

1. CHAPTER ONE - STRATEGIC CONTEXT

1.1 PARAGRAPH 1.14

Representation

Banister, Freemantle, Polygon CAF and Fitzhugh RA STR01-1531/1-RD-O

Issues

- a. Whether there has been adequate consultation on the Community Strategy.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

1.1.1 The purpose of developing Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) is to bring together representatives from all sectors of the local community, including voluntary organisations, residents' groups and businesses. They should therefore be well placed to deliver the Community Strategy and also to link in to the production of Local Development Frameworks. I note that the Objectors consider that there should be consultation with Community Action Forums and Residents' Associations as they say that few residents are involved in Neighbourhood Partnerships. To be successful the LSP needs to engage effectively with local people. If this is not happening it is a matter that the Council will no doubt wish to address. However, it is not an issue with which the Local Plan should become involved.

RECOMMENDATION

- ◆ I recommend that no modification be made to the Plan in response to this objection.

1.2 PARAGRAPH 1.54

(Proposed Change 1)

Representations

Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust STR01-362/11-ID-O

Issues

- a. Whether reference should be made in the learning section to the teaching hospital.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

1.2.1 In the Revised Deposit version reference is made to the teaching hospital

under the learning section and this would meet the objection. However, under Proposed Change 1 the teaching hospital is referred to in the health and caring section to reflect its inclusion in these rather than the learning policies. This seems to me to be logical and I support the proposed change accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

- ◆ **I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with Proposed Change 1.**

1.3 GENERAL

Representations

Central Council of Physical Recreation	STR01-121/6-ID-O
GOSE	STR01-172/81-ID-O
Persimmon Plc	STR01-446/7-ID-O
Mr D Huggins	STR01-524/5-ID-O
Consortium of Registered Social Landlords	<u>STR01-526/39-ID-O</u>
English Heritage	STR01-628/29-ID-O
RICS	STR01-691/2-RD-O
Ms S O'Dell	STR01-828/7-ID-O

Issues

- a. Whether the designations are clearly shown on the Proposals Map.
- b. Whether the Plan adequately prioritises issues of importance to the community and the environment including deprivation, heritage, open space and affordable housing.
- c. Whether the Plan adequately addresses sustainability issues.
- d. Whether the Plan satisfactorily relates to other Council strategies.
- e. Whether Transport Development Areas (TDA) should be included in the Plan.
- f. Whether a policy is necessary to encourage use of better materials in built development.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

1.3.1 The Proposals Map is inadequate because it only details the changes that have been made between Initial and Revised Deposit stages. However, I note that the Council is intending to produce a composite map that illustrates clearly the detailed policies and proposals in the Plan as advised in Paragraph 26 of Annex A to PPG 12. This would satisfy the objections of GOSE and Persimmon Plc.

- 1.3.2 The Plan should be read as a whole. The Strategic Chapter in Part One outlines the overall context, which is then translated into land use and site specific policies (Parts Two and Three). It is also important to understand that the Local Plan is but one of a number of strategies. These include the Medium Term Plan and the emerging Community Strategy. The former document relates to public service delivery within the context of a number of priorities as set out in Paragraph 1.15 of the Plan. The latter document sets out a vision for the year 2020 and how it may be made reality through a series of challenges for economic, social and environmental well-being.
- 1.3.3 Southampton's area is tightly constrained within its boundaries and it is therefore inevitable that development will compete for limited land resources. However, the Medium Term Plan does not rank its priorities and the Local Plan should not seek to do so either. Rather it should aim to deliver these priorities through its land use policies and these policies should be internally consistent. That is not to say that choices will not have to be made in terms of specific areas of land. However, it seems to me that these are best addressed through the site specific policies set out in Parts 2 and 3 of the Plan rather than in the Strategic Chapter. For this reason I do not consider it necessary to include specific policies in the first part of the Plan.
- 1.3.4 Mr Huggins, the Consortium of Social Landlords and the Central Council of Physical Recreation, are concerned that insufficient emphasis is placed on a particular aspect – for example the promotion of health through leisure, tackling deprivation, addressing the needs of local communities or affordable housing. With the exception of heritage issues, which I deal with below¹, I do not agree. Chapter One has something to say on all of these matters and moreover sets the scene for more detailed consideration in policies and proposals later on. In addition there are other documents produced by the Council such as the Local Cultural Strategy and the Health Improvement Plan, which set out aspects of these issues other than that relating to the development and use of land.
- 1.3.5 I do not consider that new development inevitably takes place at the expense of the local population. In many cases it provides opportunities for wider social benefits such as affordable housing and additional recreation facilities. If Southampton is to embrace its sub-regional role, which is a clear aspiration in the Medium Term Plan, it cannot turn its back on growth. What is needed is a balanced approach so that the best use is made of existing resources in a sustainable way. However, as I have already said this is not the responsibility of the Local Plan alone and the Medium Term Plan and emerging Community Strategy will also include important initiatives and actions relevant to the city and its people.
- 1.3.6 Ms O'Dell considers that sustainable development should be the central theme of the Plan and amendments made to reflect the emphasis of current government policy on sustainability. She considers that the Plan is biased towards commerce rather than procuring a good quality of life for its citizens. However, sustainable development is not limited to environmental concerns and the prudent use of natural resources but also encompasses economic

