

## **CABINET**

**20 DECEMBER 2011**

### **DRAFT LODGE HILL DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jane Chitty, Strategic Development and Economic Growth

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration Community and Culture

Authors: Brian McCutcheon, Planning Policy and Design Manager  
Caroline Allen, Lodge Hill Planning and Project Manager

#### **Summary**

On 2 August 2011 Cabinet approved a six-week consultation period on the draft Development Brief for the MOD site at Lodge Hill, Chattenden. This report sets out the results of the consultation, including a detailed schedule of responses at Appendix 1. The draft Development Brief expands on Policy CS33 of the Publication Draft Core Strategy; see separate item on this agenda.

Approval is now sought to adopt the Development Brief subject to changes to reflect the outcome of the consultation, and to grant delegated authority to the Director for Regeneration, Community and Culture, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development & Economic Growth, to approve minor changes to the Design Brief to improve its clarity and consistency, prior to its formal publication.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 The costs of preparing the Development Brief and the consultation have been met from the Planning Policy and Design budget and are being recharged to the prospective developer through an existing agreement.
- 1.2 The Development Brief expands on Policy CS33 of the Draft Core Strategy, which is the subject of a separate report on the Cabinet agenda. The Local Development Framework forms part of the council's Policy Framework. Pending adoption of the Core Strategy the Development Brief cannot be adopted as a supplementary planning document.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Policy CS33 of the Publication Draft Core Strategy makes a strategic allocation of an area of land at Lodge Hill. This land is allocated for a new settlement to include:
- Up to 5,000 dwellings
  - At least 43,000m<sup>2</sup> employment floorspace
  - At least 5,000m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace
  - Supporting infrastructure, community facilities and open space
- 2.2 This is a strategically important site for regeneration and growth in Medway. It will meet a significant portion of the area's housing need, including family housing, and has significant potential for higher-value employment uses that will contribute to meeting the aims of the Council's Economic Development Strategy. It can also create a step-change in the delivery of sustainable development in Medway and the wider Kent Thames Gateway.
- 2.3 Because of the importance of this site it is necessary to provide a more detailed planning policy framework than is possible in the Core Strategy. This draft Development Brief expands on Policy CS33 to provide further detail on the strategic principles set out in that document. It sets out the Council's expectations for the development and also addresses the relationship of Lodge Hill with the surrounding rural areas and smaller villages.
- 2.4 Once adopted, the Development Brief will become a material consideration in the determination of any planning applications for the Lodge Hill site. The development of Lodge Hill is expected to take at least 15 years and the Development Brief will provide a consistent guide and framework for developers over this time period.
- 2.5 The Development Brief, including the revisions recommended following the consultation, is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.6 **Copies of Appendices 1 and 2 have been sent to Cabinet Members, Ward Members, Group Rooms and the Chatham Contact Point. Further copies are also available from Democratic Services and via <http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=2337&Ver=4>**  
**Please contact 01634 332509/332008 for further details.**

## 3. Options

- 3.1 The alternatives to preparing a Development Brief for Lodge Hill are to:
- Prepare a formal Area Action Plan
  - Not prepare any detailed planning policy for the site and to rely on the draft Core Strategy Policy
- 3.2 In the first case, an Area Action Plan has greater weight and status within the planning system. However, it has a more complex and time-consuming procedure that must be followed for production. This would significantly delay the production of any detailed planning policy for the

Lodge Hill site. This would cause a consequent delay in the delivery of the regeneration and growth that the development can provide, or increase the risk of early and/or speculative planning applications needing to be determined before a full development policy framework for the site is in place.

- 3.3 In the second case, not producing any detailed policy for the site would reduce the amount of guidance and control that the Council would have over future development. It would also undermine confidence in the development among the local community and statutory bodies, where there are a number of concerns about the development that can best be addressed at this more detailed policy stage. It would not have any advantages in terms of timescale, as the Core Strategy's adoption process is longer than that for a Development Brief and in the absence of either there would be no policy justification to support a planning application on the site.
- 3.4 Accordingly it is not considered that either of these options would be a suitable alternative, given the importance of this site. It should be noted in this respect that an outline planning application for the site has recently been received and this therefore increases the urgency of ensuring that a suitable policy framework for the site is in place.

