



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING AND ACCESS

TOPIC – DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 4 : PLANNING FOR PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

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Committee Administrator:

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SUMMARY

The Government published a consultation paper on this matter in December 2007 which was subject of a Portfolio Holder Decision notice (PHD 128). This was, however, not confirmed as a revised Planning Policy Statement and since then, with the economic downturn, it has lead to a revised approach with the publication of this draft PPS.

Draft PPS 4 Planning for Prosperous Economies represents the Government's strategy to produce a streamlined, coherent set of planning policies designed to meet the economic challenges being faced today and over the longer term.

The key message from the revised guidance is that planning is an important lever towards improving economic performance and to this extent the revised guidance brings together the economic aspects from other planning policy statements (PPS6 Town Centres and PPS 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas).

To this extent the revised guidance defines economic development to include a broad range of activities which achieve at least one of the following objectives whether in urban or rural areas:-

- Provides employment opportunities
- Generates wealth or
- Produces or generates an economic output or product.

And then sets out a range of objectives for prosperous economies, including :-

- Achieving sustainable economic growth and raising the productivity growth rate of the economy;
- Build prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of cities, towns, regions and local areas – both urban and rural;
- Deliver sustainable patterns of development and responding to climate change;
- Promote high quality and inclusive design, improving the equality of the public realm;
- Improving accessibility – ensuring access by a choice of means of transport including the need to travel and providing alternatives to car use;
- Promote vitality and viability of town and other centres as important places for communities and ensure that they are economically successful;
- Promote social inclusion.

The revised guidance is set out in two parts, firstly covering plan-making policies, whether at regional or local level, and includes matters such as :-

- the need to positively encourage sustainable economic growth in both rural and urban locations – but in rural areas taking account of the need to protect the countryside;
- support existing business sectors and plan for new/emerging sectors – taking advantage of low carbon economic opportunities;
- facilitate new working practices such as live/work units and use of residential properties for home working;
- ensure that land allocations for economic development are based on the need and reasonable prospect of the site being used for such purposes during the plan period. If the site is unlikely to be used for the allocated economic use that the allocation should not be retained and wider economic uses or alternative uses such as housing should be considered;
- make provision for a broad range of business types;
- set out evidence-based policies for the delivery of sustainable transport, etc to support the planned economic development;
- set out a retail hierarchy to meet the needs of the population and catchments, and identify which centres will accommodate any identified growth with flexible town centre policies to respond to changing economic circumstances;

- encourage residential or office or appropriate uses above ground floor retail;
- identify opportunities within centres for development/redevelopment, support diversification in the town centre as a whole to promote consumer choice including a range of tourism, leisure and cultural activities;
- assessing additional retail floorspace must follow the need, sequential and impact test; and sites must be accessible;
- in urban areas encourage high-density development within existing centres accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.;
- include policies for managing the evening and night time economies in town centres;
- in rural areas economic development in open countryside away from existing settlements should be strictly controlled, with new development being located in or on the edge of existing settlements, with the countryside being protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty;
- in rural areas, local service centres should be identified as the preferred location for new economic development;
- set out criteria for farm diversification and replacement of buildings;
- establish car parking standards for non-residential development;

The second part of the draft guidance includes elements to be covered by development management policies – these provide greater detail as to the matters summarised above.

Finally the draft guidance includes an annex listing town centre health check indicators and one giving definitions of the range of data that may be useful in establishing a robust evidence base for both plans and policies.

DECISION

In general, the revised approach provides a comprehensive view of economic development and brings together those aspects of a number of existing Planning Policy Statements. A recommended response, including concerns raised, is set out in the accompanying schedule and in the responses to the list of consultation questions set out as part of the consultation procedure.

It is recommended that the comments and schedule appended to this decision notice be forwarded to the Department for Communities and Local Government as the formal response from Winchester City Council, by the close of the consultation period (28 July 2009).

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

This revised guidance, once confirmed by Government, will form the advice for both spatial planning and economic development plan/policy-making and decisions.

**FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION
NOTICE**

N/A

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR
OFFICER CONSULTED**

None

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

Signed 22.07.09

Councillor Keith Wood – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access

Appendix 1 - Proposed Winchester City Council comments on draft PPS4: Planning for Prosperous Economies

Appendix 2 – Planning Policy Statement Consultation Questions

Proposed Winchester City Council comments on draft PPS4: Planning for Prosperous Economies:-

Para/policy number	WCC Comment
Para 1	<p>Refers to all types of economic development, which is then defined at para 3 but excludes a number of uses that provide employment opportunities or produce economic products/outputs such as education, and health.</p> <p>If this PPS is to truly reflect all forms of economic development then the definition given needs to be broader.</p>
Policy EC1.3	<p>Refers to the local level – need to clarify if this is County or District</p> <p>Also in relation to evidence what is the role of community planning? A number of parish/town Councils undertake valuable research as part of Market Town Health Checks etc. These readily feed into the LDF process and should be referred to here.</p>
Policy EC1.4 part 5b	<p>What's the definition of 'local services'? Need to set out the intention of this otherwise it will be open to interpretation.</p>
Policy EC1.5 part 1 and 2	<p>Reference to hierarchy – need to clarify what this refers to – is this the regional retail/town centre hierarchy or another type?</p>
Policy EC1.5 part 2	<p>What is intended by 'office development of local importance' – how will this be determined? What matters need to be taken into account in determining this?</p>
Policy EC2	<p>Covers regional planning – what about sub-regional issues particularly where economic prosperity is key to growth.</p> <p>Part 4 refers to universities and hospitals but these are excluded from the definition on page 4 – need to clarify definition of economic development</p> <p>Part 6 refers to planning tools – the footnote on page 20 gives a useful explanation as to what is covered by this term, need to refer to this in this section.</p>

