

# **South Lakeland District Council Local Development Framework**

## **Core Strategy**

### **Comments on implications of recent Government Announcements by South Lakeland District Council**

June 2010

## Introduction

1. In a letter dated 16th June 2010, the Inspector has asked for the Council's views on the implications of recently announced government changes for the soundness of the submitted South Lakeland Core Strategy.
2. These announced changes are: -
  - i. the Secretary of State's notice of intention to abolish the Regional Spatial Strategy in his letter of 27 May 2010;
  - ii. the exclusion of residential garden land from the definition of Previously Developed Land in PPS3 Annex B
  - iii. The deletion of the national indicative minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare from PPS Para 47.

## Council's Response

3. The Council does not consider that these announced changes affect the soundness of the Core Strategy, or require significant changes, for the reasons set out below. However the Core Strategy text will require some changes to reflect changes to PPS3 and to clarify the implications of the Government's announcement for the status of the RSS. Annexe 1 sets out the necessary changes;

## Regional Spatial Strategy:

4. The RSS for the North West was approved in September 2008. The Regional Planning Body, 4NW, has been progressing a partial review of RSS, which includes proposed targets at local authority level for providing site accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People. In addition, 4NW has commenced preparation of a single regional strategy, RS2010, which is reviewing housing and employment land targets. At the present time, it is understood that work on the partial review has been suspended. 4NW continue to believe that the Northwest will benefit from a shared vision and an agreed set of integrated priorities and are therefore developing a succinct and streamlined non-statutory, high-level framework/plan for the Northwest, which builds on the RS2010 work.
5. Whilst the Core Strategy remains part of the Development Plan, the Secretary of State's announcement is a material consideration. Whilst most of the Core Strategy is based on the Council's own evidence base and local circumstances, there are some areas where the Core Strategy has a relationship with existing and emerging Regional Strategy. The key areas are the following;
  - **Sequential approach to the location of new development** (CS Policy CS1.1 (Sustainable Development) requires that development should comply with the sequential approach in Policy DP4 of the RSS);
  - **Settlement Hierarchy** (CS Policy CS1.2 – The Development Strategy) sets criteria for the definition of settlements;
  - **Housing Requirement** (CS Policy CS6.1 – Meeting the Housing Requirement. The RSS requires the development of 8,800 dwellings between 2003 and 2025;

- **Provision of Affordable Housing** (CS Policy CS6.3) – states that the Council will consider the appropriateness of allocating sites in every community in the plan area in order to achieve housing requirements in the RSS and to meet local needs;
- **Gypsy and Traveller sites** (CS Policy 6.5a) refers to making appropriate provision for Gypsies and travellers in line with emerging targets in the partial review of RSS.
- **Efficient Use of Land and Buildings** (CS Policy 6.6) as submitted seeks to ensure that at least 50% of new dwellings are delivered on Previously Developed Land reflecting a target set in RSS;
- **Employment Land** (Para 8.4) refers to the RSS approach to the pattern and scale of new employment development;
- **Renewable Energy** (CS Policy 8.7) makes reference to regional targets for renewable energy.

6. These will be discussed in turn.

#### Sequential approach to the location of new development

7. The Council considers that the sequential approach in RSS Policy DP4 remains a logical, rational and sustainable approach to the location of new development. However the reference in Core Strategy Policy CS1.1 to RSS Policy DP4 needs to be amended so that bullet 8 now reads;

*Development should accord with the following sequential approach:*

- *first, using existing buildings (including conversion) within settlements, and previously developed land within settlements;*
- *second, using other suitable infill opportunities within settlements;*
- *third, the development of other land where this is well located in relation to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure.*

8. This will not change the import of the policy but will ensure that these key sustainable development considerations are maintained if and when the RSS is revoked.

#### Spatial Strategy

9. In relation to the Spatial Strategy (Policy CS1.2), the Council has drawn on the settlement definitions in the Regional Spatial Strategy, tempered by the former Structure Plan to identify key and local service centres, as required in RSS policy RDF2. Notwithstanding any proposed revocation of the RSS, the Council considers that the principles for determining the settlement hierarchy remain sound and founded on sustainable development principles and considers that they form an appropriate basis for the spatial strategy. There is therefore no requirement to amend the settlement hierarchy in the light of the recent announcements. The Council therefore proposes no change, other than to clarify the status of the RSS by inserting the following text after Paragraph 2.2;

*At the time of adoption, the Secretary of State had recently announced his intention to revoke Regional Strategies. Although, if the Regional Strategy is revoked, the principles for defining settlement hierarchies will no longer be part of the Development Plan, the Council remains of the view that these are*

*soundly based and, having regard to local circumstances, form a rational basis for the definition of Principal Service Centres, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres in the Core Strategy.*

#### Housing Requirement

10. The Council supports the target of 400 dwellings per annum set out in RSS policy L4, and considers it to be well founded on the evidence of high levels of affordable housing need set out in the 2006 South Lakeland Housing Needs and Market Assessment, which formed the basis for the Council's participation in the RSS process and subsequent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), December 2009. It therefore considers that no change is required, other than to clarify the status of the RSS in the Policy and Reasoned justification. It is suggested that reference to the RSS be deleted from the policies and the following text be inserted before Para 7.1;

*At the time of adoption, the Secretary of State had recently announced his intention to revoke Regional Strategies. Although, if the Regional Strategy is revoked, its dwelling completion targets will no longer be part of the Development Plan, the Council remains of the view that these are soundly based and, having regard to clear affordable housing needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, environmental capacity and deliverability constraints, remain a sound basis for the delivery of new housing in South Lakeland District.*

#### Affordable and Local Occupancy Housing (Policy CS6.3)

11. The level of affordable housing requirement is based on local evidence of need and viability and not a requirement set by the RSS. The policy on local occupancy in the Core Strategy housing is supported by RSS policy L4, but is also based on evidence of need. SLDC consider that no change is required, other than to *delete reference to the RSS in Policy CS6.3*).

#### Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People (Policy CS6.5)

12. In view of the government's announced intentions for the RSS and the cessation of work on the Partial Review, it is considered appropriate that policy CS6.5 be modified to delete the phrase *"and emerging targets in the RSS"*. The Council will continue to monitor needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and make provision in line with the criteria of the policy.

### Efficient Use of Land and Buildings

13. The removal of the 50% Previously Developed Land target derived from RSS and its replacement with a more sustainable 28% PDL target is already put forward in Inspector's Proposed Change 1. This issue is discussed in the previous response.

### Employment Land Requirement:

14. The scale and distribution of employment land and premises is based on the 2005 Employment Land and Premises Study, and not on the RSS. We therefore consider the Core Strategy remains sound in this regard and propose no change other than to *delete the first sentence of Paragraph 8.4 to remove reference to the RSS.*

### Sustainable construction, energy efficient and renewable energy:

15. (CS8.7) This policy states that the Council will seek to achieve appropriate on-site renewable and low energy sources wherever possible, contributing towards the target in RSS policy EM17. This policy remains founded in national policy and the Council will continue to seek to achieve on-site renewable and low-carbon energy sources wherever possible. The Council is currently working with other Cumbrian authorities on a renewable energy study which will inform the setting of local targets. The Council proposes no change other than to clarify the status of the RSS by deleting Para 9.26 and the words '*contributing to the target in RSS policy EM17*' from CS Policy 8.7.

### Consequential Changes

16. Throughout the Core Strategy, there are inset boxes coloured green on national, regional and local policy context to the Core Strategy. Many of these refer to RSS policies. Given the reduced weight of RSS following the Secretary of State's announcement, these references to Regional Policies are likely to date very quickly and should be deleted.

### **Exclusion of residential garden land from the definition of Previously Developed Land in PPS3 Annex B**

17. The Council considers that this national policy change does not affect the soundness of the Core Strategy, as:
- The document makes no direct reference to garden land;
  - The Core Strategy's supporting evidence on residential land capacity does not depend on garden sites as a source type;
  - The proposed change to PPS3 will have no material impact on the Previously Developed Land Target in CS Policy 6.6.
18. The Council therefore proposes **no change** as a result of this change to PPS3 other than to clarify the change in national policy.

**Deletion of the national indicative minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare from PPS3.**

19. While the revision to PPS3 removes the indicative minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare, the Council is content that this is retained in policy CS6.6, with appropriate clarification to the supporting text in Para 7.18 in regard to PPS3. We consider the indicative minimum density is helpful and relevant and that the policy, as worded, also provides sufficient flexibility - both in encouraging higher densities, and accepting lower densities, on appropriate sites. Therefore the Council proposes no change as a result of this change to PPS3 other than to clarify the change in national policy.

## **Annexe 1**

### **Necessary Changes**

#### **Policy CS1.1 – Delete existing Bullet 8 and replace with;**

*Development should accord with the following sequential approach:*

- *first, using existing buildings (including conversion) within settlements, and previously developed land within settlements;*
- *second, using other suitable infill opportunities within settlements;*
- *third, the development of other land where this is well located in relation to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure.*

#### **Para 2.2 – add additional paragraph thus**

*At the time of adoption, the Secretary of State had recently announced his intention to revoke Regional Strategies. Although, if the Regional Strategy is revoked, the principles for defining settlement hierarchies will no longer be part of the Development Plan, the Council remains of the view that these are soundly based and, having regard to local circumstances, form a rational basis for the definition of Principal Service Centres, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres in the Core Strategy.*

#### **Para 7.1 – add additional paragraph**

*At the time of adoption, the Secretary of State had recently announced his intention to revoke Regional Strategies. Although, if the Regional Strategy is revoked, its dwelling completion targets will no longer be part of the Development Plan, the Council remains of the view that these are soundly based and, having regard to clear affordable housing needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, environmental capacity and deliverability constraints, remain a sound basis for the delivery of new housing in South Lakeland District.*

#### **Policy CS6.1**

*Delete ‘in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West’;*

#### **Policy CS6.3**

*Delete ‘and achieve housing requirements in the RSS’;*

#### **Para 8.4**

*Delete ‘The RSS advises that the pattern and scale of provision of allocated employment land should be determined by employment land reviews’.*

#### **Para 9.10 – additional text proposed in Change SOCG22**

*Delete ‘Work is progressing in relation to meeting the requirements of RSS Policy EM1(b)*

**Para 9.26**

Delete Para 9.26

**Policy CS8.7**

Delete the words 'contributing to the target in RSS policy EM17'  
**Text boxes Page 21, 31, 46, 59, 69, 89, 101, 114, 117**

Delete references to RSS policies

**Para 11.5 as amended by Change SLDC46**

Delete 'and RSS Policy RTc'

**Key Diagram**

Delete 'RSS Policy RTc Diagram 3 from Proposed Change SLDC16;