



SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL ON THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECO-TOWN

MEETING WITH JEREMY RICHARDSON OF THE SCOTT WILSON GROUP ON 8 DECEMBER 2008

The Panel met with Jeremy Richardson (Technical Director) of the Scott Wilson Group who delivered a presentation on the draft Planning Policy Statement.

The Panel NOTED the following points that arose from that meeting:

- The Co-op's proposals would benefit from strengthening of the 'affordable' housing target;
- Though it would be challenging to achieve a change in the public's attitude toward issues such as car use and energy consumption, the Government believed that to have the best chance of achieving these ambitious aims, 'brand new' settlements, such as the proposed development in Stoughton, were required;
- Some research on the 'new towns' established after the second world war informed the draft PPS (Planning Policy Statement);
- It was clear that some of the Co-op's proposals, such as those for a tram route, would require significant Government funding. There was a need for the Co-op to demonstrate that their sustainable transport proposals were deliverable before the scheme could gain Government approval;
- There was some concern that the housing projections in the 'Barker Review of Land Use' report were now not applicable, as the 'credit crunch' appeared to have had a negative impact on housing need. However, the Government had asserted that the credit crunch would be a short-term blip on housing need in the long-term and this assertion had not been questioned in the draft PPS;
- In assessing the location for the Pennbury site, Scott Wilson had carried out site visits, met with officers of the four authorities and consulted their RSS (Regional Spatial Strategy) and LDF documents. They had also held meetings with the Environment Agency;
- Despite the identification of sites within the RSS, the Government appeared to have made a preference for stand-alone sites, rather than sustainable urban extensions.