Policy EC5.1	Not all matters referred to in this policy are matters for Core Strategies – many aspects will be covered in subsequent DPDs. This needs to be left to the discretion of Local Planning Authorities to determine – the introductory para should refer generally to the LDF as do other policies in this section.
Policy EC14 and EC 15	<p>Both are entitled Local Development Framework - yet none of the other policies under this section on Decision Making Policies includes this header, needs consistency of approach.</p> <p>Also need to clarify whether these are planning application policies or plan making policies.</p> <p>As both these policies refer to development with rural areas/countryside, need to emphasise the appropriateness of scale and location, rather than just location (EC15.1 part 1)</p>
Policy EC14	<p>Includes uses such as hotels, serviced accommodation and residential which do not fall within the definition of economic prosperity set out at para 3.</p> <p>Also these elements (particularly hotels) are often not small scale as intended by this policy.</p>
Policy EC10 and EC17	Clarify why there are two policies covering same matter – repetition?



PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT Consultation Questions

When complete, please email to economicdevelopment@communities.gsi.gov.uk or post to Richard Canovan, Planning for Business Team, Communities and Local Government, 1/J3 Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU

PART 4: Consultation Questions

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Questions on which we would particularly like your views:

Please state whether you agree to your response being made public. **Yes**

1. **Do you support the consolidation and streamlining of national planning policy on economic development into a single policy statement? What do you think are the costs and benefits of the approach?**

Yes No

Comment: The concept of streamlining policy advice is supported, however the approach set out in this revision results in the partial review of related policy statements which (para 1) suggests will be replaced by guidance notes. To ensure a seamless process in the guidance available to practitioners this needs to be undertaken simultaneously to ensure continuity of approach and that all aspects of policy guidance are included. In particular the references to car parking standards are misleading as they refer to car parking for non-residential development which does not just relate to the uses listed at para 3 under the definition given of economic development. Users requiring car parking policy are not automatically going to search an economic prosperity document for detailed planning policy on such matters.

2. **Does the draft Statement include all that you understand to be policy from draft PPS4, PPG5, PPS6 and PPS7? If not, please be specific about what paragraphs in any of these documents you feel should be included in this document? Please can you explain why this should be the case?**

Yes No

Comment:

3. **Other than where specifically highlighted, the process of streamlining policy text previously in draft PPS4, PPS6 and PPS7 to focus on policy rather than guidance is not intended to result in a change in policy. Are there any policies which you feel have changed in this process? Please tell us what you think has changed and provide alternative wording that addresses your concerns.**

Yes No

Comment:

4. **Does the structure of the draft Statement make it easier to understand what is required at different stages in the planning process? Are there any improvements you would like to see made?**

Yes No

Comment: The structure of the document needs clarifying with an explanation of the main differences between the plan making policies vs decision making policies, particularly as some elements are covered under both sections e.g car parking for non-residential development. It also needs to set out broadly to which geographical areas the policies specifically apply – some policies are explicit and refer to urban or rural areas, others lack clarity.

5. **Do you think the restructuring of the impact test from the consultation draft of PPS6 achieves the right balance and is it robust enough to thoroughly test the positive and negative impacts of development outside town centres?**

Yes No

Comment:

6. **Should more be done to give priority in forward planning and development management to strategically important sectors such as those that support a move to a low carbon economy, and if so, what should this be?**

Yes No

Comment: References to a low carbon economy are few and economic growth and prosperity as promoted through this policy statement, could potentially have a significant impact on climate change matters, this element needs much greater emphasis and references to green procurement, BREEAM standards etc need to be highlighted. The growth of 'green' businesses

also needs emphasis as these provide employment opportunities and economic diversification as set out at para 3, objectives 2 and 3.

7. Is the approach to the determination of planning applications set out in policy EC21 proportionate?

Yes No

Comment:

8. Do you think the requirement for regional spatial strategies to set targets for employment land targets for each district in their area should be imposed? Please give reasons for your view.

Yes No

Comment: With the range of economic matters included under the definition of economic development as set out at para 3, it would be difficult to set employment land targets for each district without having a precise knowledge as to the existing economic structure of the District. Given the concept of flexibility now promoted through the spatial planning system to set prescriptive requirements would be contrary to this and potentially result in land allocations not taken up and therefore need to be released under Policy EC4.1. 7.

9. Do you agree the policies do enough to protect small or rural shops and services, including public houses? If no, please explain what changes you would like to see.

Yes No

Comment:

10. In response to Matthew Taylor, we have altered the approach to issues such as farm diversification. What do you consider are the pros and cons of this approach?

Yes No

Comment: Whilst the findings of the Taylor review are reflected in this draft statement, there is a need to ensure that economic development in rural areas remains in proportion to the scale of the location, and strictly controlled with new development being located in or on the edge of existing settlements. This is expressed in some detail in Policy EC9 which

is supported.

It is particularly positive to see in policy EC12.3 point 5 support for “small-scale economic development...that are remote from local service centres, recognising that a site may be an acceptable location for development even though it may not be readily accessible by public transport”. This concurs with the Taylor review which explains the need for such development despite a lack of regular public transport in rural areas.

- 11. Do you think that the proposals in this draft PPS will have a differential impact, either positive or negative, on people, because of their gender, race or disability? If so how in your view should we respond? We particularly welcome the views of organisations and individuals with specific expertise in these areas.**

Yes No

Comment: