Statement Of Consultation On The Development Framework For Area Action Plan No. 8 Land At Queenborough/Rushenden Isle Of Sheppey

2005

Introduction

The Development Framework for Queenborough and Rushenden has been prepared in the context of both the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan 2000; and the Deposit Draft Swale Borough Local Plan Deposit Draft First Review published March 2004. In policy terms, the Development Framework in both its draft and adopted states embraces more closely the latter document, which itself builds on the earlier residential and employment allocations around Queenborough Creek and Neatscourt respectively, and the proposed Rushenden Link Road. This more holistic approach to the regeneration of Queenborough and Rushenden and its designation as an Area Action Plan, has been made possible following a decision by Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in 2003, to invest public money (£7m) in the wider regeneration of the Queenborough/Rushenden area, through its regional development agent South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). The consultation process was undertaken within this context.

The Development Framework has also been prepared during a time of significant change to the relevant legislation with the introduction of the new planning system as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which came into effect on 28th September 2004. This legislation has been accompanied by new planning policy guidance in the form of Planning Policy Statements. The effects of these changes, is such that the Framework Document as now adopted, is a material consideration in relation to both of the above plans. The Framework as adopted is also relevant to, and has informed the discussion on the Re–Deposit Swale Borough Local Plan, due for publication in July 2005.

National government guidance requires that any document proposed for adoption as supplementary planning guidance – SPG, (now called Supplementary Planning Document - SPD) must be subject to public consultation. Details of the consultation undertaken and the decisions made in response to the comments made should be published alongside or as part of the adopted SPG. This document fulfils that requirement. Part One, sets out the consultation process undertaken. Part Two provides a summary of the comments received on the Draft Development Framework and the Council's response. The response identifies where changes have been made to the text.

PART ONE

The Consultation Process

The Draft Development Framework was prepared by Rummey Design Associates, consultants working on behalf of SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) during the latter half of 2003 in liaison with relevant officers from Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council, drawing of adopted and emerging policy.

January 2004 An initial draft of the Framework was provided to local Ward Members for views and comment. None were received.

February 2004 The Draft Development Framework was reported to the Local Plan Panel on 17th February, for comment and seeking agreement to its publication for consultation. The draft was agreed with no further amendments.

March 2004. The Draft Development Framework was published for public consultation on the 22nd March, with comments required by the 4th May 2004. The Draft Framework was published alongside of and for the same duration as the Swale Borough Local Plan First Deposit Draft that set out the wider policy context for the Framework.

Letters advising of the existence of the Draft Framework, where it could be viewed and inviting comments were sent to all residential and business addresses within the AAP 8 boundary area as well as to statutory and non-statutory Consultees, local Ward Councillors and other relevant Members and the Queenborough Town Council. Individual copies of the document were provided to statutory bodies and others where appropriate. A copy of the document was also placed in the Members Room in Swale House, for use by other Members not individually notified-

A public notice was placed in the East Kent Gazette on 24th March 2004.

Copies of the Draft Framework were placed on display at the Councils Offices at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne at the Sheerness District Office Trinity Road, Sheerness; as well as at the public libraries at Queenborough and Sheerness. Copies of the document were also made available for purchase and placed on the Council's website.

In addition, a public open day/evening was held at the Borough Hall, Queenborough on 19thApril. The event was attended by representatives from Swale Borough Council, Swale Forward, and SEEDA. The event attracted approximately 200 visitors and served to increase awareness of the development proposals for the area included in both the draft development framework and the draft Local Plan.

A second afternoon/evening consultation was arranged by SEEDA in response to comments made to them at the first open day. This was held on 13th May 2004, in the Rushenden Club and attracted only a single visitor. This turnout was not totally unexpected given the level of attendance at the first event, and the fact that it was held after the closing date for responses to both the Draft Development Framework, and the First Deposit Draft Swale Borough Local Plan.

A total of 12 letters were received in response to the Draft Development Framework consultation. Each letter received was acknowledged. The comments received and the Councils response are summarised in Part Two.

September 2004. A report detailing the comments received and the suggested responses was prepared for consideration by the Sheppey Area Forum at its meeting held on 9th September 2004. However, the report was subsequently withdrawn from the agenda, when it was determined that consideration of the Draft Framework fell outside the remit of the Sheppey Area Forum as newly constituted. In their previous guise, the Area Committees did have the power to consider and make recommendations on development brief type documents. Legal advice as to the extent of their remit changed between drafting the report and the meeting date. Notwithstanding this fact, informal note was taken of the relevant comments made at the meeting.

September 2004. Comments received in response to the Draft Development Framework, as well as those received in response to the relevant policies in the

First Deposit Draft Swale Borough Local Plan were reported to Local Plan Panel on 23rd September. A copy of the report and minutes is attached at Annex A.

December 2004 – An amended version of the Development Framework, taking on board issues raised at the Local Plan Panel was presented to the Council's Executive on 15th December 2004. The accompanying report identified three additional changes which officers sought agreement to. Two issues were highlighted in the report a third was tabled at the meeting. A copy of the report, tabled item and minutes are provided at Annex B. Issue one, sought a more flexible wording in relation to affordable housing provision, but maintaining a minimum requirement of 30%. The second and third issues related to factual errors and omissions in relation to Zones 4 and 9.

At this meeting the Council approved the amended Development Framework as Supplementary Planning Document for the site.

Following receipt of the finally amended version of the Framework and the completion of this statement of consultation, letters of notification have been sent to all those who had made representations on the brief advising them of its adoption. Copies of the adopted brief have been provided to statutory consultees and others as appropriate. Hard copies of the document have been made available for inspection during normal office hours at the Council's main offices at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, and at Sheerness District Office, Trinity Road, Sheerness. Electronic copies have been placed on both the Swale Borough Council's web-site (www.swale.gov.uk) and on the Queenborough and Rushenden Regeneration website (www.qrregen.co.uk)

PART TWO

Summary of Comments Received.

RefNo	Name	Object/Support	AAP	Summary of response	Council's Response
002	Mr. A Brundish	O	8	Notes that from the tidal gate at top of First Avenue to Coal Washer (Ladies Hole), the sea wall is 4m above ODN ie 2m lower than Queenborough and lower than that of the wall along the Swale to the bridge. This is said to be part of the one-two hundred year flood defences. It would make economic sense when planning the new proposals to standardise the electrical supply and make it all underground. The overhead wires are unreliable and ugly. Roads served by overhead supply are the older properties ie First Avenue, Second Avenue and Alseager Avenue. There is a lack of parking in First Avenue. There is an active Local Gardening Club in Rushenden based at the CARE house which is very active in the area. Thinks if could get local interest in with the Town Council of some projects could generate local involvement using the Garden Club with its stock of tools.	Flood risk is identified in various parts of the Draft Development Brief as an issue which will need to be addressed e.g. paragraph 4.2 bullet point 3. More detailed information will be provided on the issue at the Master Plan stage to reflect on-going discussions with the Environment Agency. With regard to electricity supply the comment is noted. Paragraph 4.1 of the brief makes reference to the need for consultation to be undertaken with statutory consultees such as the utility companies. The issue may also be dealt with under the wider references included within the secition on design principles. With regard to lack of parking and the reference to the Gardening Club, these are issues which are either too detailed or not of relevance to the draft Development Framework, but are nonetheless issues which will need to be taken on board as part of the master planning and community consultation work.
003	Southern water	O	8	Notes Southern Water is committed to meeting additional demands arising from the Local Plan however investment and upgrading of existing facilities may be required, the implementation of which must be planned. Limits on the availability of water and wastewater services may place a constraint on the phasing of development at Queenborough/Rushenden. Suggest an additional bullet point added to para. 4.2 "Provision of water and wastewater services to the Acton Area is dependent on the availability of sufficient water and sewerage capacity.	The Borough Council notes the points raised but considers these issues to be sufficiently covered in general terms (ie essential infrastructure) in sections 5 Design Principles and section 6 planning obligations and section 7 implementation and phasing. The company will be a key consultee in the master planning process.

RefNo	Name	Object/Support	AAP	Summary of response	Council's Response
				Water, sewerage and wastewater capacity is finite and increased demand may have an impact on existing resources. Water mains and sewers also need to be of sufficient size to deliver water and remove wastewater. There is a need for an assessment to establish the impact of the proposed development on water and wastewater services.	
005	Mouchelparkman	S	8	Notes that they are drawing together information in relation to Country requirements in relation to education, libraries, adult education, youth and community and social services. Would wish to engage in further discussions and reserve for all requirements to be included in the proposals.	Noted. Discussions are on-going with the County Council. This information will be fed through into both the master plan and the developer contributions strategy docuements.
007	KCC (Planning)	O	8	(KCC strategic planning). Overall this is a clear statement with an informative outline plan which has taken on board most of the key issues. Acknowledges that more work is currently underway which will feed into the process eg alignment of Rushenden Road, contributions etc. Notes that careful attention will have to be given to biodiversity considerations as the development progresses. Para. 4.2 Consideration should be given to wider issues of accessibility in respect of the employment uses and encouraging sustainable access. A green travel strategy/plan could be the focus for this work. Biodiversity. Notes no part of the area is covered by a statutory or non-statutory designation for nature conservation but considers this part of Sheppey remains important for biiodiversity and containes extensive areas of semi-natural habitat including grazing marsh and standing water. The draft framework earmarks significant areas for development which are of importance to wildlife habitats. Stretches of the northern and western boundaries area adjacent the SSSI, SPA and Ramsar	This respondent makes a number of comments. The broad support is noted and welcomed. Accessibility. Issues of accessibility particularly highway access is highlighted throughout the document. Wider issues of access are already included in paragraph 4.8. Wildlife habitats. The objector's concerns are noted, and the Ecology section under paragraph 4.2 has been amended to take account of issues raised butat a broad level reflecting the broad level of guidance this document is providing. With regard to a green grid, it is the Council's view that this is best addressed at the Master Plan stage, as it will be influenced by ecological studies which are in process of being undertaken. With regard to retail, the concerns are noted. An additional sentence has been included under paragraph 4.5 retail zones. With regard to youth and outreach facilities, the Borough Council agrees that reference could usefully be included, but

