Rotherham Core Strategy Public Examination

Statement by Sheffield City Council in relation to Matters 1.1 to 1.3

Matter 1: Requirements, Vision, Strategy, Objectives and Sustainability

Issue 1: Has the Council complied with all the legal requirements, and in particular the duty to co-operate, and are the Core Strategy's proposals for sustainable growth deliverable, clear, sufficiently justified, effective and consistent with all relevant national policy?

1.1 What measures has the Council taken to comply with the duty to co-operate, with which local authorities has that co-operation taken place and what has been the outcome of that co-operation? What documentary evidence is there of that cooperation, and what evidence is there in the Core Strategy of the effectiveness of that co-operation?

Regional and Sheffield City Region Co-operation

Sheffield District is the major city and economic driver within Sheffield City Region (SCR) and its influence extends well beyond the district boundary. This means it has been essential for Sheffield City Council (SCC) to actively engage and co-operate with Rotherham MBC, as well as the other local planning authorities that comprise the SCR Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Strong co-operation between the South Yorkshire districts took place on strategic planning matters even before the duty to co-operate was introduced. Both authorities were actively involved on working groups that developed the evidence base and policies in the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) which was published in 2008. Further joint working has subsequently taken place through various officer groups established through the SCR LEP, principally those established to support the Housing and Regeneration Board (which includes elected Members from all the local authorities in SCR).

As part of the work of the LEP Housing and Regeneration Board, officers from Sheffield and Rotherham have been part of a joint working group established to oversee the production of forecasts of population and households for the Sheffield City Region. The forecasts were produced by the Knowledge and Research Team at Sheffield City Council on behalf of the other SCR local authorities.

Both Sheffield and Rotherham have contributed to the joint South Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller need assessment which was completed earlier this year.

Bi-monthly meetings have taken place between all four South Yorkshire districts for a number of years, and, since 2012, between the districts that make up the City Region. These meetings have taken place at two main levels

- Heads of Planning
- Lead officers from forward planning/policy teams (Sheffield City Region Planning Officers Group)

On transport matters, Sheffield and Rotherham work together via the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) Partnership. This includes the four South Yorkshire Districts as well as the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive. The Partnership
published a Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy in April 2011 which defines the transport priorities for the period 2011-2026. It acts as the LTP Strategy for South Yorkshire but covers the larger SCR area because the South Yorkshire transport system also serves Chesterfield, Worksop, Bolsover, the Peak District and their vicinity, which form part of the wider SCR economy. The strategy has been shaped jointly with our City Region Partners in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and in consultation with key partners such as South Yorkshire Police, Health organisations, the Highways Agency and Network Rail.

Within South Yorkshire, the SCR Transport Strategy is implemented through the South Yorkshire LTP3 Implementation Plan. This includes a number of priority transport projects which relate to travel across the Sheffield/ Rotherham boundary (see SCC statement on Question 4.12).

Sheffield/ Rotherham cooperation

Since 2008, both authorities have worked together to develop a common methodology for the Sheffield and Rotherham Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). A single SHLAA Working Group has overseen regular updates of the assessments undertaken for each district (the Working Group comprises council officers from the two districts, a representative from the Northern Sub-Area of the former East Midlands Region, representatives from the Home Builders Federation and the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)).

A series of separate meetings were also held between Rotherham and Sheffield between December 2011 and March 2013 to discuss the housing requirement figure in the Rotherham Core Strategy (see Matter 1.2 below). Notes of these meetings are appended to Rotherham MBC’s Statement of Co-operation (RSD12). The outcome of those discussions is reflected in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and associated Technical Note (see below).

Other discussions (through meetings, e-mail, etc) have also taken place between the two districts on specific cross-boundary issues of strategic importance, most notably in relation to:

- development at Waverley (officers from both authorities were part of a joint working group which oversaw the masterplan and planning application for this strategic site)
- the Enterprise Zone designation along the M1 corridor (including the Advanced Manufacturing Park, Templeborough and the Lower Don Valley)
- the Rotherham/ Sheffield Tram-Train trial (see statement on Matter 4.12)

Documentary evidence

The main documentary evidence of the co-operation is:

- Forecasts of Populations and Households for the Sheffield City Region – Final Report (March 2013)
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Rotherham Housing Requirement (3 June 2013)
- RSD14: Technical Note for Memorandum of Understanding between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Sheffield City Council (July 2013)
- Sheffield and Rotherham SHLAA reports:
  - Rotherham (2009, 2012)
- South Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study (2013)
- Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy (2011-2026)
1.2 Have there been any discussions at any time with a nearby Borough or District to accommodate any unmet need, and has any nearby Authority requested the Council to meet any of its needs? And what was the outcome of any such request? For example, are any arrangements or understandings in place between the Council and Sheffield City Council? In which ways has the Council acted as a “good neighbour” in matters of town and country planning?

