

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 61

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Consultation Response to the Government's draft planning policy 'Development and Coastal Change'		
Date of Meeting:	5 November 2009		
Report of:	Director of Environment		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Helen Gregory	Tel: 29-2293
	E-mail:	helen.gregory@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: ENV12778	
Wards Affected:	Brunswick and Adelaide; Central Hove; East Brighton; Queen's Park; Regency; Rottingdean Coastal; South Portslade; Westbourne; Wish		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The report seeks endorsement of the officer response to Government consultation on the draft planning policy - planning for development and coastal change (a supplement to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk) which sets out the planning framework for the continuing economic and social viability of coastal communities. This document brings together national planning policy to deliver sustainable coastal risk management. Consultation closed on the 12 October 2009 and an officer response was sent subject to approval by the council. The officer response generally welcomes the draft policies and a copy is attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member endorses the officer response to the draft policy on Planning for Development and Coastal Change, sent out to meet the 12 October deadline, as set out at Appendix 1.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The consultation document forms part of a wider package of actions being taken forward by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to deliver the Government's sustainable flood and coastal risk management approach set out in the Making Space for Water Strategy.
- 3.2 The draft planning policy on Development and Coastal Change reflects the new draft style for presenting national planning policy and sets out a slimmed-down suite of policies. A companion guide is being prepared to provide practice guidance and support for the implementation of the policy. The intention is that the final policy will be published as a supplement to PPS25 Development and Flood Risk.

The Draft Coastal Change Policy and Relationship to Council Priorities

- 3.3 The draft development and coastal change policy promotes a strategic risk-based approach to managing future physical changes to the coastline, so that long-term adaptation of communities can be planned, whilst allowing necessary development that is appropriate and safe. It also introduces a more coordinated approach to planning and investment at the coast, ensuring that spatial strategies take proper account of the impact of physical processes affecting the coastline and decisions regarding the planning and management of coastal defences.
- 3.4 The officer response is set out at Appendix 1. The response generally welcomes the intention of the government to update planning policy on coastal change and agree that a strategic risk based approach to managing future physical changes to the coastline is an appropriate approach. However the response also highlights areas of the draft policy and in particular the draft practice guide where further guidance is requested for local planning authorities in the identification of Coastal Change Management Areas, ensuring that the wider consideration of sustainable coastal communities is fully taken into account and to reflect the real constraints in managing coastal change
- 3.5 The proposed approach is that where there is a significant risk of change to the coastline over the next 100 years, local planning authorities should define through their Local Development Framework (LDF) a 'coastal change management area' (CCMA) related to the area likely to be affected by coastal change and based on best available information (principally Shoreline Management Plans). Inappropriate development (such as new residential development) should be avoided in areas vulnerable to coastal change but certain types of time-limited development/activities or minor temporary uses that require a coastal location (such as recreation uses) may be permitted to maintain the social and economic viability of the coastal community.
- 3.6 To reduce the risk facing coastal communities already at threat from coastal change, plans need to be in place to manage their future development through adaption, for example by improving their resilience (defences/ development design etc), or by relocation and roll-back of development and infrastructure to more sustainable locations further inland from the changing coast. Where development and infrastructure needs to be relocated, sufficient suitable land should be allocated through the planning process. Applicants proposing developments within a CCMA will be required to assess the vulnerability of proposed developments to coastal change.
- 3.7 The draft companion Practice Guide sets out the envisaged areas of practice guidance and support to be provided to enable local planning authorities to implement the policy. It will provide guidance on how local planning authorities should manage the impacts of coastal change in the interim before Development Plan Documents can be updated to properly reflect the new policy.
- 3.8 The draft planning policy relates clearly to the council's priorities of protecting the environment while growing the economy, and within that, the Corporate Plan aims of protecting and enhancing our urban and natural environments and mitigating and adapting to the challenges as a coastal city of climate change.

3.9 The emerging Core Strategy for the Brighton & Hove Local Development Framework already proposes a strategic planning policy approach to the coastline recognising the need for on-going regeneration and maintenance of the seafront in an integrated and coordinated manner:

- It recognises that over the last 15 years the council has been engaged in a phased renewal of the defences between the Marina and the city boundary at Saltdean.
- It reflects that the council will continue to work with Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England for the ongoing maintenance of the coastal defences in accordance with the Brighton Marina to River Adur Strategy.
- With respect to the coastline east of the Marina the council will continue to monitor the cliffs in order to understand more fully how the cliffs will react to changing climate in the next 50 years in order to plan for and take appropriate measures to safeguard coastal communities, important infrastructure (A259 & Trunk Services) and coastal access in the longer term in accordance with recommendations in the Beachy Head to Selsey Bill Shoreline Management Plan.
- Further the emerging Core Strategy adopts a cautious approach to all new cliff development and will ensure proposals are examined rigorously in respect of cliff stability.

3.10 Given the timing of this consultation document and its likely final publication (in 2010) any further implications of the policy, such as the potential need to identify a coastal change management area, can be addressed in future appropriate Development Plan Documents. Implications for Development Management can be met within current practices in considering planning applications.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The Council's Coast Protection Engineer has been consulted on this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations contained within the report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Patrick Rice

Date: 25/09/09

Legal Implications:

5.2 Planning Policy Statements and their supplements are prepared by Government after public consultation to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. Local authorities should take them into account in preparing plans and policies. Once finalised, the policy supplement will be a material consideration to be taken into account when considering planning applications. No adverse Human Rights implications are considered to arise from this report

Lawyer Consulted:

Ann Wilkinson

Date: 21/09/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The proposed new policy would impact equally across all members of the community and there is no evidence to suggest that any particular racial or ethnic group has an increased exposure to coastal change risk.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The principle of sustainable development underpins the Government's draft policy proposals. Its emphasis is on ensuring that development on the coast remains safe during its expected lifetime, and enhancing the resilience of coastal communities to the increasing risk of coastal change. This approach will play an important part in minimising the effects of climate change and promoting the long-term viability of coastal communities in a sustainable way.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 None have been identified.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 None have been identified.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The draft planning policy on development and coastal change relates clearly to the council's priority of protecting the environment while growing the economy, and within that, the Corporate Plan aims of mitigating climate change.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The alternative option would be to make no response to the public consultation on the draft planning policy. That option would be less likely to result in a final document that is useful within our local context.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 As a coastal city it is considered important for Brighton & Hove to respond to the Government consultation on the draft Coastal Change policies in a transparent manner, to accord with the corporate priority of open and effective city leadership.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Response to Government consultation paper on draft 'Planning for Development and Coastal Change'.

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Consultation Paper - Planning for Development and Coastal Change, July 2009:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/consultationcoastal.pdf>

