



# **Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee**

Date: **18 March 2008**

Report of: **Frank Campbell – Havant Borough Council**

Subject: **PUSH Sustainability Policy Framework**

## **SUMMARY**

Following the Joint Committee meeting on 28 January 2008 when the report on this Policy Framework was deferred for further consideration, officers have now amended the report to reflect the concerns expressed. The revisions were considered by the Planning and Sustainability Members Panel on the 26 February when they were agreed for reconsideration by the Joint Committee. The revised report provides a justification for a policy framework for the sub region to ensure that the significant new development that will take place over the next 20 years within the PUSH area is built sustainably.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Joint Committee endorses and supports the approach set out in this report.
2. That the Joint Committee recommends that each PUSH partner local authority integrates the Policy Framework, set out in this report, into their Local Development Framework, at the earliest opportunity. (For authorities which are only partly within the PUSH Sub Region this recommendation applies only to those parts of the authorities that lie within the Sub Region).

## **INTRODUCTION - CONTEXT AND OVERALL JUSTIFICATION**

1. The development growth proposed in South Hampshire over the next 20 years represents an important opportunity to build to high standards of sustainable design. It is essential that high standards of sustainable design are achieved to respect and enhance the sub region's unique environmental constraints and characteristics. These include:-
  - The sub region is exposed to the tilting of the South of England land mass caused by the pre-historic melting of ice-sheets;
  - The sub region's low lying coastal landscape is most susceptible to the impacts of climate change through rising sea levels and increasing frequency of storm events;
  - The sub region has a high concentration of sensitive internationally and nationally designated natural environments and habitats;
  - The sub region is identified by the Environment Agency as being an area of serious water stress;
  - The sub region's coastal built heritage is worthy of protection in the national interest;
  - The sub region's coastal location is fundamental to its economy;
  - The sub region is the largest and most densely populated urbanised area in the South East outside London, where a properly integrated approach to economic, social and environment assets poses particular challenges but is crucial to the achievement of sustainable development objectives.
2. Achieving sustainable and environmentally sensitive development across the sub region requires joint working and the application of consistent standards and principles. This joint working is being coordinated through the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). The impact of all development on and its resilience to climate change is a global challenge which each authority within PUSH will need to meet with local innovation and through collaboration with its spatial partners. Each Council's spatial plans and its development proposals must include measures to mitigate their impact on and to adapt to climate change.
3. Recognising the importance of the climate change challenge, PUSH submitted a sub regional policy to SEERA and that policy was incorporated into the Draft South East Plan as Policy SH14. A copy of the submitted policy SH14 is attached as an appendix to this report for information. Recognition of the sub region's need for a specific policy to meet the challenge of ensuring that development growth is sustainable has been confirmed by the Panel Report into the South East Plan. The Panel supported Policy SH14, which sought higher standards than the general sustainability policies for the region as a whole.

## **THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

4. To take Policy SH14 forward, a policy framework approach has been developed by PUSH officers. The policy framework translates Policy SH14 into a set of principles, which each authority should reflect in their emerging Core Strategy. The wording of the Policy Framework is set out below in paragraphs 8 to 16. The wording of the policy framework principles is not intended to be prescriptive: it provides a consistent basis on which each authority can tailor the wording in its own policies. The consistent use of all the policy framework principles within Core Strategies and other Local Development Documents is essential to ensure a high level of sustainability in new development over the whole PUSH area. This will be an important factor in reassuring existing and new communities about the overall impact of new development.
5. National approaches to sustainability policy are changing rapidly. A significant development has been the Code for Sustainable Homes (December 2006). This Code (CSH) provides a nationally recognised set of standards for residential sustainable development. The opportunity has been taken to incorporate the CSH into the policy framework because it provides a recognised basis for consistent training and understanding not only for the relevant staff of the PUSH Authorities but also within the development industry operating within South Hampshire. Most significantly the CSH scoring system is proposed as the basis for escalating sustainability targets over the plan period.
6. The policy framework provides a level of detail appropriate for shaping policies in a Core Strategy. There is much more detail that developers, members, planning control officers and the public will need in order to understand how new development can be made sustainable. A background guidance document is being produced by PUSH officers to provide just such an evidence base. This will add detail on the justification for the policy framework principles and on the practicalities of building sustainable homes, employment space and shops. This document could also form the basis for a Supplementary Planning Document which could be agreed jointly by PUSH Authorities and tailored to meet their specific needs as appropriate. This document will come forward for consideration during the next few months.
7. The policy framework has been subject to consultation with business interests and in particular the development industry, and has been developed jointly by officers of all the PUSH Authorities to gain agreement to the principles. Detail of the consultation will be provided in the evidence base document referred to in the previous paragraph.

## **PROPOSED COMMON POLICY FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES**

8. Local Development Frameworks within the PUSH area should include policies to deliver all of the following principles:
  - The LDF Sustainability Policies will apply to all development<sup>1</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> For these purposes, “development” means 1 dwelling or more and 500m<sup>2</sup> or more of non-residential floorspace.