The Sheffield Core Strategy (CS) was adopted in 2009 and was prepared within the broader planning framework provided by the RSS (now revoked). Sheffield’s housing requirement in the CS is the same as that in the RSS. The RSS identified Sheffield and Rotherham as a single strategic housing market area (see Figure 12.1) and stated that this is reflected in the housing figures for the two districts. Paragraph 12.12 of the RSS notes that, for Sheffield, ‘the strategy takes advantage of opportunities to support economic growth, whilst managing the environmental impacts arising from development in the area’. This meant that Sheffield’s housing requirement figure was set at a level below that which would be needed to accommodate the DCLG household projections, while Rotherham’s figure was set at a substantially higher level than the projections. This implies that some of Sheffield’s need would be met in Rotherham, though the RSS does not specify how much.

Rotherham’s proposal to set a lower housing requirement initially caused SCC some concern because it was not clear how the growth envisaged by the RSS would be accommodated. SCC therefore lodged an objection to the Draft Rotherham CS in September 2011. Extensive and constructive discussions subsequently took place between the two authorities to seek agreement on how the RSS housing requirement could be met. The outcome of those discussions is the MoU on the Housing Requirement (RSD12 Rotherham Statement of Co-operation, Appendix 23) and associated Technical Paper (RSD14). This has led to Sheffield withdrawing its objection (see RSD12, Appendix 21).

Sheffield published its Pre-Submission Draft City Policies and Sites document in April 2013 (this is the development management policies and site allocation DPD - a ‘second tier’ DPD which flows from the adopted CS). The Pre-Submission document acknowledges (paragraphs 12.14 to 12.18) that the allocations proposed for housing are not sufficient at present to meet the full requirement set by the CS. Although, in theory, there are sufficient suitable, available sites to meet the requirement, the weak housing market conditions mean that there is a risk that not all the allocated sites will be deliverable during the plan period. Overall, there is potential to accommodate around 22,400 dwellings in Sheffield between 2013 and 2026 but our current estimate is that only around 18,750 homes are deliverable over that period. This compares to a residual gross requirement of around 19,080 dwellings (based on the current Core Strategy gross requirement and taking into account the number of homes delivered between 2004 and 2013). The current net 5-year supply (2014-2019) is estimated to be 46% of the net requirement, representing a shortfall of just over 4,900 dwellings1.

The Pre-Submission document (paragraph 12.17) therefore confirms that the Council intends to undertake an immediate review of the CS following completion of the present document (scheduled for adoption in autumn 2014). It notes that this will allow comprehensive consideration of the strategic options for housing and other land uses in the city, including options for Green Belt review. This will, however, require further work with other local planning authorities (including Rotherham) about the distribution of housing and countryside across the wider market area. This further work will also take

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1 Sheffield Housing Requirement and Land Supply Monitoring Report, July 2013
account of 2011 Census data and reflect the SCR Strategic Economic Plan (due to be submitted to Government later this year). It is hoped that further set of forecasts will be available by spring 2014.

SCC is satisfied that the Sheffield and Rotherham Core Strategies provide sufficient flexibility to cater for the housing requirement originally set by the RSS for the strategic housing market area. The RSS requirement equates to combined average annual provision across the two districts of 2,435 dwellings per year over the period 2004-2026 and is the basis for the agreement in the MoU (see MoU Technical Paper, Table 12).

At this stage, it is not possible to say with any certainty what the outcome of the further SCR population and household growth forecasting work will be or how a higher requirement would be accommodated across SCR as a whole. We note, however, that:

(a) The latest Interim 2011-based household projections point to only slightly higher combined average annual growth (2,495 households per year) across the two districts when compared to that proposed in the RSS.

(b) Rotherham’s total potential housing land supply for the period 2013-2026 (see MoU Technical Paper, Table 12) includes a significant margin over and above the requirement (land supply plus safeguarded land for the period 2013-2026 equates to 19,100 dwellings – equivalent to 1,470 dwellings per year).

(c) It is anticipated that Sheffield’s CS review will look ahead to 2032 or 2033 and will identify additional land for housing within Sheffield district (i.e. over and above the current Local Plan supply of 22,400 dwellings identified in the latest SHLAA update (July 2013)).

(d) The effective market demand for housing, although increasing, remains at a relatively low level and it will take some time for Sheffield and Rotherham to achieve the step change in delivery rates needed to meet the housing requirement figures in the two Core Strategies – this provides time to reassess housing need and bring forward additional land to enable housing delivery to ‘catch up’ later in the plan period.

1.3 Are all cross-boundary issues satisfactorily addressed?

Sheffield City Council is satisfied that cross-boundary issues have been satisfactorily addressed.