#### **4. Advice and analysis**

- 4.1 The Development Brief has been produced with the input of the prospective developers of Lodge Hill and the assistance of a considerable evidence base produced in support of the Draft Core Strategy. Statutory agencies, particularly Natural England, have also provided advice on key parts of the Development Brief. It is therefore considered that it represents a comprehensive document that will assist in the delivery of a high-quality development that meets the Council's and local community's aspirations.
- 4.2 The Development Brief takes the vision of Lodge Hill from the parent policy, CS33, in the Draft Core Strategy and expands on this. In particular, the aim for the development to be an exemplar of sustainability is fully considered in the Brief and standards are set that define what this should mean on the ground.
- 4.3 The Development Brief also considers the relationship between the development site and the surrounding rural communities. In this respect the consultation that has been carried out has been particularly valuable in adding to our understanding of the concerns and issues that these communities face in the light of the proposed Lodge Hill Development.
- 4.4 Procedurally, the Development Brief cannot become a full Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) at this stage because there is no adopted parent policy for it to hang from. However, an adopted document that has been through the same full consultation and assessment procedures as an SPD would still be given considerable weight in determining planning applications. When the Core Strategy has been adopted, it is the intention to upgrade the Development Brief to a full SPD status.

4.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment screening report for the Development Brief is attached at Appendix 3. The conclusion of this report is that a full Diversity Impact Assessment is not required.

## 5. Risk Management

5.1 There are considered to be limited risks associated with this work. The main risks are associated with failure to proceed or with legislative change. These are considered below:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Failure to proceed	Failure to proceed with the Development Brief would lead to a lack of control over future development including the current outline planning application and could lead to a loss of community confidence.	Strong support from Members and officers will enable ongoing community involvement and create certainty for future developers
Legislative and/or national policy changes	Resulting in revisions to the process or new legal requirements	Careful monitoring of national policy and its implications for Medway. Ensure that evidence base and policies are robust so they can be adapted to alternative procedures if necessary.

## 6. Consultation

6.1 A six-week public consultation period for the Development Brief was carried out from 30 August – 14 October 2011. This was advertised online and through posters and leaflets sent to the parish Councils, Hoo library and local community centers, and included:

- Public exhibitions (afternoon and evening) at High Halstow, Cliffe Woods, Chattenden, Hoo St Werburgh and Wainscott
- Publication of the draft Development Brief on the Council's website and through the Limehouse consultation portal
- Weekly webchat facility through the Lodge Hill Facebook page
- Attendance at existing local youth groups, Sure Start child health clinic, Chattenden Primary School's community group and Rural Liaison Committee

6.2 84 written responses to the draft Development Brief were received, in addition to one response via the webchat facility and verbal feedback at the various public exhibitions and local groups. A full schedule of the written responses is attached at Appendix 1, together with officers' response and the suggested resultant changes to the Development Brief. The main concerns related to the environmental and transport impacts of the development of the site, together with the potential impact on existing village facilities and some questions over how deliverability of the required supporting infrastructure, services and mitigation can be

assured.

6.3 Attendance at the public exhibitions (a total of 40 individuals) and uptake of the online facilities were disappointing, but useful feedback was received from those who did attend. In general, verbal feedback at the exhibitions was more positive than that received in writing from the local community. The seven people who attended the exhibitions at Chattenden, in particular, were broadly in favour of the development, and while there were mixed views elsewhere, including some general opposition to the prospect of development and a degree of concern regarding the potential impacts of the development, there was also broad support for many of the measures proposed in the Development Brief to address these potential impacts.

6.4 The prospective developer has also carried out a series of consultations on their proposals for the site, and the results of these were made available to officers when drafting the Development Brief.

## **7. Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 4 October 2011**

7.1 The Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the proposals for the Development Brief on 4 October 2011. The full minutes are set out in Appendix 4 to this report. In summary, the Committee was informed of the consultation responses received at that time and debated a number of issues about the proposed Development Brief. The Committee noted the contents of the Lodge Hill Development Brief, currently (then) out for public consultation and recommend that the Cabinet agree the Lodge Hill Development Brief subject to the outcome of consultation.