RefNo	Name	Object/Support	AAP	Summary of response	Council's Response
				site. Within 300m at the closest point. Development which alters the hydrology of the area could lead to a deterioriation in condition, an issue which needs to be considered. There is generally a presumption against development that would directly,indirectly or cumulatively harm the scientific or nature conservation interest of statutory sites. Given the size of the development it should be supported by an Environmental Statement. Full ecological and hydrological studies will need to be undertaken. Of particular concern is the zone to the south of the development identified for industrial/warehouse and distribution use. Biodiversity should be considered at every state of the preparation of the development framework. There must be sufficient flexibility within the framework to ensure that once appropriate surveys have been undertaken, areas identifies ad of particular importance can be withdrawn from development and substituted for other less sensitive areas. Brownfield sites within the area may also contain speciies of national importance. There may be opportunities to make biodiversity gains as part of the development process by recreating habitats that will in future enhance quality of life in the area. Apart from direct habitat loss the proposed development will contribute to the fragmentation and isolation of existing habitats. A green grid linking open space and wildlife habitats through the area may help but it will be important to understand how key species exploit habitats or dispertse through the area. In this locality breeding and wintering birds and water voles are of particuarl importance. Para. 4.5 Considers there could be a danger of diffusing retail provision too much, although there is clearly a need for some convenience stores/cafes it would be preferable to reinforce retail at the existing	considers that this better located in paragraph 4.8. However this is only one type of community use and the existing types of examples provided are sufficient. More precisely detailed levels of need will emerge through the master planning process and the consultation process. The Borough Council agree that a reference to the proposed creek crossing could usefully be included in paragraph 4.8 under Transport/Access. Finally, the Borough Council agrees that employment/training could be included in paragraph 6.0 however this list is not comprehensive and it could be argued as being covered under the generic reference to education provision. The more detailed discussion on developer contributions and the individual elements of which it will comprise will be undertaken as part of the developer contributions strategy already referred to.

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				centre ie Queenborough invorporating the craft element. Para 4.6 Youth and outreach facilities are required. Para. 4.8A new pedestrian bridge across the creek on the line of the "environmental link" woudl greatly help movement between Rushenden and Queenborough and be an attractive feature in the areas development. 6.0 local employment/training could usefully be added to the list of matters likely to be the subject of planning obligationsl.	
015	CPRE (Swale)	O	8	Objects to the designation of part of the employment land as car distribution/storage on the main approach/adjacent Cowstead Corner. (illustrative land use zone 7) This is an unattractive form of development, very intrusive at night with high levels of security lighting.	This designation reflects the current use of the site ie the existing car depot. The import and export of cars and the associated work will continue to be a major element of the Port of Sheerness's business, given existing contracts etc.. This is fully recognised in the Local Plan and in particular Policy B12 (Neatscourt) as amended from which this Framework document derives.
008	KCC (Archaeology)	S	8	(KCC archaeology) Outlines the variety of historical interest in and around Queenborough which include important buried archaeologial remains of prehistoric, Romean medieval and later date; deposits of geoarchaeological and palaeo-environmental interest; tha nationally important planned medieval town of Queenborough including the site of the castle which is protected as a scheduled ancient monument, the medieval street layout and buried archaeological deposits; The Queenborough Conservation Area and a number o historic buildings both listed and otherwise; remainas of industrial archaeological interest and historic maritime interest which may include visible standing remains which contribute to the historic environment of Queenborough. Recommends that to inform the development of the master plan, a detailed study is undertaken of the potential heritage resources present	The Borough Council welcomes the detailed information provided. A detailed study of the historic environment will as recommended be required to inform and support the Master Plan process. A more general reference to the range of features in and around the site is now included under the heading Archaeology and historical legacy in paragraph 4.2.

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				and the constraints an opportunities they offer to development and regeneration of the area. As well as the potential impact of development upon buried archaeological remains, the study should consider the proposals with respect to the wider historic environment and any opportunities for its interpretation, presentation and enhancement. This should include consideration of the historic town and its mediewval layout, historic buildings and structures, whether listed or not, and the industrial and maritime heritage of the area.	
009	Countryside Agency	S	8	Supports the framework and in particular section 5 which sets out key design principles for the development. Welcomes the reference to the need to provide links betweeen the existing and new proposed areas, and to incorporate principles of energy efficient sustainable development. Would like to see recognition in this that the new development needs to be integrated with existing communities and that where appropriate green spaces can link the existing and new communities. Supports the introduction of greenways as part of the solution to local transport problems. Makes ref. to Counntryside Agency document Greenways Technical Guidance (Nov. 2002) as useful background.	Support for the development framework is noted. With regard to the issue of integrating existing and new communities, the Borough Council would point out that this is recognised as one of the key influences which has shaped the vision for the area (paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4). There is there fore no need to include and further specific references. No change proposed
010	Kent Wildlife Trust	O	8	Strategic policies in the Local Plan make it clear that treatment of the local environment must include enhancement as well as protection in line with the principles of sustainable development. This is particularly important for the area covered by the AAP. The Trust therefore expect the following: 1) explicit reference to potential on semi-natural habitats in para. 4.2; 2) explicit reference to enhancement of the natural environment in para. 4.8; 3) explicit reference to enhancement (as well as conservation and protection) of wildlife habitats within	The Borough Council agrees that the development framework could usefully benefit from a more explicit refernce to conservation, protection and enhancement of the natural environment within the document. The section under paragraph 4.2 has been re-written.Reference to the natural environment has been included in paragraph 3.2 Key influences. Further reference is included under paragraph 4.8 Environmental enhancement.

