

WARWICK DISTRICT PLANNING FORUM

19th September 2011

- Update on Planning Matters
- Discussion on Review of the Planning Forum

Update on Planning Matters

- Changing times
 - Nationally
 - Sub-regionally
 - Locally
 - Development Services

National Statements

- ‘The planning system is ...
 - Old and failed
 - Slow and inefficient
 - Undemocratic and broken’
- ‘Planning acts as a brake on growth enemies of enterprise’
- ‘Planning reform is key to our economic recovery’
- Fight for growth, prosperity and the right protection for the countryside’

National - Changes

- Emerging Localism Bill (House of Lords)
 - Abolition of RSS
 - Duty to cooperate
 - Primacy of Local Plans
 - Neighbourhood Planning
- National Planning Policy Framework
 - Draft for consultation – 17th October
 - 1,000 pages to under 100

National Planning Policy Framework

- Key points
 - The planning system should help to build a strong economy by ensuring there is enough land for growth, and ensuring that infrastructure is provided.
 - The planning system should also promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing housing, good design and local services to support health and well-being.
 - Planning decisions should protect, and try to improve, wildlife and the habitats they live in, as well as landscape, and old buildings.

National Planning Policy Framework

- Key Points
 - The Government wants planning decisions to be based on up to date local plans, put together with communities, and based on adequate evidence
 - Objectively assessed development needs should be met, unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits
 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development where Local Plans are out of date, absent, silent or indeterminate
 - Reaffirms Governments commitment to protecting the Green Belt

National Planning Policy Framework

- Key points
 - Work collaboratively on strategic planning priorities to enable delivery of sustainable economic growth in consultation with Local Enterprise Partnerships
 - The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans, therefore, must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.
 - Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

Planning for Growth

- The Government's top priority in reforming the planning system is to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs
- Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy
- The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will attach significant weight to the need to secure economic growth and employment.

Other National Changes

- Planning Guarantee
 - Speeding up planning applications
 - Expectation on decisions within a 12 month period
 - Information requirements
 - Consultation in the autumn
- Financial considerations
 - New Homes Bonus
 - Community Infrastructure Levy being spent locally
 - Reducing the budget deficit

Sub-regional - LEP

- Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (www.cwlep.com)
 - Proactive on Planning for Growth
 - Strategic Growth Plan for the area (spatial ambitions for growth and development)
 - Local Enterprise Zone bid around Coventry Airport
- Duty to cooperate
 - Sub-regional statement – no progress yet
 - Coventry consulting on Proposed Core Strategy

Warwick District – Local Plan

- Warwick District Local Plan
 - Consultation closed in July
 - Analysis of responses and evidence gathering
 - September Executive approved framework
 - November Full Council to consider vision and growth levels (not just planning)
 - March 2012 Full Council to decide on preferred options for consultation
 - Need to move quickly to adoption

Development Services

- Changes in staff – retirements of senior officers
- New appointments
 - Development Manager – Gary Stephens
 - Sandip Sahota (Eastern Area Team Leader)
 - Rob Young, Jo Hogarth, Sunita Burke, Fiona Fuller
 - David Cooper (Western Area Team Leader)
 - Steven Wallsgrove, Penny Butler, Liz Galloway, Erica Buchanan, David Edmonds

Challenges ahead

- First priority is to bring stability within the service – new people in new posts
- Tackle the back-log of applications caused by the reduction in capacity
- Then to look at how the Development Control service responds to the changes and challenges ahead
- Pressure for speedier decisions and financial savings (£2.5m worth of savings by 2015/16)

Moving forward

- Need to look at our internal processes and seek to improve the way we work to speed up the system and secure more income
- Need to look at our relationships with our partners, consultees and stakeholders such as Town and Parish Councils and Amenity Groups
- Need to work together and build stronger relationships
- Need to consider role of pre-application engagement with developers