objectively assessed needs of the Borough;
- the absence of a documented comprehensive review of the Green Belt within the Borough to inform decisions about proposed locations for housing growth.

At the request of RBC, the Inspector agreed to suspend the examination of the Core Strategy until October 2013, so that further work could be undertaken to address his two concerns. This additional work by RBC is the subject of this consultation.

Local Member Comments

County Councillors Hosker and Walton, with electoral divisions in Erewash Borough adjoining Rushcliffe Borough, have been consulted. Any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

Further Proposals for New Housing Development

RBC's review of its proposed housing target is based on additional evidence, appraisal of potential development options and further discussions with the other Greater Nottingham Authorities (GNAs) of Broxtowe, Erewash and Gedling Boroughs and Nottingham City Councils. As a result, work, RBC proposes to increase the Borough's housing target from 9,600 new dwellings between 2011 to 2026 to 13,150 dwellings between 2011 and 2028. The additional 3,550 new dwellings would be provided on three key sites at:

- South of Clifton within the area east of the line of the new A453 and west of Fairham Brook.
- Land at Melton Road, Edwalton, to the north of the A52.
- Land to the east of Gamston, within the area to the east/south of the A52 and Tollerton.

The two sites at Clifton and Edwalton have already been identified in the Core Strategy as major housing sites but RBC propose to increase each allocation by 500 and 550 dwellings respectively. The Gamston site is a new allocation for 2,500 dwellings. The area south of Clifton is reasonably close to the administrative boundary with Erewash Borough and is the only site to have potential strategic planning policy implications for the County Council. Details of the report can be viewed at the link below.

<http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/planningandbuilding/localplan/Further%20proposals%20for%20housing%20development%20leaflet.pdf>

Officer Comments

In February 2010, the GNA published their Aligned Core Strategies – Options for Consultation. At that time, RBC intended to prepare its Core Strategy in alignment with the other GNA and make housing provision to meet the objectively assessed needs of the Borough and contribute to the wider needs of the Greater Nottingham Housing Market Area (HMA). The Options for Consultation proposed that 52,000 new houses would be provided across the HMA between 2009 and 2026 and that Rushcliffe's contribution would be 13,860 new houses. Derbyshire County Council was broadly supportive of the approach to housing provision across the HMA.

In the consultation on its CSDPD in April 2012, however, RBC proposed to reduce significantly its previously preferred housing provision target of 13,860 houses to 9,600 houses between 2011 and 2026.

In its Technical Officer response to RBC, made in May 2012, Derbyshire County Council expressed concerns that, in the absence of any clear new evidence to demonstrate the need for a reduced level of housing provision in the Borough, any potential housing shortfall in the Borough would fall on

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neighbouring districts to make up, including Erewash Borough. The implications for Erewash Borough were of particular concern as much of the Borough is covered by Green Belt. The Green Belt in this location is of high strategic importance because it prevents the coalescence of the urban areas of Derby and Nottingham and the smaller towns in between. As capacity to accommodate new housing development within the urban areas of Erewash Borough is limited, it was also a concern that any potential increase in housing provision in the Borough could have an adverse impact on the Green Belt.

Since the suspension of the EIP, the outcome of discussions on future housing needs between RBC and GNAs has concluded that at least 3,550 more homes should be provided in Rushcliffe Borough by 2028. This would take the planned housing provision in the Borough to a total of 13,150 homes between 2011 and 2028.

Erewash Borough Council's Core Strategy was subject to an EIP between 23 April and 3 May 2013. Importantly, in June 2013, the Inspector confirmed the Borough's overall housing target of 6,250 new dwellings between 2011 and 2028. This housing target was determined in agreement with the other GNAs as Erewash Borough's contribution to meeting the overall requirements of the HMA.