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				the key aspects of the design principles set out in para. 5.0; 4) for the purposes of clarity, direct reference to ecological enhancement in Policy AAP8 by re-wording clause 4 to read "physical, economic and environmental measures, including on-site and off-site protection and enhancement of biiodiversity, to support and integrate…"	
011	Courtley Consultants Ltd	O	8	Considers it inappropriate at this stage to specify zone 2 as an area for community facilities as there has been no proper consultation or assessment of other land use proposals. This should come from the consultation process - not before.(ii) SEEDA must fully engage with landowners, public and the community and ensure that their views are considered without the threat of CPO. (iii) Public, community and landowners must be given free access to all surveys and reports made by SEEDA, KCC and SBC on issues such as planning, design, topography, flooding, ecology, archaeology, contamination and highway matters, to enable those parties to offer additional information and views of their own in the consultation process. (iv) re MU5 suitble sites need to be identified for business relocation as part of the implementation process of AAP8 and MU5.(v) An equalisation policy will need to be adopted to ensure the fair and proper distribution of land uses and costs in relation to public open space, community facilties and othr commercial land uses I.e. employment and housing within MU5.(vi) Insufficient detail or clarity is available on Plan 1 to enable the public or landowners to comment meningfully on the various landuses referred to in Zone 2. It is unclear for example if the housing and retails areas are envisaged, nor does it clarify the varying degrees of leisure and recreation uses across the MU5 area. Most importantly no comments are made or illustrated on the immediate land adjoining	The comments are noted and amendments to the Framework included within the revised Framework as appropriate. The preparation of the draft development framework and its publication alongside the deposit draft Local Plan represents the first in a number of opportunities for landowners, the community and others to comment on the development proposals. The purpose of the draft development brief is to establish broad principles as to how the development is likely to proceed but allowing some flexibility as the design developsin response to technical issues and local consultation. Paragraph 3.1 refers to the need for continued involvement of the local communities in the scheme. Further commitment to community involvement is provided in section 8. More detailed discussion on all aspects of the development will be undertaken as part of the Master Plan process. It is as part of this process that ecological, flood risk, contamination and other reports will be drawn up following detailed investigative work. Where appropriate such survey information will be made publicly available. Comments regarding development costs are noted. The Council recognises that for a regeneration proposal of this scale it will be essential to ensure that developer contributions are fair and proportionate. It is

RefNo	Name	Object/Support	AAP	Summary of response	Council's Response
				Queenborough Creek to the south and its intended use. Plan 1 should be removed and a better more detailed and comprehensive plan submitted for a far greater detailed consultation.	proposed that a developer contribution strategy will be drawn up as part of, or to go alongside the Master Plan. Both documents will be the subject of public consultation and both will in time be adopted by the Borough Council. Paragraph 4.7 now refers to the need to provide alternative sites for business reloation.
013	Queenborough Town Council	S	8	Town Council have no specific representations to make at this early stage. Would like to stress the paramount importance of the Rushenden Link Road to planned developments set out in the AAP. It is not considered feasible to embark on the full scale development without this road. Similarly, the second Swale crossing and associated road works should be well advanced before the project proceeds. Want to ensure that basic amenities such as shops, welfare facilities etc are included in the development.	Noted. The concerns expressed in relation to roads and social and community facility provision including retail are already fully reflected in the development framework and in the relevant policies in the Deposit Draft Local Plan. They will be explored in more detial as part of the Master Planning work, including the developer contributions strategy.
014	Abbott Laboratories	S	8	The Plan is important to the social and economic future of Sheppey as the area still suffers from a long established, fragile economy, and has progressively seen a mobile situation regarding visitors and residents on the Island. The Island needs an improved and stable economy to reduce many of the perceived disadvantages of the area. Key to this is to establish more long term employment with quality organisations to add critical mass to the activities of Abbotts, Port of Sheeness, Tesco and others. Enhancement of the Queenborough Creek area will be an important addition. Provision of new road infrastructure at an early stage is important, housing provision should be phased appropriately with provision of new employment opportunities, otherwise crossing will not have desired effect. Development plan needs to be supported with appropriate improvements in	Comments noted. References to timing of provision of housing, employment and infrastructure will be dealt with in the Master plan whose preparation will follow the adoption of this framework. With regard to the provision of new infrastructure, paragraph 1.4 refers to the importance of the both the A249 improvements and the provision of the Rushenden Link road. The provision of the Rushenden Link Road is noted in paragraph 3.2 as the trigger for the development potential of the area. The importance of providing quality, long term employment is recognised implicitly in both in this document and in the Local Plan.

