



Leicestershire
County Council



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SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 28 JANUARY 2009

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECO-TOWN FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

FINAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the findings of the Scrutiny Review Panel on the Proposed Development of an Eco-Town for Leicestershire (a copy of the Panel's report and appendices is attached to this report).

Background

2. In July 2007 the Government invited local authorities and landowners or developers to put forward bids for possible eco-towns. 57 bids were received and on 3 April 2008 the Government published a list of 15 locations that had been short listed as possible sites for eco-towns. One of these locations, proposed by the Co-operative Group, lies to the south east of Leicester in an area around Stoughton village.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 18 June 2008 agreed to establish a Scrutiny Review Panel to consider in detail the proposals being put forward by the Co-op.
4. Based on an examination of the Co-operative Group's proposals and feedback from an initial consultation, the Cabinet on 20 June 2008 approved a number of comments which represented the Council's preliminary views on eco-towns and Pennbury in particular.

Resource Implications

5. There are no direct resource implications arising from the findings of the Panel. However, should the Co-op's proposals receive approval by the Government, there would be resource implications in relation to the statutory, and other, provisions that the County Council would need to provide for the area.

Recommendation

6. The Commission is asked to consider the findings of the Panel and agree to submit the report together with any comments it may have to the Cabinet.

Equal Opportunities Implications

7. The Co-op's proposals envisage that 30% of the 15,000 homes to be built would be 'affordable', with approximately 75% of that number as rental properties with the remainder as shared ownership.

Environmental Implications

8. The concept for the Eco-town for Leicestershire provides for a high degree of self containment with a minimum demand on external resources. It offers a commendable approach to sustainability and high environmental standards in areas such as energy and water, environmentally friendly technologies and construction methods. The success of this concept, though, is subject in large part to the deliverability of an ambitious transport strategy, which includes a way of living not previously tested.

Background Papers

'Eco-towns – County Council response to Pennbury' - report to the Scrutiny Commission on 18 June 2008

'Eco-towns – County Council response to Pennbury (Stoughton)' - report to the Cabinet on 20 June 2008

'An Eco-town for Leicestershire' - Masterplan Vision Document by the Co-operative Group

'Pennbury Strategic Assessment Summary Report' by Halcrow – 11 December 2008.

'Pennbury Strategic Assessment Sustainability Appraisal Review' by Halcrow – 17 December 2008.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

A copy of this report has been circulated to all Members via the Members' Information Service.

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