- The scale and density of development is matched by its level of accessibility to the necessary social, environmental and economic infrastructure, especially by walking, cycling or by public transport, as demonstrated through the design and access statement; and
- All new development will incorporate best practice principles of urban design and ensure that the completed development creates and contributes to a high quality public realm including green infrastructure for the local community; and
- Adequate land or funding has been provided for waste management infrastructure; and
- It meets the sequential and exception test (where required) in relation to PPS25 and the findings of the PUSH Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; and
- It protects and enhances the natural and built environment. Where development unavoidably has an adverse impact on the natural or built environment, mitigation measures will be required; and
- It contributes to the delivery of xx MW of new renewable energy by 2020 and carbon neutrality in the authority
- Where it is part of a major area of development, it either links to existing or produces its own local renewable energy and also maximizes resource efficiency opportunities; and
- When permitted it meets the following minimum Code for Sustainable Homes threshold level, and equivalents for non-residential development, as set out below:

<b>All residential development achieves at least the following level (Star rating) of the Code for Sustainable Homes</b>		<b>All multi-residential and non-residential developments with a floor space of over 500 m<sup>2</sup> must achieve at least the following BREEAM standards</b>
<b>Until the end of 2011</b>	3	BREEAM 'very good'
<b>from 2012</b>	4	BREEAM 'excellent'
<b>from 2016</b>	6	BREEAM 'excellent'

#### **PROPOSED COMMON POLICY FRAMEWORK – EXPLANATORY DETAIL**

9. To accompany the Policy Framework principles set out above, PUSH is developing guidance to aid implementation. This will assist PUSH authorities in incorporating the principles of the Policy Framework into their Local Development Frameworks (LDF). The following paragraphs (10 -16) provide guidance on interpreting the Framework principles.

## **Density and Accessibility**

10. A fundamental issue for spatial planning is to ensure that development density is maximised at locations with good accessibility to a range of social, environmental and economic infrastructure. Social, environmental and economic infrastructure includes civic functions, social services, cultural facilities, education, leisure, green space infrastructure, shopping and jobs. The implementation of the framework seeks a minimum density of 60 dwellings per hectare which must be of good urban design. The identification of highly accessible locations will be a matter for each authority to define within Local Development Frameworks but would be expected to include city and town centre locations. Where these higher densities apply, it will be essential to ensure that the development proposals meet the highest quality of urban design and that the proposals result in the creation of, or contribution to, high quality public realm and green infrastructure for the local community. Individual authorities may seek higher minimum densities and/or wider areas to which these higher densities apply. Such higher densities and/or areas should be identified and justified within Local Development Frameworks on the basis of their accessibility to public transport connections and a range of social, economic and environmental infrastructure.

## **Waste Management**

11. Waste management infrastructure includes all physical aspects of the waste hierarchy, ranging from adequate refuse storage space within the curtilage of individual dwellings for non recyclable, recyclable and composting waste to the provision of construction material recycling and material recycling centres in major developments.

## **Renewable Energy**

12. The amounts of renewable energy each authority will need to contribute to the overall PUSH target of 100MW will be agreed through the emerging Energy Study commissioned by PUSH and reflecting each authority's scope for producing renewable energy.
13. Carbon neutrality requires a developer to demonstrate how their development will achieve this. They must adopt a sequential approach to reducing carbon emissions, involving one or more of the following, in order of priority:
  1. Maximising passive energy efficiency;
  2. Incorporating renewable energy on site;
  3. Utilisation of low carbon energy supply;
  4. On smaller development sites, contributions to a carbon offset fund.

On small developments of fewer than 10 dwellings and less than 1000m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floorspace, a financial Carbon Offset Contribution may be accepted that can be used to provide sustainable energy elsewhere within the area.

## **Major Areas of Development**

14. For the purpose of this Policy Framework, major areas of development are  $\geq 250$  dwellings or  $\geq 5000\text{m}^2$  of non-residential development. In such developments there will be a requirement to provide either on site renewable energy or a link into an existing local renewable supply.
15. At major development areas there will also be a specific requirement to maximise Resource Efficiency focussed (a) on water conservation and (b) dealing with the whole waste stream through the application of the waste hierarchy.

## **Target Table**

- 16 The targets in the table within the Policy Framework at paragraph 8, set a timetable for reaching the Government target of zero carbon homes by 2016. The timetable provides escalating targets from now until 2016. These have been set in the context of the unique impacts that climate change will have on the sub region and the progress being made by the development industry in creating lower carbon products. It is considered that the escalating targets provide a realistic staged progression to zero carbon development.