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				the infrastructure of the area.	
006	Mr. R.J. Collins	O	8	Don't know what its all about. Does it mean doing a lot of work in Rushenden Road. If it does it it likely to be quickly vandalised. Questions whether the scheme will provide any opportunity for art eg dance and drama studio,or gallery. Suggests provision of public toilet. Questions why there is not enough money to pay fares of children to and from the Islands schools for large families. Objects to more tarmac, more cars and more factories.	The majority of these comments are not ones which refer specifically to the draft development brief. The suggestion for the provision of space for the visual and performing arts is noted but is too detailed for the Framework document which refers to social and community facilities more generally. It will be an issue for the more detailed master planning and community consultation work.

ANNEX A – Report to Local Plan Panel 23/9/04 (Extract)

Agenda Item No.

TO:	**LOCAL PLAN PANEL -**
DATE	**23rd September 2004**
SUBJECT:	**DRAFT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AREA ACTION PLAN 8 – QUEENBOROUGH/RUSHENDEN**
BY:	**HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary This report sets out for Members consideration, my suggested response to the comments received on the major regeneration proposals for Queenborough and Rushenden as set out in the Deposit Draft Local Plan and the Draft Development Framework. I have also taken the opportunity to provide Members with a more general update on the wider project issues.

Implications:

Financial None. The cost of reproducing the development framework in its final form will be down to SEEDA.

Human Resources: None

Sustainability The development framework provides the guidance for the major regeneration of the Queenborough and Rushenden area, combining the re-use of large areas of brownfield sites, addressing issues of former contamination, and improving the local physical and natural environments. Whilst it does contain an element of greenfield development it offers the opportunity to improve conditions for the existing communities providing a range of new housing and employment opportunities as well as community and other facilities.

Decision **The Panel is recommended to:**

1. **Agree the amendments to both the Deposit Draft local Plan and the Draft Development Framework as set out through the report**
2. **Agree the amendments to the Deposit Draft Local Plan and Draft Development Brief as set out in Annexes 1 and 2 of the report; and**
3. Note the update information provided in part 2 of the report.

Introduction

1. This report is drafted in two sections. Part 1 identifies and discusses the key issues arising out of comments received in relation to both the Draft Development Framework and the relevant policies in the Deposit Draft Local Plan. As the draft development framework (subject to amendment) will be adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the relevant planning policies, it is important that both issues are considered together. Part 1 is accompanied by Annexes 1 and 2 as follows

Annex 1: Contains a summary of comments received in response to relevant policies in the Deposit draft Local Plan, together with the Councils suggested response.

Annex 2: Contains a summary of comments received in response to the Draft Development Framework together with the Council's suggested response

Annex 3 A summary of other issues raised in comments back to SEEDA (information only)

2. In the second part of my report, I update Members on the general background to the project, and include a draft timetable for work to be carried out over the next 12 months.

PART 1

Background

3. Members will recall that the Deposit Draft Local Plan and the Draft Development Framework were published for consultation on 22nd March 2004 with comments required by 4th May 2004. In addition to the letters of consultation on the Local Plan, separate letters were sent to all residents and businesses within the AAP8 area inviting separate comments on the Draft Development Framework.

4. On 19th April an open day/evening was held at the Borough Hall in Queenborough with representatives from SEEDA and their consultants Rummey Design Associates Limited (RDA), Local Plans, Community and Swale Forward to explain in more detail the Queenborough regeneration scheme proposals. Representatives from the Town Council were also present throughout the day as was Councillor Goodhew. The day was well attended and generally well received. In particular, for a number of business people it offered the opportunity of further meetings with SEEDA to discuss their particular situation and concerns. It is estimated that around 200 people attended during the day.

5. A further opportunity to view the Plans and to talk to SEEDA was provided on the afternoon evening of 13th May at the Rushenden Club. This attracted one person only. It is my personal view that due to the good response on 19th April and the fact that the closing date for comments on both the Local Plan and the Draft Development Framework had passed, this was not surprising.

Discussion

6. A total of 37 representations were received on the Local Plan in response to policies AAP8, MU5, MU6, B12, T8 and T11.all of which are relevant to the Draft Development Framework. A further 12 were received in response to the Draft Development Framework.

7. I am pleased to report that in respect of both documents, no fundamental objections were raised to the regeneration proposals set out. Where respondents have suggested amendments be made, they are for the most part ones which I consider are beneficial and can be agreed, whilst resulting in no fundamental change to the overall regeneration scheme proposed.

A) Comments made in response to the Deposit Draft Local Plan

8. A summary of comments received and my suggested response are attached at Annex 1 There are however three main issues to which I would wish to draw Members' attention as follows:

1. The funding and timing of new community facilities and infrastructure provision.

9. There is a clear concern that the timing and funding for community provision and infrastructure should be agreed and confirmed at an early stage. In particular there is concern that the Borough Council should be sure that funding is in place preferably before work commences. There is also concern, that developer contributions should be fairly proportioned.

10. I fully sympathize with the views expressed as, I am sure would Members of this Panel. This is a very important issue that it is proposed will be addressed in detail alongside the Master Plan, when full details of what is proposed to be provided and when, is known. The importance of this element of the scheme is not however currently reflected in the supporting text to Policy AAP 8,nor in the policy itself. I would recommend that the policy is amended accordingly. It will also be important for this to be reflected in policies MU5, MU6, B12 and T11 that are the site-specific policies for the various elements with the overall AAP. There is also a need to ensure that there is a consistency between what is being asked for in Policy MU5 and MU6. There is no reference for example to affordable housing provision for the site north of Queenborough Creek. There is a general inconsistency through the Plan as to the amount of affordable housing provision being sought from the AAP8 site.

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

1) an appropriate reference be included within both the text and policy AAP8 that agreement on funding and timing of community facilities and other infrastructure should be secured prior to any development taking place; and that this will be addressed by means of the Master Plan and a developer contributions strategy.

2) the Plan is amended to ensure a consistent approach to development requirements such as affordable housing provision. That approach, to reflect the latest discussions with the relevant providers.

2. The role of Neatscourt (Policy B12)

11. Representations in relation to this policy are mixed. Medway Ports point out the importance of this site to continued port operations including car storage. Two others object to the possibility of the site becoming another unsightly car depot. The policy as worded does to my mind reflect the importance of the site in relation to the Port. The policy and supporting text could and should however be amended to better reflect the wider role now envisaged for the site, including the possibility of providing alternative employment space for that lost within the existing Rushenden/Queenborough area. With no fundamental objections to policy AAP8 this would be fully in accordance with the overall vision for the regenerated area.

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

1. The supporting text to policy B12 and policy B12 be amended to reflect the role now envisaged for the Neatscourt employment area within the wider regeneration scheme.

3. Community Involvement

12. Understandably, there is concern that the local community (resident and business) as well as landowners, should be fully involved in the development proposals. Whilst the Local Plan is essentially a land-use document, it should be recognised somewhere within the supporting text the importance of the commitment of the existing communities to the scheme if it is to be successful.

13. In Part 2 of this report, Members will see that work is in hand to provide the opportunity for full community involvement in the scheme.

Recommendation: It is recommended that

1. A suitable reference is included within the supporting text to Policy AAP8 to the effect that it is seen as essential that the local community are fully engaged in the process of regeneration of the area.

B) Comments made in response to the Draft Development Framework.

14. A summary of the comments received together with the Councils suggested response in included at Annex 2.

15. The numbers of comments received in response to the Draft Development Framework was disappointingly low, - 12 in total. Of these, only two were from local residents. Notwithstanding that fact, as noted in paragraph * approximately 200 people attended the open day/evening, where the response to the proposals was generally favourable. I am reasonably comfortable therefore that the development brief as drafted has the broad support of those living and working in the area. I am also of the view that the comments made in response to this document when taken alongside those made in response to the Deposit Draft Local Plan cover the range of additional issues which need to be addressed, or those which require a more fine-tuned approach.

16. A summary of the comments received is attached as Annex 2 to this report. Two key concerns have been highlighted to which I would draw Members attention.

1. Nature conservation interests

17. The first issue, raised by a number of respondents, is the fact that insufficient reference is included to nature conservation interests within and around the site. Whilst some reference is already included within the document, there is scope for a more positive reference being included, Improved environmental quality is a key part of the vision. I am suggesting that references be included within paragraphs 4.3 and 4.8 under the headings environmental quality and environmental enhancement. Reference could also usefully be included in paragraph 4.2 bullet point 3 on the importance of the local hydrology. More detailed references are however best addressed through the Master Plan, when the results of the ecological and other survey work is available.

2. Objections by Courtley Consultants Ltd (011)

18. The points raised by this objector echo pretty much those highlighted above in response to the Deposit Draft Local Plan. In relation to consultation, they note that SEEDA must fully engage with landowners, public and the community and ensure that their views are considered without the threat of CPO; that the Public, community and landowners must be given free access to all surveys and reports made by SEEDA, KCC and SBC on issues such as planning, design, topography, flooding, ecology, archaeology, contamination and highway matters, to enable those parties to offer additional information and views of their own in the consultation process.

19. They note that suitable sites need to be identified for business relocation as part of the implementation process of AAP8 and MU5.(v).

20. They require an equalisation policy be adopted to ensure the fair and proper distribution of land uses and costs in relation to public open space, community facilities and other commercial land uses.

21. I am satisfied that by agreeing the recommendations set out above, that the policy references for each of these issues will now be provided within the Plan. The full engagement of the local community and the need for a developer contributions strategy are essential for the regeneration scheme to be successful. In relation to the Draft Development Framework, I therefore consider that more positive references could and should be included as appropriate throughout the document, but specifically in sections 2 and 7.

Recommendation. It is recommended that

> The draft development framework be amended by the inclusion of appropriate references to the need for full local community engagement in the scheme; and for the provision of a developer contributions strategy to be established alongside the Master Plan.

Next Steps

22. As with other emerging supplementary planning guidance, the next step will be to report the comments and responses set out in this report along with the views of this Panel to the Sheppey Area meeting on 28th September and then Executive for agreement for the document to be adopted a supplementary planning guidance.

Once approved, the Development Framework will form the basis for the more detailed work involved in preparing a Master Plan and Developer Contributions Strategy for the site.

Contact Hilary Hanslip – Ext 7337 Date 6th September 04

ANNEX 3

Summary of issues from RDA community questionnaire.

(approx. 40 reps. Age mainly 51+)

Transport/Access

- Traffic calming required for High Street, South Street; also re-surfacing to North Road including the re-instatement of kerbing.
- Improved cycle links from the station to Sheerness etc
- High traffic levels resulting in an unpleasant walking environment
- Increased off road parking

Employment

- Increased potential for more marine business
- Employment for all ages

Community

- A modern community centre
- Additional leisure facilities, youth club; parks; facilities for children
- Comment on standard of current level of facilities
- Provision of post office
- It is a friendly community with a good social mix – unpretentious. Has many long term residents who are happy to stay here.
- Questions If the community centre is lost would it also mean the loss of the library

Environment

- Untidiness of the area generally; lack of pride in area; run down estate

General

- Too many homes and not enough infrastructure so any improvement good.
- Would like to see as much emphasis put on the history of the area and what's existing - not just new proposals
- Development sounds exciting
- Scheme should be treated as a whole, not piecemeal. Emphasis on sustainable community, utilities, resources and a pleasant environment.

Extract Local Plan Minutes 23/09/04

249 DRAFT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AREA ACTION PLAN 8 – QUEENBOROUGH AND RUSHENDEN

The Head of Development Services submitted a report setting out his suggested response to the comments received on the major regeneration proposals for Queenborough and Rushenden, as set out in the Deposit Draft Local Plan and the Draft Development Framework. He had also taken the opportunity to provide Members with a more general update on the wider project issues. He indicated that the key issues arising out of comments received in relation to both the Draft Development Framework and the relevant policies in the Deposit Draft Local Plan should be considered together as the Draft Development Framework would be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the relevant planning policies. There port included a summary of comments received in respect of both relevant policies in the Deposit Draft Local Plan and the Draft Development Framework, together with the Council's suggested response in both cases. Exhibitions had been held to publicise the issues within the relevant area and a number of comments had been received as a result of that exercise. It would be necessary to review the draft in the light of the representations received.

RECOMMENDED

(1) That an appropriate reference be included within both the text and Policy AAP8 that agreement on funding and timing of community facilities and other infrastructure should be secured prior to any development taking place and that this would be addressed by means of the Master Plan and a Developer Contributions Strategy.

ANNEX B – Report to Executive 15/12/04

Agenda Item No.
Or Decision No

TO:	**EXECUTIVE**
DATE:	**15th December 2004**
SUBJECT:	**Development Framework AAP8 Queenborough and Rushenden**
BY:	**Head of Development Services**
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the background to the preparation of the Development Framework for AAP8 Queenborough and Rushenden and presents a final amended version of the Framework for consideration with a view to adoption. The amendments take onboard comments received as a result of the public consultation exercise and its consideration by both the Local Plan Panel and Sheppey Area Forum.

Implications: Financial Implications: It is to be expected that SEEDA will pay for the production of the final document.
Human Resource Implications: None

Decision Required: That the Executive adopts the Development Framework as Supplementary Planning Document

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Introduction/Background

1. As part of the Local Plan preparation it was agreed that a Draft Development Framework would be produced for publication alongside of the Deposit Draft Local Plan for the Queenborough and Rushenden Regeneration Area. The purpose of the Framework is to build and expand on the policies relating to the regeneration of the area (policies AAP8, MU5, MU6, B12 and T11). It represents the first in what will become a series of policy guidance documents that will guide and co-ordinate development in the area. As the first document in the series, it is concerned with general principles, and establishing a Vision for the area.

2. The Framework has been drawn up by Rummey Design Associates, consultants working on behalf of SEEDA, (the lead agency in the regeneration process) in conjunction with officers from the Borough Council.

3. The Draft Development Framework was published for public consultation alongside the Deposit Draft First Review Local Plan in March 2004. In addition to the more general consultation notification on the Local Plan, local residents and businesses within the AAP area, as well as a range of other Consultees such as KCC and Environment Agency, were sent additional notifications seeking comments on the Draft Development Framework. An open day/evening, held at the Borough Hall, Queenborough on 19th April 2004 to explain the proposals in more detail attracted in the region of 200 people. A second more limited open afternoon/evening was held on 13th May 2004 at the Rushenden Club, but attracted only one person. This was

perhaps not unexpected due to the high turnout for the first event. A total of only 12 written comments were received
directly in response to the Draft Development Framework.

4. The results of the consultation exercise and the comments received, both in relation to the Draft Development Framework and to the relevant policies in the Deposit Draft Local Plan, were reported to the Local Plan Panel at their meeting on 23rd September 2004. A second report was also the subject of informal comments by the Sheppey Area Forum, when they met on 28th September 2004.