In the context of the above, RBC's proposed new housing target of 13,150 dwellings is welcomed and supported. The revised housing target would more appropriately meet the objectively assessed housing needs of both the Borough and the wider HMA as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The new housing target would be likely to negate the need for the other GNAs, including Erewash Borough, to make up any potential shortfall in Rushcliffe Borough's housing needs. Overall, therefore, the new housing target would address the previous concerns of the County Council on the CSDPD.

The proposed extension of the plan period for housing provision from 2026 to 2028 is supported. This accords with the plan periods for housing provision being proposed in the Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling and Nottingham City Core Strategies.

Of the three proposed locations to accommodate the additional housing requirement of 3,550 dwellings, only the site to the south of Clifton could potentially have some impact on housing provision in Erewash Borough. However, this area is some distance away from the main urban area of Long Eaton and the urban areas of Beeston and Attenborough in Nottinghamshire are located in between. It is unlikely, therefore, that the proposed housing allocation there would have any significant impact on housing delivery in Long Eaton. Similarly, the only strategic allocation for housing provision in the Erewash Core Strategy is proposed at the Stanton Regeneration site for nearly

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2,000 houses. It is therefore unlikely that the new housing proposed south of Clifton would impact on the viability and delivery of housing at Stanton, given the significant distance between the two areas.

Draft Rushcliffe Green Belt Review

RBC has carried out a comprehensive Green Belt Review (GBR) in three stages that assess:

- 1) broad locations of Green Belt adjoining the Nottingham Principal Urban Area;
- 2) broad locations across the remainder of the Green Belt in the more rural parts of the Borough; and
- 3) the more detailed Green Belt boundaries.

The GBR assesses how well it performs in meeting the Green Belt purposes set out in the NPPF. Recommendations are made for three areas of the Green Belt which warrant further consideration for possible review of Green Belt boundaries to accommodate growth. They are located to the south of Clifton, south of West Bridgford and east of Gamston. Details of the review can be viewed at the link below.

<http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/planningandbuilding/localplan/Draft%20Rushcliffe%20Green%20Belt%20Review.pdf>

Officer Comments

In the context of the housing provision comments above, it is welcomed that RBC has undertaken a GBR in Rushcliffe to inform decisions on where the additional 3,550 dwellings should be located.

Between 2006 and 2007, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Council officers carried out a joint review of the Nottingham – Derby Green Belt. This review assessed broad areas of that Green Belt (within Rushcliffe) and how well each area performed in meeting the five Green Belt purposes set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts, which was the relevant national planning policy on Green Belts at that time. The Nottingham – Derby GBR formed part of the main evidence base which informed the broad growth strategy for housing provision in the Three Cities Sub-Area and, particularly, the Derby and Nottingham Core HMAs.

It is welcomed that the Rushcliffe GBR incorporates the findings of the Nottingham - Derby GBR and uses a similar methodology to assess more specific broad areas of the Green Belt in the Borough against the five main Green Belt purposes now set out in the NPPF. Six broad areas of Green Belt have been defined and assessed. Broad Area 1: North of the new A453 Alignment and River Trent Crossing, adjoins an area of Green Belt to the east of Long Eaton within Erewash Borough. However, it is noted that although the

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site has been assessed as being of medium importance, the area contains steep topographical features, is a substantial area at risk from flooding and is not contiguous with the built up area to the north. As a consequence, it has not been assessed as a suitable area for potential growth and the area of Green Belt, therefore, has not been recommended for further investigation and review.

On the basis of the above, the Rushcliffe GBR is considered unlikely to have any significant implications for the Green Belt and Green Belt policy in Erewash Borough.

(3) **Financial Considerations** There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The recommendation made in the context of the County Council's responsibilities and services under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file 1314.7 by the Planning Services Manager. Officer contact details – Steve Buffery, extension 39808.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That the Cabinet Member authorises officers to respond to Rushcliffe Borough Council's Consultations on its Core Strategy – Further Proposals for New Housing Development and Draft Green Belt Review as set out in the report.

Mike Ashworth
Acting Strategic Director – Environmental Services