## **8. Financial and legal implications**

8.1 Because the Development Brief cannot become a full SPD at this stage, it will have slightly less weight in the planning system. However, its approval by Cabinet will enable it to be a significant 'material consideration'. Government guidance in PPS12 stresses the importance of full public engagement in the production of planning policy and by applying the same principles to this document its status can be maximised.

8.2 The prospective developer is meeting all costs associated with the production of the Development Brief.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 Cabinet is requested to adopt the Lodge Hill Development Brief, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, as amended in accordance with the schedule of consultation responses set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

9.2 That the Director for Regeneration, Community and Culture in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development & Economic Growth be granted delegated authority to approve minor

changes to the Lodge Hill Development Brief to improve its clarity and consistency, prior to its formal publication.

## **10. Suggested reasons for decision**

- 10.1 A Development Brief for Lodge Hill will provide greater certainty for future developers and the local community and will assist in securing Medway's regeneration and growth.

### **Lead officer contact**

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### **Background papers**

Draft Core Strategy (see separate item on this agenda)

Core Strategy and Lodge Hill evidence base: this is extensive and is available at

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/developmentplan/localdevelopmentframework/ldfevidencebase.aspx>)

## Diversity Impact Assessment: Screening Form

<b>Directorate</b> Regeneration, Community and Culture	<b>Name of Function or Policy or Major Service Change</b> Lodge Hill Development Brief		
Officer responsible for assessment Caroline Allen	Date of assessment 05/12/11	New or existing? New	
<b>Defining what is being assessed</b>			
<b>1. Briefly describe the purpose and objectives</b>	To expand on the relevant policy from the draft Core Strategy and provide a more detailed policy framework to support and control the delivery of the strategic development site on MOD land at Lodge Hill, including consideration of the site's relationship with the surrounding rural area and communities.		
<b>2. Who is intended to benefit, and in what way?</b>	Residents, businesses, workers and visitors of the proposed new development and the existing surrounding communities.		
<b>3. What outcomes are wanted?</b>	To ensure that Lodge Hill lives up to its exemplar vision To integrate the new development successfully into the existing rural community To ensure that any potential negative impacts of the development are addressed in a timely and comprehensive manner		
<b>4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?</b>	Contribute - Active participation and buy-in from different parts of Medway Council - Partnership working with outside bodies including the prospective developer - A clear, shared vision for the site	Detract - Economic downturn - Legislative change affecting planning and construction industry	
<b>5. Who are the main stakeholders?</b>	Residents, workers, visitors, developers, businesses, community and interest groups, Charities, other Council departments, statutory bodies		
<b>6. Who implements this and who is responsible?</b>	Developers & infrastructure providers Medway Council Planning Policy team		

<b>Assessing impact</b>		
<b>7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>racial/ethnic groups</i>?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.	
<b>8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>disability</i>?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	<p>The Development Brief includes principles encouraging inclusive design, including consideration of the needs of disabled people within the housing proposals for the site.</p> <p>The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.</p>	
<b>9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>gender</i>?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	<p>The vision for Lodge Hill is for an inclusive, active and well-functioning community, which will benefit individuals of both genders, and the Development Brief includes principles setting out how this can be taken forward.</p> <p>The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.</p>	
<b>10. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>sexual orientation</i>?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.	
<b>11. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>religion or belief</i>?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups	



	have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.	
<b>12. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to people's age?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	<p>The vision for Lodge Hill is for an inclusive, active and well-functioning community, which will benefit individuals of all ages, and the Development Brief includes principles setting out how this can be taken forward. Housing proposals for the site specifically consider the needs of elderly people and the need for community facilities addressing the needs of all age groups is also considered.</p> <p>The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.</p>	
<b>13. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>being transgendered or transsexual</i>?</b>	YES	Brief statement of main issue
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.	
<b>14. Are there any <i>other</i> groups that would find it difficult to access/make use of the function (e.g. speakers of other languages; people with caring responsibilities or dependants; those with an offending past; or people living in rural areas)?</b>	YES	If yes, which group(s)?
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	<p>The Development Brief specifically addresses the relationship of the new development to the rural communities which surround it and includes measures designed to improve integration and access to facilities and services amongst these communities.</p> <p>The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.</p>	
<b>15. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>multiple discriminations</i> (e.g. <u>disability and age</u>)?</b>	YES	
	NO	
<b>What evidence exists for this?</b>	The views of relevant groups have been sought through the consultation process, and these groups	

