Croydon Council

REPORT TO: PLANNING POLICY DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE
29th July 2008

AGENDA ITEM: 10


LEAD OFFICER: Phillip Goodwin, Director of Planning and Transportation

CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Jason Perry, Cabinet Member for Planning

WARDS: All

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:
The Council is statutorily required to assemble a Local Development Framework and to prepare Development Plan Documents which generally accord with and help to deliver the regional spatial planning and development framework, i.e. the London Plan. It is also required to have regard to the London Plan and the Mayor’s policies for planning in any planning and development decision it takes, particularly where there may be strategic or regional impacts and implications. Consequently the Mayor’s position on planning and the exercise of his planning powers are of significance to a wide range of corporate policies and priorities.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:
There are no financial implications arising from this report and recommendation.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.:
For general release

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 The Planning Policy Development Sub-Committee is recommended to:

1.1.1 note and welcome the salient points of the Mayor’s new planning document and to have regard to them in its planning and development decisions;
1.1.2 note that a full report on the Mayor’s proposals and their implications and a recommended response to them will be made to the next meeting of Committee.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The new Mayor of London has recently published a statement setting out his ideas for changing strategic planning policy and how he intends to exercise his planning powers. He has asked for comments on his proposals by 10th November 2008. This report outlines the Mayor’s proposals and indicates that they are generally welcome. However a full report on them and the appropriate response from Croydon Council should be made in September.
3  Introduction

3.1 On 9th July 2008 the Mayor published a document, entitled “Planning for a Better London”, setting out his “direction of travel” on planning and housing over the coming months and years. The document outlines the Mayor’s general approach to planning, his responses to the major planning challenges in London, and how he intends to put his policies and initiatives into practice, including a list of SPG (Supplementary Planning Guidance) and other documents that he intends to publish over the next four years. This is intended as a prelude to further, more detailed, work to carry out these proposals. The programme is not necessarily exhaustive, and may be subject to future changes or additions.

3.2 The main points made by the Mayor’s document are as follows:

**Mayor’s Overall Approach to Planning**
- To adopt a consensual, co-operative or partnership approach to planning with the boroughs and others which focuses more on the outcomes of strategies and plans rather than the processes of preparing and agreeing them.
- To be concerned with all of London. Whilst not diminishing his concern for planning of Central London and the East London corridor he will also give greater priority to addresses the planning issues and needs of Outer London, especially as this is where the majority of Londoners live and work.
- A greater emphasis upon building communities and safe and pleasant neighbourhoods where most of residents day to day needs can be satisfied.
- Continued focus on facilitating economic growth in all areas, addressing the challenges of climate change and tackling the root causes and impacts of deprivation
- The Mayor will only intervene in “genuinely strategic” planning applications and will not seek to “do boroughs’ work for them”. He will only use his “takeover powers” in exceptional circumstances when there are important strategic issues to be addressed.
- To establish an annual London Planning Convention in which all partners for planning for London can participate.

**Economy**
- He expects to plan for long term economic growth in London is all areas. Despite recent and current slowdown, it is estimated that 8.1 million m² of new office space will be needed.
- The Mayor will support all London business, whether multi-nationals or SMEs (small and medium enterprises).
- It is planned to draw up a new economic development framework for the CAZ (Central Activities Zone)
- It is, however, proposed that very tall buildings will be allowed in only a limited number of appropriate locations. These will determined in coordination with boroughs
- The Mayor wishes to facilitate the development of a diverse retail sector and will explore avenues for ensuring that “affordable retail unit” provision is made in major developments

**Outer London**
- The Mayor identifies that in the foreseeable future, 60% of economic growth will be in Outer London. He believes that this should be planned for by provisions in appropriate plans. He will establish an Outer London Commission to recommend new policy
The Mayor will review the sub-regions and will probably abandon the new “pizza wedge” framework introduced in 2008. He considers that any sub-regional arrangements should be based upon where there are common needs and common issues to be addressed.

The Mayor will support Outer London’s economy, including exploiting the potential of employment hubs in Barnet and Croydon.

Housing
- It is estimated the population will grow to 8.61 million by 2026 which will mean a large increase in the number of households to be accommodated. The main need will be for family housing, particularly affordable family housing. There is also a major need to plan for the provision of the infrastructure and facilities required by changing communities and new neighbourhoods.
- Working with boroughs the Mayor aims to maximise affordable housing provision. He will scrap the counter-productive 50% affordable housing target. He will allow a higher proportion of shared ownership and intermediate housing to meet future housing needs.
- The Mayor will also take or support initiatives to improve housing quality and design standards. He intends to issue guidance on designing out crime.
- The Mayor wishes to build a better evidence base on actual housing needs, the capacity of areas to accommodate housing growth and change and local housing markets’ response to needs.
- The Mayor intends to produce a new draft Housing Strategy later this year, and new Housing SPG.

