

SESplan

The Strategic Development Planning Authority
for Edinburgh and South East Scotland

MINUTE of MEETING of the SESplan
JOINT COMMITTEE held in the West
Lothian Room, Lothian Chambers,
Edinburgh on 20 June 2016 at 2.00
p.m.

Present:- Councillor Stuart Bell (Convener), Scottish Borders Council
Councillor Tony Boyle, West Lothian Council
Councillor Jim Bryant, Midlothian Council
Councillor Norman Hampshire, East Lothian Council
Councillor Lesley Laird, Fife Council (Vice Convener)
Councillor Alex Lunn, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Ian Perry, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Ron Smith, Scottish Borders Council

Apologies:- Councillor Tim Day, East Lothian Council
Councillor Cathy Muldoon, West Lothian Council
Councillor Kelly Parry, Midlothian Council
Councillor John Wincott, Fife Council

In Attendance:- Mr Ivan Clark, Lead Officer, SESplan
Ms Pam Ewen, Fife Council
Mr Brian Frater, Scottish Borders Council
Mr Ian Johnson, Midlothian Council
Mr David Leslie, City of Edinburgh Council
Mr Graeme Marsden, SESplan
Mr Craig McCorrison, West Lothian Council
Mr Douglas Proudfoot, East Lothian Council
Miss Kathleen Mason, Scottish Borders Council (Clerk)

1. **MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 30 MAY 2016**
The Minute of Meeting of 30 May 2016 had been circulated.

DECISION
APPROVED the Minute as a correct record.

2. **PROPOSED PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT, HABITATS REGULATIONS APPRAISAL AND STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT**
With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 30 May 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report by the SDP Manager presenting an update on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (Environmental Report) and an explanation of the proposed approach to ensuring that the plan complied with the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), a process known as the 'Habitats Regulations Appraisal'. Mr Clark explained that the SEA was a statutory requirement for land use plans. An SEA Environmental Report was published alongside the MIR. Appendix 1 to the report presented an account of how the proposed plan had taken into account the mitigation suggested in that Environmental Report. It also set out an update of that

Environmental Report SEA based on what the team now knew was the content of the Proposed Plan. The update concluded that the growth corridor option remained the option with the least environmental impact. A revised SEA Environmental Report would be published alongside the plan. A Habitats Regulations Appraisal of the plan was also a statutory requirement that focused on any impacts of the plan on European Nature Conservation sites. This would be carried out prior to publication and a Record of that Appraisal would be published with the plan. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was carried out in relation to the MIR and specifically with regard to the Growth Corridor Option in the MIR. The team had reviewed this and considered that its conclusions remained valid. However, the team would publish a revised Strategic Flood Risk Assessment alongside the plan that more closely reflected the content of the proposed plan. As part of the discussions about potential amendments to the version of the plan tabled at the last committee, the team had concluded that the proposed amendments did not change the conclusions of the flood risk assessment or the strategic environmental assessment.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **note the Addendum to the Environmental Report attached as Appendix 1 to the report;**
 - (b) **note the proposed approach to the completion of the Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) process, as it applied to Natura sites, set out in paragraphs 3.1-3.6 of the report;**
 - (c) **delegate authority to the SESplan Project Board to approve the publication of a Revised Environmental Report and a Habitats Regulation Appraisal alongside the Proposed Plan; and**
 - (d) **note the approach to Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.**
3. **PROPOSED PLAN EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 May 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report by the SDP Manager presenting the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment relating to the preparation of the Proposed Plan for consideration by the Joint Committee. Mr Clark explained that the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EqHRIA) was prepared to help to ensure that SESplan did not discriminate and that, where possible, SESplan took opportunities to promote equality as well as human rights and to foster good relations between groups. The team had considered the draft amendments in the context of that assessment and concluded that no changes to the assessment tabled at the last meeting were necessary.

DECISION

NOTED the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

4. **PROPOSED PLAN AND ACTION PROGRAMME**
With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of Meeting of 20 May 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report presenting the Proposed Plan and Proposed Action Programme to the SESplan Joint Committee for consideration and approval. The Proposed Plan and Action Programme, attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report, include amendments seeking to address the concerns noted by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 30 May 2016.
- 4.1 Mr Clark briefed Members on the most significant amendments in relation to some of the concerns raised at the last committee. He explained that in the Better Connected Place section the Levenmouth Rail Link had been given its correct status as a project that had

had a full transport appraisal. It had also been moved into a column of projects which were expected to be delivered within the first 12 years of the plan. In the schedule of amendments it was recognised that two new stations would need to be shown on the relevant graphics in the plan before publication. Unfortunately this wasn't able to be done before the committee papers went out. The core team recognised that the Dunfermline Green Belt needed to be shown more explicitly on the graphics and again, this would be done before publication. The text regarding East Lothian now more clearly articulated the constraints around Musselburgh and indicated more clearly that if, in the longer term, a need was recognised for new strategic growth areas, then these would be directed to the eastern end of the Long Term Growth corridors identified on the diagrams. The text concerning Blindwells had been amended to more accurately reflect members' long term ambitions for that settlement. In addition, an East Lothian business cluster had been identified at 4 locations in East Lothian to reflect members' concerns that the plan didn't sufficiently express the business opportunities in East Lothian. In addition, in light of the closure of Longannet and Cockenzie the text now more explicitly recognised that these sites might have the potential for a wider range of uses in addition to their potential for providing support to the offshore renewables industry. In light of these amendments and the other more minor and consequential amendments set out in Appendix 6, it was recommended that the committee approved the proposed plan and action programme attached at appendices 1 and 2 to the report for publication, subject to ratification of this decision by the member authorities. The committee was also asked to note the Housing Background Paper and the SDP2 Transport Appraisal. Mr Clark asked the committee to note that the transport appraisal had been amended since the version presented at last committee to address concerns around readability. The committee was also asked to note the process for the approval of supporting documents for publication set out in Appendix 5 and agree the publication proposals set out in para. 4.1 - 4.4 of this report. In addition, it was recommended that the committee agreed that editorial changes of a non-policy nature were delegated to the Strategic Development Plan Manager in consultation with the SESplan Joint Committee and SESplan Project Board Chairs.

- 4.2 Mr Clark summarised a submission from Homes for Scotland which had been received on 17 June 2016 as follows:- Homes for Scotland welcomed that the housing supply targets in the plan were based on the 'Wealth Distribution' scenario. It also noted and welcomed that the housing supply target for market homes exceeded the demand estimated by the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment. However the submission set out concerns that the housing supply targets for affordable homes did not fully meet the evidenced demand set out in the HNDA. The submission stated that Homes for Scotland would be making the case that the Housing Supply Targets should have been based on the Strong Economic Growth scenario. Their view was that the plan did not adequately reflect the ambition of Scottish Government or the City Regional Deal ambitions with respect to affordable housing. The submission also raised concerns about the extent to which the plan-making process was collaborative. It claimed that the MIR did not include clear options on housing supply targets and that it was only now that their members were able to see the approach to Housing Supply Targets in full. Mr Clark advised that HfS remained keen to engage with SESplan throughout the consultation period and indeed in terms of implementing and monitoring the plan. The submission raised two main issues, as follows (a) the targets themselves, and (b) the extent to which the plan-making process was collaborative. In relation to targets Mr Clark explained that the proposed plan and the Housing Background Paper which accompanied the plan was quite open about the fact that the housing supply targets for affordable housing did not meet in full the estimates set out in the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment. As that paper set out, the reasons for this were: (a) In line with SPP and guidance related to HNDA, in setting the HST the team took the HNDA as its starting point, but considered policy and practical considerations to reach a view on the level of housing that could actually be delivered over a defined period; (b) the reason the team aimed for realistic targets was because it was important that the deliverability of housing sites was not undermined by an over-supply of land. It would create uncertainty for communities and infrastructure providers if land was identified for housing but did not come forward; (c) the availability of resources

to deliver supporting infrastructure was limited. d) the rate of past and recent completions suggested the targets set were still ambitious because , to meet the HST completion rates needed to be roughly double the rate of actual completion rates over the last 5 years. With regard to collaboration, Mr Clark explained that the MIR did not include actual housing supply targets but it did set out the factors that the plan would consider in setting those targets. These included the growth scenario that should be the basis of the HNDA. MIR preferred option was 'Steady Economic growth' but as a result of the submissions to the MIR, including those from HfS and individual housebuilders, the HST in the proposed plan were in fact based on the Wealth Distribution Model – and the team noted that the HfS submission welcomed that. The Plan Manager met with HfS representatives on 10 May. On the advice of the Board the actual Housing Supply Targets were not shared with HfS at this point. This was because the Board considered that housebuilders should not be seen by other stakeholders (including those likely to argue that HSTs should be lower) to be given preferential treatment in terms of the information that was shared before the publication of the plan. The Team did however provide HfS with the reasoning behind the HSTs and the key pieces of information - namely that the targets exceeded market demand but didn't fully meet demand for affordable housing. The Team understood that the meeting was a helpful one and commitments were made for closer working going forward. Indeed the Action Programme now included an action to explore jointly whether the remit of the SESplan Housing Market Partnership could be expanded to include joint action to support the rate of market and affordable housing delivery. As the submission pointed out, HfS would in any case be making a full representation once the proposed plan was published and that submission would be carefully considered alongside other representations. In conclusion Mr Clark advised there was nothing in the submission from HfS which warranted a delay in moving to a decision on the proposed plan.

- 4.3 During the discussions which took place Councillor Laird asked that paragraph 3.6 of the report be changed to include a reference to new rail halt at Halbeath Park and Ride. Members agreed that this addition should be made to the plan, and any consequent additions needed to the action plan, prior to ratification and that the exact wording would be agreed with Fife officers. With reference to the submission from Homes for Scotland, members confirmed that they had fully considered the issues related to Housing Supply Targets as set out in the Housing Background Paper

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to approve the Proposed Plan and Proposed Action Programme, attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to the report, for publication, subject to ratification of this decision by the member authorities;**
- (b) to note the Housing Background Paper and SDP2 Transport Appraisal, attached as Appendices 3 and 4 to the report;**
- (c) to note the process for the approval of supporting documents to the Proposed Plan, including technical notes, for publication set out in Appendix 5 to the report;**
- (d) that editorial changes of a non-policy nature to Appendices 1 and 2 were delegated to the Strategic Development Plan Manager in consultation with the SESplan Joint Committee and SESplan Project Board Chairs; and**
- (e) to the publication proposals set out in paragraphs 4.1 - 4.4 to the report.**

The meeting concluded at 2.39 pm