		have also been involved in the formulation of the parent policy within the draft Core Strategy. So far no adverse comments have been received.	
<b>Conclusions &amp; recommendation</b>			
16. Could the differential impacts identified in questions 7-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact?	YES		
	NO		
17. Can the adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or another reason?	YES	N/A	
	NO		
Recommendation to proceed to a full impact assessment?			
NO	This function/ policy/ service change complies with the requirements of the legislation and there is evidence to show this is the case.		
NO, BUT ...	What is required to ensure this complies with the requirements of the legislation? (see DIA Guidance Notes)?		
YES	Give details of key person responsible and target date for carrying out full impact assessment (see DIA Guidance Notes)		
<b>Planning ahead: Reminders for the next review</b>			
Date of next review			
Areas to check at next review (e.g. new census information, new legislation due)			
Is there <i>another</i> group (e.g. new communities) that is relevant and ought to be considered next time?			
Signed (completing officer/service manager)		Date	
Signed (service manager/Assistant Director)		Date	

**Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee – 4 October 2011**

**Lodge Hill Development Brief**

**Discussion:**

The Lodge Hill Planning and Project Manager introduced the report advising that the Development Brief expanded on Policy CS33 of the draft Core Strategy providing more detailed issues surrounding this site. Members were advised that the public consultation process ran until 14 October 2011 and would be revised and adopted ahead of the Core Strategy timetable. This was because the developer was keen to submit a planning application and the council would then have a Development Brief to consider the application against.

The committee was advised that, to date, only four written responses had been received but it was expected that more would arrive in the final week of the consultation period. Other responses had been verbal feedback from the series of public roadshows that had been held. The feedback had been mixed, with some people firmly against the development, mainly for transport and environmental concerns, in particular some woodland on the site. Expressions of support had been from Chattenden because of the health facilities, shops and transport links the development would bring to that area of Medway.

Members considered that the main issue for consideration was the transport links in and out of the site and were disappointed that the developer had not yet developed draft proposals for this, as it would be so important for the future success of the site and for Medway as a whole. Officers responded that the developer had moved on with the level of detail regarding transport links. A planning application was to be submitted soon and planners would have to be satisfied that the transport proposals at that stage complied with the standard of transport expected for the Lodge Hill site, as set out in the Development Brief.

Members questioned the anticipated creation of 5,000 jobs by the development of the site, stating that they thought this was a very high target. They asked what formula had been used to arrive at this figure? Officers responded that the figures were within the Economic Strategy for Medway where detailed work had been carried out around the capacity of the site and what it could deliver, which was evidence-based. It equated to producing one job per household as a minimum target.

The committee agreed that whilst it was good to see these ambitious figures, they questioned whether these were realistic, especially in the current economic climate, and may also create a false aspiration. Officers accepted that it was an ambitious target this new community should consist of a mix of

uses and the latest broadband provision would be provided throughout the site, which would encourage businesses to locate there. It was hoped that the Universities in Medway, which were reaching capacity on their current campus sites, would consider locating satellite buildings at Lodge Hill.

Members noted that the development of the site would involve a long construction period and that this could provide significant training opportunities for young people in Medway. Other large Council contracts included agreements for apprenticeships as part of the contract and Members hoped that the Lodge Hill development would take advantage of this type of opportunity as well.

The committee asked if the development provided any opportunity to improve transport elsewhere in Medway? Officers advised that improvements to town centre networks could only be requested from a developer where there was a definite, measurable impact to a town centre by the development. In studies so far, this had not been indicated but there would be a more detailed transport study carried out at a later stage and this would be considered at that time.

**Decision:**

The committee agreed to:

- (a) note the contents of the Lodge Hill Development Brief, currently out for public consultation;
- (b) recommend that the Cabinet agrees the Lodge Hill Development Brief subject to the outcome of consultation.