
SESPLAN: RATIFICATION OF PROPOSED STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Report by Service Director Regulatory Services

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

29 JUNE 2016

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks ratification of SESplan Proposed Plan and Action Programme and the noting of associated documents.**
- 1.2 The SESplan Proposed Plan provides the strategic long term context for the preparation of Local Development Plans within south east Scotland. It sets out a vision and a series of outcomes in relation to the creation of a thriving, successful and sustainable region. It includes a number of housing and infrastructure proposals of direct relevance to the Scottish Borders.
- 1.3 The SESplan Proposed Plan is accompanied by a suite of associated documents including the Action Programme which sets out the proposals for delivery alongside the Plan.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that the Council:-

- (a) Agrees to ratify the SESplan Proposed Plan and Proposed Action Programme set out in Appendices 2 and 3 respectively,**
- (b) Notes the following associated documents: Housing Background Paper (Appendix 4); SDP2 Transport Appraisal (Appendix 5); Updated Environmental Report and Habitats Regulation Appraisal (Appendix 6); Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (Appendix 7), and,**
- (c) Notes the publication proposals set out in paragraphs 3.20-3.22.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting on 20 June 2016 the SESplan Joint Committee discussed and agreed the Proposed Strategic Development Plan and accompanying documents. The SESplan committee report is set out in **Appendix 1**. The Proposed Plan is set out in **Appendix 2**, and the Proposed Action Programme is set out in **Appendix 3** to this report.
- 3.2 A number of associated documents have been produced, and are available for view in the members' library. These are the housing background paper (**Appendix 4**), the Transport appraisal (**Appendix 5**), the updated Environmental Report and Habitats Regulation Appraisal (**Appendix 6**), and, the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (**Appendix 7**).
- 3.3 The SESplan Strategic Development Plan Authority, made up of 6 member authorities, is required to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for South East Scotland. SDPs set out a vision and a spatial strategy for development for up to 20 years.
- 3.4 The Proposed Plan was preceded by a Main Issues Report which was approved for consultation by the SESplan Joint Committee 29 May 2015. Consultation took place for 10 weeks starting on 21 July 2015. Thereafter, reports on consultation were considered by the Joint Committee on 28 September 2015, and on 14 December 2015.

SESplan Proposed Plan

- 3.5 The Proposed Plan has developed alongside discussions/workshops with the Joint Committee, as well as with Key Agencies and the City Region Deal Team, and has taken into account the consultations received on the Main Issues Report.
- 3.6 The Proposed Plan provides the strategic guide for Local Development Plans to set out detailed policies and land allocations. The key elements of the Plan are-
 - (i) A growth strategy where most growth over the next 20 years is focused in and close to Edinburgh and along growth corridors with good public transport.
 - (ii) A set of place-making principles to guide local planning and development.
 - (iii) Ambitious, realistic housing supply targets and a generous supply of housing land.
 - (iv) A plan-led and prioritised approach to enhancing green networks.
 - (v) A strategic walking and cycling network, and,
 - (vi) The need for Supplementary Guidance on cross boundary transport development contributions.
- 3.7 Technical papers produced as part of the Main Issues Report have been reviewed and updated where appropriate. In addition, a background paper on housing (Appendix 4), and a transport appraisal (Appendix 5) have been produced related to key aspects of the Plan.

SESplan Proposed Action Programme

- 3.8 The Action Programme sets out how the Plan will be implemented. It sets out roles, responsibilities and timelines related to each of the strategic actions.
- 3.9 Although the Action Programme is submitted to the Scottish Ministers alongside the Proposed Plan, it is not subject to formal Examination.

Implications for Scottish Borders

Vision and Key Outcomes

- 3.10 The Plan vision is for a thriving, successful and sustainable region. Key outcomes are set out and these include improved employment opportunities, reduced impact from climate change, well-designed homes to meet needs, vibrant town centres, reduced health and education inequalities, increased use of public transport, improved opportunities for cycling and walking.

