

THE EXECUTIVE

14 JUNE 2005

JOINT REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND HEALTH AND THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

BARKING TOWN CENTRE HOUSING STRATEGY	FOR DECISION	
<p><i>This report concerns the principles for Housing Regeneration in Barking Town Centre; such strategic matters are reserved to the Executive.</i></p> <p>Summary</p> <p>The volume of housing development in Barking Town Centre over the next 10 years is likely to outstrip any development levels seen in the Borough for the last 30 years. For this reason it is vital that the homes built meet the needs of the existing and future communities and the wider aims of The Sustainable Communities Plan.</p> <p>This level of development must also be brought forward in phases which meet market demand and includes the correct levels of Infrastructure both social and physical.</p> <p>The Barking Town Centre Housing Strategy seeks to provide a summary of all the current issues that effect housing development in the Town Centre including the national, regional and local policy context. It builds on the Framework plan target of 4,000 new homes giving information about which sites will provide these and how tenure splits and property types will be agreed with Developers and Registered Social Landlords (RSL's).</p> <p>Wards Affected – Abbey and Gascoigne</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Executive is requested to agree the Strategy (attached as Appendix 1) to be published and used as the guide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting all of the current policy objectives for new housing developments and ensuring that housing regeneration fits into the wider regeneration agenda; and• Indicating how the target of 4,000 net new homes in Barking Town Centre can be achieved, providing more balanced tenure whilst maintaining levels of affordable rented homes. <p>Reason</p> <p>To ensure that new housing development and estate regeneration contributes to the Community Priorities of “<i>Regenerating the Economy</i>” and “<i>Improving Health Housing and Social Care</i>”.</p>		
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1. Background

- 1.1 The Framework Plan estimates that over 4,000 new homes can be provided within the town centre, creating a balanced community and creating a distinctive character for the area. The Framework Plan has been endorsed by the Council as the means for going forward with the regeneration of the Town Centre and has been turned into an Interim Planning Guidance.
- 1.2 Current levels of social rented housing in Abbey and Gascoigne Wards are approaching 80% to meet the aims of the Sustainable Communities Plan we must strive to balance this, increase housing choice in terms of type and tenure and provide the infrastructure to support the Community.
- 1.3 When discussing proposed schemes with developers, RSL's and Master Planners it became apparent that a document was needed to act as a guide to meeting all of the current policy objectives for new housing developments and how housing regeneration fitted into the wider regeneration agenda. The document would also be able to show how the 4,000 target and the objective of mixed tenure could be achieved.
- 1.4 The Strategy covers the following areas;
- How housing in the Town Centre has developed up to present day
 - Decent Homes - the investment in our own housing stock
 - The current information about need and the housing market and the aims of the current Housing Strategy
 - The London Thames Gateway Urban Development Corporation
 - The Barking Town Centre Interim Planning Guidance
 - The required levels of affordable housing and the requirements of larger developments to achieve London Plan Targets
 - Supported Housing, BME, older people and key worker strategies
 - Physical and Social Infrastructure
 - How the regeneration of estates and redevelopment effects the existing residents
 - The Framework Plan, Urban Design and environmental sustainability
 - The Delivery of the proposed 4,000 net new homes in the Town Centre

2. The Aims of the Strategy

- 2.1 The Strategy document aims to ensure that all new homes in the Town Centre including estate regeneration, redevelopment of existing and brown field sites in both the public and private Sector ownership can;
- Contribute to the aims of Decent Homes and link with work of Housing Futures.
 - Contributes to the delivery of 4,000 net new homes in Barking Town Centre
 - Achieves a sustainable balance of tenures across the Town Centre whilst retaining current levels of affordable rented property
 - Reach high environmental standards to contribute to the sustainability agenda
 - Make high impact and visible improvements across all areas and each estate
 - Accommodate the growing diversity in housing need with a greater variety of housing choice both in terms of tenure, size and type

- Introduce a greater mix of tenure, in order to achieve the balance between rented and private ownership
- Ensure that all Barking's housing, new and existing achieves a balance of meeting existing need and aspirations.
- Increase the general housing densities to maximise the Town Centre location within easy access of public transport
- Ensure that the highest quality urban design standards are incorporated into all new forms of housing
- Integrate the redevelopment with the rest of the Town Centre
- Ensure that the needs of all groups including Black and Minority Ethnic, older people, young people and key workers are considered in all new housing provision

3. Funding the aims of the Strategy

- 3.1 The Strategy does not deal with the complexities of the financial details on the provision of affordable housing; In order to provide the level of affordable homes suggested could require approximately £272 million over the next 10-15 years. This will be achieved by a combination of Housing Corporation funding, section 106 contributions and cross subsidy from private developers. It is not expected to place any direct burdens on the Capital Programme. The Strategy's aim is to set our objectives rather than to be prescriptive about methods of finance.
- 3.2 The financial implications for the Council as a major land owner are dealt with in a report agreed by the Executive on 20 July 2004 (minute 53 refers) concerning Council Land and Asset Disposals - Funding New Affordable Housing and Regeneration Initiatives. The implication of this is that the capital receipts being forgone for the housing land disposals, which would otherwise be reinvested in the Council's housing stock, is approx £275 million. However, it has been agreed that this potential resource is best realised through the regeneration of the area which includes the provision of higher quality new affordable homes and meeting all the objectives of this Strategy and the Barking Town Centre Action Plan.
- 3.2 The recommendations of this report deal with, in principle, foregoing capital receipts for Council housing land / asset disposals where projects meet corporate objectives in terms of regeneration, the achievement of the decent homes target and the aim of providing sustainable communities. This would apply to Barking Town Centre where a clear case can be demonstrated to ensure value for money is achieved from the disposal of the asset. On projects of this nature the Executive will receive a detailed report on each proposal for a reduced capital receipt before commencement of that proposal.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Strategy when approved will be published and given to developers and RSL's to be used in conjunction with the Interim Planning Guidance to ensure that they are fully aware of the Council's objectives. It will also be used to provide to the Greater London Authority the evidence of how the London Plan targets will be met in the regeneration of Barking Town Centre as a programme thus providing the context for future discussion.

5. Consultation

5.1 The following have been consulted on the contents of this report;

David Woods – Director of Housing and Health
Niall Bolger – Director of Regeneration and Environment
Ken Jones – Head of Housing Strategic Development
Jeremy Grint – Head of Regeneration
David Waller – Interim Head of Regeneration Finance
Property Services

Background Documents

- The Sustainable Communities Plan (Homes for all) – ODPM Jan 2005
- The Barking Framework Plan – Sept 2002
- Mayors London Plan – Feb 2004
- Barking Interim Planning Guidance – Dec 2004
- Barking and Dagenham Housing Strategy 2003-6