



Portfolio Holder Decision
Making Session and date/time

Portfolio Holder Delegated
Approval
18 September 2013
Council: 26th September 2013

Item

16

Public/Private

ADOPTION OF THE OSWESTRY 2020 TOWN PLAN

Responsible Officer: Andrew Evans, Head of Economic Growth & Prosperity
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1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks the endorsement of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing & Commissioning (Central) for the adoption of the Oswestry 2020 Town Plan (the 2020 Plan) by Shropshire Council as a material consideration for development management purposes. The ultimate responsibility for planning policy adoption falls to full Council. A copy of the 2020 Plan has been placed in the members' library and is available online at: <http://www.oswestry2020.co.uk/home.html>
- 1.2 The 2020 Plan has been prepared as a community led plan by a steering group comprising local residents and community representatives, chaired by the Mayor. The content of the 2020 Plan has been informed by an extensive programme of public consultation events. The steering group should be congratulated for the preparation of a high quality document which provides an analysis of local strengths and opportunities and identifies a clear vision, objectives and actions to guide the future of the town.
- 1.3 Shropshire Council has promoted community-led plans as a more sustainable model to the full-blown statutory process for neighbourhood development plans set out in the Localism Act. This means that the 2020 Plan will not need to undergo a costly examination or referendum, but is instead given weight by the Local Planning Authority through the resolution of Shropshire Council to draw on it to help inform development management decisions and by ensuring that the SAMDev Development Plan helps to deliver its vision and objectives.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing recommends to the full Council that the objectives and actions in the Oswestry 2020 Town Plan be endorsed and adopted as material considerations for development management purposes.

Reasons for decision:

To ensure that the Town Plan has been carefully considered before it is put before the full Council.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Shropshire Council's planning approach is committed to promoting and supporting community led planning as a more cost effective and sustainable alternative to the

Neighbourhood Plans introduced by the Localism Act. For such community led plans to be given formal weight as a material planning consideration when determining planning applications it is necessary for the Local Planning Authority to formally adopt the 2020 Plan with this stated intention. There is a well-established practice of adoption by the local planning authority for development management purposes.

- 3.2 Once adopted by the Local Planning Authority, the 2020 Plan should be given due weight by the Planning Inspectorate, not least due to the extensive public engagement which has informed its preparation. The 2020 Plan will also help inform the further development of the draft Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan. The SAMDev Plan will help to deliver the vision and objectives of the 2020 Plan by allocating specific sites for future development; by providing a policy framework for local development management decisions; and by appropriate cross-referencing to the 2020 Plan, confirming that developers will be expected to demonstrate how their proposals help to address its vision and objectives.
- 3.3 The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications must be considered in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Not only will the 2020 Plan be reflected in the statutory development plan as described above, but its adoption by Shropshire Council for development management purposes ensures that it is very clearly a material planning consideration. Nevertheless, other material considerations may on occasion over-rule the 2020 Plan, not least the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). While Shropshire Council may seek to apply the 2020 Plan in development management decisions, it is important to set local expectations at a realistic level, particularly in light of appeal decisions across England that regularly depart from adopted local plans when other considerations, particularly housing supply, are brought to bear.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Oswestry 2020 Town Plan has been prepared using funding made available by Government through the Neighbourhood Planning Frontrunners Project, supplemented by funding from Shropshire Council and Oswestry Town Council via the Oswestry Local Joint Committee. The adopted Town Plan does not commit Shropshire Council to any further expenditure.

5. Conclusions

The Oswestry 2020 Town Plan is a high quality document which provides an authoritative analysis of local strengths and opportunities and identifies a clear vision, objectives and actions to guide the future of the town. Formal adoption of the Plan by the Council in its role as Local Planning Authority will allow the content of the Town Plan to be given formal weight as a material planning consideration when determining planning applications.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Report to Cabinet 16th January 2013: Draft Development Management Policies

Report to Cabinet 26th June 2013: Site Allocations & Management of Development Plan (Oswestry Revised Preferred Options)

Key Decision: Yes

Included within Forward Plan: Yes

Name and Portfolio of Executive Member responsible for this area of responsibility:

Mal Price, Portfolio Holder Planning, Housing and Commissioning (Central)

Local Members: Keith Barrow; Martin Bennett; Vince Hunt; Peter Cherrington