Spatial Strategy

- 3.11 The spatial strategy is for most growth in and around Edinburgh and in the long term growth corridors. For the period up to 2030 most growth will be met by land already identified in existing Local Development Plans. Beyond 2030 growth will be directed to Edinburgh, the longer term growth corridors and settlements in the rural growth areas (in the Scottish Borders these equate to the growth areas identified in the Local Development Plan). Place making principles are set out to guide the development of the Local Development Plan.
- 3.12 The spatial strategy looks to the transport improvements to accommodate cross boundary movement, the maintenance of designations such as the area's Countryside around Towns, and the further development of strategic green networks in central and western Borders.
- 3.13 There is support for the development of new opportunities provided by the Borders railway both within immediately adjacent areas (including the Central Borders Business Park) and into the rural heartlands. The potential for the future extension of the railway to Hawick and beyond is set out. The opportunities provided by a new station at Reston are recognised, as are the improvements to key routes including the A1, the A7 and the A68. The opportunities provided by town centres and local access routes to promote tourism are also recognised.

A Place to do Business

- 3.14 The opportunities for tourism, recreation development and wider business and industrial growth and investment in the Central Borders business cluster are set out. There is also emphasis on the contribution to the city region by the rural economy through sectors including tourism, food and drink, textiles, farming and forestry, and low carbon and creative and niche industries.

- 3.15 The Plan identifies issues to be addressed including high speed broadband, promoting low carbon solar and hydro, business related to farming and forestry, promoting Eyemouth harbour as a potential offshore wind farm service port.
- 3.16 There is a proposal to establish a cross boundary windfarm working group and support for the Zero Waste Plan.

A Place for Communities

- 3.17 The Plan targets increasing housing delivery. For the Scottish Borders up to 2030 it is expected that there will be a requirement for 4594 homes including an additional generosity allowance of 10%. Estimates currently indicate that there is sufficient land currently identified within the Local Development Plan (and Supplementary Guidance) to meet this requirement in the Scottish Borders.
- 3.18 Local Development Plans are to identify the retail hierarchy of town centres and local centres within the Scottish Borders.

A Better Connected Place

- 3.19 The SESplan Proposed Plan places emphasis on the promotion of sustainable travel, and identifies a number of strategic walking and cycling routes within the Borders, along with key transport infrastructure set out in the strategy above.

Proposed Consultation Arrangements

- 3.20 It is expected that the ratification of the Proposed Plan and Action Programme will be completed in August 2016. Following printing and circulation of the documents, it is expected that the Plan will be published in September 2016 for a period of 6 weeks during which time representations to the Plan may be made.
- 3.21 There will be a public notice and placement of the documents on the internet, in council offices and in all public libraries. Key Agencies, adjoining planning authorities and strategic development plan authorities, and Community Councils will be advised of the representation process period.
- 3.22 An Engagement Action Plan will be prepared by SESplan in consultation with member authorities for agreement by the SESplan Board to set out the approach to engagement with key groups.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

The Council supports the funding of SESplan through its annual member contribution, and budget is in place to cover the Plan development costs.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

SESplan is the strategic development authority for Edinburgh and the South East of Scotland set up by the Scottish Government. The Council therefore has a duty to contribute to its effective operation and members and officers have been closely involved in its preparation. The ratification of the Proposed Plan is not considered to pose risk to the Council.

4.3 Equalities

There are no direct adverse equality implications arising from this report. The SESplan Proposed Plan has been subject to an Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no direct economic, social or environmental effects arising from this report. The SESplan Proposed Plan has been subject to an Environmental Report and a Habitats Regulation Appraisal.

4.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon emissions arising directly from this report.

4.6 Rural Proofing

The Proposed Plan has been subject to a rural proofing exercise, and there are no anticipated adverse impacts.

4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to the Council's Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation as a result of this report.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments incorporated into this report.

Approved by

Brian Frater

Service Director Regulatory Services

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
M. Wanless	Planning Policy and Access Manager Ext 5063

Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: None

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Contact us at: Jacqueline Whitelaw, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells.
Tel:01835 825431