5. In broad terms, there is a general support for the regeneration of the area. The main areas of concern were as follows:

- There should be a clear commitment to engaging fully with landowners, the public and local community; The lack of community involvement was the main issue raised
- at the Sheppey Area Forum
- That early agreement and a clear commitment to the timing and funding of community
- facilities and other infrastructure should be secured;
- All survey and other relevant material should be made publicly available;
- That sites should be identified for business relocation; and
- That greater recognition should be given to the nature conservation interests within
- and around the site.

6. The Development Framework has now been amended to take account of these concerns. This amended document is now provided for consideration at Annex 1.

Discussion

7. Two further issues have arisen since the report was considered by the Local Plan Panel and Sheppey Area Forum. Neither are significant in their overall impact on the regeneration scheme, or the Development Framework.

Issue 1: Affordable Housing:.

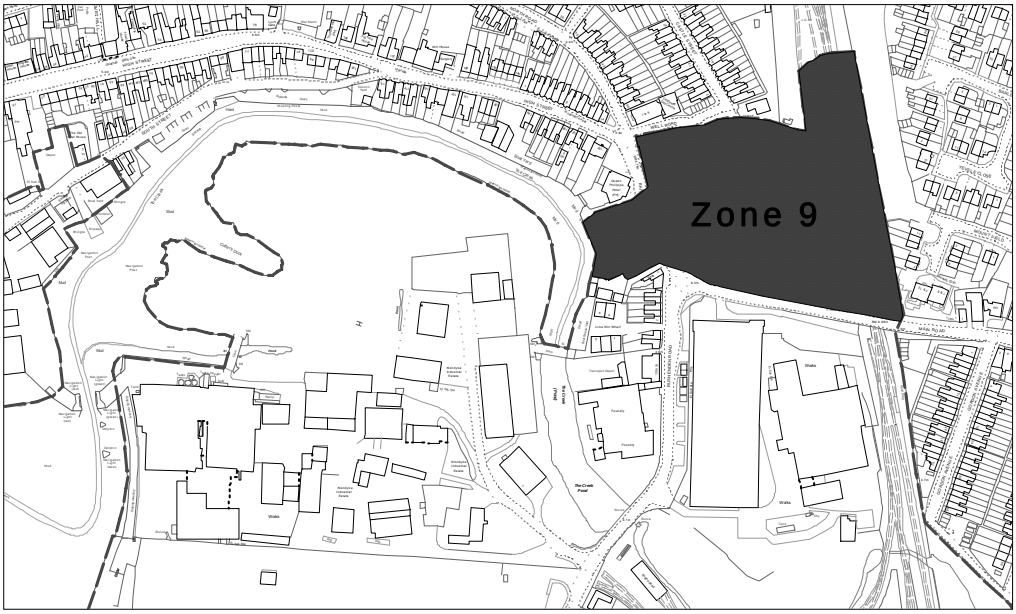
8. There is no change to the 30% requirement being provided on site. This remains the key requirement and is fully agreed by all relevant parties. The initial aim however was to look to secure a further 10% as a financial contribution, which could be used for improvements to the existing rented stock within the area. I have been advised by SEEDA and their consultants that further work on the overall economic viability of the scheme suggests that it may not be possible to secure this extra 10% provision. From the Council's side, (myself in conjunction with the Homelessness and Housing Development Manager) we have been unable to ascertain whether or not what we were hoping to achieve with the additional 10% contribution was strictly permissible within the housing funding regime. As a compromise, therefore the wording in the amended Development Framework has been revised to refer to a minimum 30% affordable housing provision to be provided on site. This then allows flexibility to secure any additional contribution should the opportunity arise. I would recommend this approach to the Executive.

Issue 2: Zone 4

9. Land within this zone is currently in employment use. The Framework identifies it as a transitional area between the main employment areas and the proposed new housing. The draft Framework referred to this essentially as a housing site with some employment. From further work, it has been established that this should more correctly refer to it being primarily an employment site as at present, but with some residential use possible. The text has been corrected, and the Plan 1 will be shown corrected when the final version is published.

Hilary Hanslip - Ext.7377 2nd December 2004

Tabled Plan – Item (Executive 15/12/2004)



Paragraph 4.3

Zone 9 Queenborough Castle Important existing community and transport hub, containing public open space, library, public house, the former Old School building and railway station.

Paragraph 4.8 Community Uses (Zones 2 and 9)

"An audit ……New facilities are likely to be concentrated within a new district centre to be located towards the southern end of Zone 2, close to the existing community at Rushenden. Facilities including new retail provision at the centre will complement those already present in Rushenden and at Queenborough around the Main Road /station area **(Zone 9)**. New provision will however be limited in scale, as Sheerness will remain the main retail and administrative centre for the Island. **Opportunity does exist nonetheless to upgrade and improve existing facilities, including bringing the former Old School back into use.**

Extract Executive Minutes 15/12/04

428 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK QUEENBOROUGH AND RUSHENDEN

The Planning Officer presented a report outlining the background to the preparation of the Development Framework for Area Action Plan 8 (AAP8) Queenborough and Rushenden and presenting the final, amended, version of the Framework for consideration with a view to adoption. She also drew Members attention to the tabled item which included additional information regarding Queenborough Castle, which was situated in zone 9 of AAP8.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Development Framework, including Queenborough Castle, be adopted as a supplementary planning document.