¹ See Paragraph 1.3.8 of my Report.

growth and social progress as detailed in Paragraph 1.12 of the Plan.

- 1.3.7 Ms O'Dell considers that an environmental statement is needed to assess the impact of policies on the local and global environment. Development proposals will though need to have regard to the Sustainable Development Principles outlined in Chapter 2 as well as any site specific or criteria based policies that may be relevant. The Council has undertaken a Sustainability Appraisal of its Plan as recommended by PPG 12². It is important to note that certain types of development proposal would also be subject to environmental impact assessment during the development control process.
- 1.3.8 Policies relating to the City's historic environment are contained in Chapter 4 of the Plan. However, I agree with English Heritage that there is insufficient recognition of the value of Southampton's heritage in the overall strategy. This could be best addressed within the section on the *City of Culture* and I recommend accordingly. I do not though concur with this Objector that it is either necessary or appropriate to provide further detail about the Council's role as facilitator in Paragraph 1.58 or to mention any SPG specifically by name in Paragraph 1.56.
- 1.3.9 The requirement for development to use appropriate materials is dealt with in Policy SDP 9, which applies to all development proposals. It seems to me an inappropriate subject for the strategy section of the Plan.
- 1.3.10 The provision of a new library in Scholing would be a subject for Chapter 6 and not the overall strategy. However, the Council has not identified a specific need for a library within this locality and has no land or resources available to provide one. There is a mobile library, although I appreciate that this is limited in terms of the range of books it can carry and does not provide a community focus as required by Mr Huggins. As things stand, I can see little likelihood of public funds becoming available during the Local Plan period and it would not be appropriate for specific reference to be made. However, if circumstances were to change the provisions of the Local Plan would not prevent consideration of this matter afresh.
- 1.3.11 PPG 13 encourages maximum use of the most accessible sites, for example in town centres and close to public transport interchanges. It states that Local Authorities should be pro-active in bringing suitable development opportunities forward and that Transport Development Areas (TDA) may provide an appropriate mechanism. The Council has not formally adopted the TDA approach, which is being promoted by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), and the Plan contains no site-specific TDA related policies or proposals.
- 1.3.12 I consider that it would be impractical at this stage to incorporate a pro-active TDA approach as suggested by RICS. This would entail a considerable amount of background work and appraisal, including a more sophisticated accessibility appraisal. There would also need to be consultation with stakeholders across a wide range of interest groups. It would be likely to lead to unacceptable delay in the adoption of the Local Plan. I am satisfied though that the overall strategy of the Plan generally follows the advice in

² See Document CD10/4

Paragraph 21 of PPG 13 and encourages well designed, higher density, mixed-use development on sustainable sites in line with TDA principles.

1.3.13 Nevertheless, the recently approved Regional Transport Strategy³ recognises Southampton as a Regional Hub where there is the potential to develop a high level of accessibility by non-car modes. It encourages the “living centre” approach, which accommodates high density development, the economic and social needs of the settlement and links to the local economic area. Paragraph 9.27 of the RTS sees this as a practical application of the TDA concept. RPG 9 is now part of the development plan and the Council will need to formally adopt the TDA approach as part of its spatial strategy when preparing its new Local Development Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

- ◆ **I recommend that the Plan be modified by including a new paragraph that appraises and recognises the heritage value of the City and how it affects the physical fabric as it exists today.**

³ Inspector’s Note – The Regional Transport Strategy was approved in July 2004 and replaces Chapter 9 of RPG 9. See Core Document CD4/2