## **ISSUES & IMPLICATIONS**

17. The Policy framework principle and the explanatory detail provide a sound basis from which all the PUSH authorities can develop their LDF policies. A number of authorities may wish to go beyond the requirements of the Policy Framework principles, for example in terms of the housing densities that they may wish to apply. Those will be matters for individual authorities and should be encouraged in terms of providing even more sustainable development. Nevertheless the Policy Framework provides an appropriate base level that everybody concerned with development in the sub region will become familiar with and therefore more able to deliver in taking forward development proposals.
- 18 The development industry has raised concerns about the challenging targets and in particular what they feel is the rapid pace proposed in the Policy Framework to escalate from Level (Star rating) 3 to Level (Star rating) 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes by 2016. However it is clear that, based on the points identified in paragraph 1 above, there is justification to apply such targets within the sub region in order to ensure that the level of development growth now planned is sustainable.
- 19 Establishing the Policy Framework principles early in the evolution of LDF policies will alert developers to the need to factor these requirements into their investment programmes and make provision for any additional costs in land purchases.

## **CONCLUSION**

20. Government published the Climate Change supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 on the 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2007. That document gives support to a locally set sustainability target approach as suggested in this Policy Framework.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> February the Government confirmed that from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008 all new homes should be assessed against the Code for Sustainable Homes star ratings. The Sustainability Policy Framework provides a PUSH wide position for all new development that accords with the principles that the Government is promoting. It is therefore now recommended that the Joint Committee support this approach and commend the Sustainability Policy Framework to each PUSH Authority for integration into their individual LDFs.

Approved by the Monitoring Officer	Mark Heath, Southampton CC	Date:	
Approved by the Finance Officer	Jon Pittam, Hants CC	Date:	

**Background Papers:**

**Code for Sustainable Homes (December 2006 & February 2008)**

**South East Plan (submitted draft)**

**South East Plan – Panel Report**

**Planning Policy Statements 1, 3, 9, 22 & 25**

**Reference Papers:**

**Enquiries:**

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**Extract from Draft Sub Regional Strategy for South Hampshire (part of Draft South East Plan)**

**Environmental Sustainability : Policy SH14**

**2.34** The substantial development proposed in South Hampshire represents an important opportunity to build to high standards of sustainable design. Achieving sustainable and environmentally sensitive development will require joint working and the application of common standards across the sub-region. New development must have regard to the high quality of the subregion's natural environment, and must contribute to improving the existing environmental quality of its many urban and suburban areas. Development must be planned with a long-term time horizon in mind, so as to create desirable places to live that will retain and attract highly skilled people and provide enhanced quality of life and inclusion opportunities for everyone. Development must respect the sub-region's natural resources including high levels of biodiversity, high quality but vulnerable water resources, changing coastlines, and important historic and cultural assets. It must be carried out in a way that minimises resource usage during construction and throughout the life cycle of the facilities and infrastructure established.

**2.35** In seeking to achieve sustainable and environmentally sensitive development, the South Hampshire authorities will work to the following principles:

- i** Excellence of urban and suburban design that reflects the historic and cultural significance of the area and contributes to an effective life/work balance
- ii** Development that aims to protect the environmental quality of the subregion and creates new landscapes of quality to enhance the natural environment
- iii** Sensitive design of interfaces at the urban/rural fringe to provide amenities and reduce pressures on surrounding landscapes
- iv** Stabilisation and reduction in the use of resources
- v** Net self-sufficiency in resource recycling and waste handling
- vi** Joint decision making on targets for resource usage and planning for resource management infrastructure
- vii** Planning that takes into account necessary mitigation and adaptation measures with regard to climate change
- viii** The application of common environmental standards across the sub-region.

**POLICY SH14:  
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**The South Hampshire authorities will:**

- i** **Produce a common framework, for incorporation into Local Development Frameworks, that establishes density ranges for development related to accessibility to services and public transport, that favours development around transport hubs and community infrastructure within a reasonable radius to encourage pedestrian and bicycle movement, and where possible joins**

development to the natural environment through linked and accessible open spaces that promote both recreational opportunities and high biodiversity

- ii** Jointly plan the infrastructure and approaches necessary to make effective management and use of natural resources an integral part of a growing economy in the sub-region
- iii** Co-operate on assessment of and planning for effective coastal zone management to address the risk of sea level rise, and co-operate to minimise the risk of other forms of flooding
- iv** Require new commercial and residential buildings in the sub-region to achieve at minimum an equivalent rating to Ecohomes/BREEAM Very Good, and post 2012 an equivalent rating to Ecohomes/BREEAM Excellent, with particular emphasis on water efficiency, unless such requirement is impractical due to the size of the development
- v** Adopt measures to encourage the use of recycled materials in all construction
- vi** Require developments to incorporate energy efficient passive solar design principles to the extent possible, promote high standards of energy efficiency in new and existing development, and require developers to provide at least 10% of energy demand from renewable sources in housing schemes of over 10 dwellings and commercial schemes of over 1,000 square metres
- vii** Deliver a minimum of 100 MW of renewable energy in the sub-region by 2020
- viii** Achieve a decrease of between 8% and 20% in water use (compared to the national average in 2005) for all new development, help promote more efficient water use in existing developments and require implementation of sustainable urban drainage systems where feasible in all new developments. The authorities will develop common policies to achieve these aims in their Local Development Frameworks.