Environment
- The Mayor will give strong support for on-site renewable energy, without being too prescriptive over technologies.
- The Mayor wishes to give greater protection from development to back gardens and open spaces. He will also maintain the strong protection from development afforded to all of the Green Belt, important areas of Metropolitan Open Land and playing fields.

Transport
- The Mayor will promote Crossrail and will look to use planning system to contribute towards its cost.
- He will also expect greater coordination between development proposals and plans and the provision of and changes to transport infrastructure.
- The Mayor has restated his opposition to Heathrow’s expansion and indicated that he favours airport growth to the east of London.
- He will also support London’s waterways for transportation of people and goods.

Communities
- The Mayor has indicated that the development of communities in neighbourhoods should be the main theme for change strategies.
- He will promote the idea of neighbourhood communities in the development of East London and the Thames Gateway.
- He will ensure that new housing is accompanied by appropriate transport and social infrastructure, especially in the Thames Gateway.
- He wishes to maximise legacy from 2012 Olympics.

Proposed Changes
The Mayor plans to publish or amend the following documents.
Croydon Council

- The London Plan. Amendments for key areas will be instigated immediately. In the medium term, the Mayor will aim to totally replace it, by beginning a new London Plan within 18 months, for publication by end of 2012.
- Alterations targeted in next 3-8 months will include those for Crossrail funding, housing targets, back gardens, tall buildings, crime and Outer London. Actual proposals will be published by end of 2010.

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

- Revision in progress of London View Management Framework
- 2008/09: Housing, Renewable Energy, Accessibility, Open Spaces and Geodiversity
- 2009/10: Town Centres, CAZ Framework, Green Infrastructure, Designing Out Crime
- SPGs to be produced within 12-18 months

3.3 The Mayor has offered his Planning for a Better London document for comment by any interested party. He has posed a number of questions in the document about his proposals for which he would particularly welcome a response. The Mayor has indicated that he would welcome comments by the 10th November 2008.

3.4 The Mayor’s proposals for changes to strategic planning policy and the way he exercises his planning powers are generally to be welcomed. There are, however, many detailed and specific ideas and proposals in the document which warrant careful and detailed consideration and the Mayor has himself asked for comments upon them. It is therefore proposed that a further report be made to Committee in the early autumn which details the Mayor’s proposals, analyses their implications for planning in Croydon and recommends a response to them by the 10th November.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Internal consultation on this report has been undertaken and no adverse response or comment was received. External consultation was not necessary on this report. When the Council responds to the Mayor’s invitation to comment in the Autumn it may be appropriate to publish that response. However that will not, in itself, constitute consultation.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

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The effect of the decision
There are no expenditure implications associated with this report. The implications of receiving a report on the Mayor’s proposals and the what they might mean for Croydon can be allowed for in existing budgets for the planning service.

3 Risks
The are no financial risks associated with this report.

4 Options
There are no financial options associated with this report.

5 Future savings/efficiencies
There are no financial savings or efficiencies associated with this report.

6 (Approved by: Ian Geary, Head of Finance, Planning & Transportation)

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR

6.1 The Solicitor to the Council notes that there are no legal considerations arising directly from the recommendation in this report.

6.2 (Approved by: Sean Murphy, Corporate Solicitor on behalf of the Council Secretary, Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

7.1 There are no new or additional human resource requirements arising directly from this report and the recommendation.
7.2 (Approved by: Robert Laban on behalf of the Divisional Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development)

8. CUSTOMER IMPACT

8.1 There is no customer impact arising directly from this report and the recommendation.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA)

9.1 The requirements for EQIA do not apply to this report or the recommendation.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL AND DESIGN IMPACT

10.1 There are no environmental and design impacts arising directly from this report and the recommendation.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

11.1 There are no crime and disorder reduction impacts directly arising from this report and the recommendation.

12. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

12.1 There are no human rights impacts directly arising from this report and the recommendation.

13. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 The Mayor’s Statement is a public document. All reports etc. relating to it should be publicly available information. There is no requirement for consultation on any response to the Mayor’s statement. However there is, however, some merit in making the Council’s response publicly available when it has been agreed. There are no data protection requirements arising from this report and recommendation.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: “Planning for a Better London”