YEAR 2 MODULE: ENVS210 STRATEGIC PLAN MAKING

Liverpool City Region
Spatial Development Strategy Workshop

10th December 2020

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL: Department of Geography and Planning

SESSION 2020/2021:   PLANNING

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Strategic Objective 1: Climate Change & Environment

- General agreement from the group on the objective.

- This is an important theme in spatial planning.

- Climate change / global warming - How will we (planning and the SDS) 'drive up standards and secure opportunities' to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? It is essential that this is a central factor in all planning decisions and proposals, especially if we are to have any chance of meeting the 2040 carbon neutral target. This can be on a small individual development scale e.g. eco home or the entire strategy for the city region setting out a pattern of development that does not lead to more carbon emissions and actually reduces them.

- Brownfield land - Maximising the potential for brownfield land is a key to environmental sustainability. We are not making new land. How do we encourage BFL to be developed and what will the CA be doing to makes sure that this happens? Important that the policy framework is in place alongside the necessary financial levers to make redeveloping brownfield sites/land viable.

- How is biodiversity being considered? Improved and new habitats can be introduced through all new development not just rural / countryside locations. E.g. urban green roofs and walls can attract wildlife. It is important that this is implemented.

- The objective says SDS will facilitate clean and renewable energy generation and energy efficiency and policy says it will support and identify opportunities - but how and who will this be implemented by and when will it happen? Partnership between the public (i.e. LCRCA) and private (i.e. energy industry) sectors will be key to delivery and will need to work to common goal.

Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure Policy

- Policy talks of opportunities new strategic green infrastructure – where is this going to be located in the City Region? Do we have any plans? Noted that the SDS references strategic tree planting. SDS could set out.

- Policy says will ensure green and open space is accessible and of high quality - how do we determine the standard expected for open space and how is this going kept at high quality? Who maintains it?

- Active travel – how will the SDS ensure this will increase? Important that infrastructure is in place (e.g. cycle lanes and public transport stops / stations) and pattern of development allows this, reducing dependency on cars.

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Strategic Objective 2: Addressing health inequalities and creating a healthier City Region

- Good, agreed that health was something that needed to be included, especially in light of Covid

- Too much focus on physical aspects of health, no consideration for mental health and wellbeing

- There is definitely an overlap between health and climate change, especially from an air quality and active travel point of view which is good – these things are important

- Who does this objective benefit the most? It needs to be inclusive of children as well as ageing population

- Is there room in the SDS for the role of the built environment in dealing with infectious diseases?

Air quality Policy

- It's environmentally focused but it's good that it has been framed from a health perspective – it makes it more personal to people across the City Region

- Where health and the environment is concerned, there's always the need to go further as it's better than not going far enough – may end up with more resistance by not going far enough

- Issues about how to deal with cross-boundary nature of air quality – is there anyway this can be applied wider than the City Region? What is being done to ensure that air quality is levelling up across the UK?

Active Travel Policy

- Liverpool city centre is really good for cycling and walking, it's aesthetically pleasing, it's safe and easy to navigate

- Wider areas aren't so well connected into the city centre, often quite disjointed and not smooth journeys

- Some areas of Liverpool are easy to cycle and boosts confidence, even with not cycling very often

- Complete segregation away from cars is optimum – is this a confidence issue? Hierarchy of cycle lanes – least preferred is lanes next to vehicular lanes

- Design is the most important consideration when thinking about active design – good lighting, public

- Have travel speeds been considered? This impacts flow and experience of walkers and cyclers

- Tourism plays a big role in active design – is it easy for tourists to get around via back? Is the city legible and easy to navigate? Can they access bikes and good quality cycle routes? Are tourist attractions well positioned and have public/active travel opportunities nearby?

- Integrated transport system is critical for uptake of active travel – it needs to be convenient, connected and cohesive otherwise people will be put off

Health Impact Assessments Policy

- This is good to have

- How easy will it be to monitor? Will it act as a guideline for applicants, or a strict procedure?

- There needs to be something that sets out how the measures are to be implemented, monitored and evaluate – if people can see the results, there will be better buy-in

- How does this sit alongside Planning White Paper's desire to streamline planning applications?

- Whose responsibility will it be? Planners or health professionals?

Healthy Food Businesses Policy

- Yes, this is an important policy to have – but how much impact does it have in light of Covid-19 (deliveries, takeaways only)

- Role of planning conditions in restricting takeaways

- Experience of school – chippy shop opposite the school, it was always packed, children don't care about their health and nutrition

- Needs to sit alongside green space, cycle lanes and access to healthier food choice

Social Infrastructure Policy

- Public spaces should also be classed as social infrastructure – not always a building and are spaces that people use to meet up in

- More about the social network and interaction it provides – it could quite easily fit in the placemaking and communities chapter too

- Important that there is a mental health emphasis when considering social infrastructure, and highlight the benefits

- Wording needs to focus more on 'sense of belonging' and 'community engagement'

- Is there a place for social value in this objective?

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Strategic Objective 3: Delivering an Inclusive Economy

- On sustainability, should look at the sustainable production of clothes.

- On town centre, only really know Liverpool City Centre. Town centre role to be identified and advertised, don't visit the smaller town centres. Different town centres have different needs. Agree identity for town centres important.

- In terms of business support, there should be a combination of small and larger businesses.

- Each business has different needs, aim to focus on the benefits of different sizes

- Encourage small businesses

Employment Skills Policy

- Skills has links to building back better and economic growth.

- Apprenticeships and internships need promotion to increase awareness.

Digital Connectivity Policy

- Prioritise/focus better speed for business, with a 'good' speed for houses.

- Not a necessity to deliver gigabit connection to homes, affordability for students.

- Address reliability and capacity of internet speed around peak times.

Social Economy Policy

- Protection can help competitiveness and inclusivity.

- Affordability – Starbucks Coffee example in a deprived area.

Rural Economy Policy

- Considered a good approach.

Other Policy Areas

- Widen employment skills

- Help businesses understand how they can achieve the objective

- Culture and ethnicity should be considered throughout all policies.

- Queried if COVID 19 implications have been considered. Agree flexibility required.

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Strategic Objective 4: Place Making and Communities

- General agreement from the group on the objective.

- This is an important theme in spatial planning

- Objective should focus on centres and better places

- Important to show who the Plan is being made for

- Different needs in different places and that needs to be reflected eg the quality in the City centre is different to that in the suburban areas

- The SDS should look at the overall housing numbers but local plans are better positioned to identify sites as the local planners have better local knowledge

- Housing numbers are important and so is quality

- Is there a difference between bullet point 2 and bullet point 3 (discussion about how differentiate between homes and buildings and urban spaces

Design Standards Policy

- Need different design in different places to reflect the vernacular

Housing Standards Policy

- Impact of Covid shown there needs to be separate home office spaces in new homes

- Need to incorporate outside space – gardens and balconies – experience of Covid is that those without gardens have an impact on well-being

- Water efficiency and sustainable drainage are important as water as a resource needs to be considered

- EVCP are expensive and the policy should look at how to reduce cost to make Electric Cars more affordable

Other Policy Areas

- Infrastructure should be given priority

- Sustainability of buildings needs to be prioritised eg solar panels, green energy

- Historic environment

- Tourism

- Protection of cultural assets (Agent of Change)

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The University of Liverpool is home to the first Planning School in the world, founded in 1909. Since then the Planning School has continued to innovate in its' Planning research and teaching.

As part of the Year 2 Module on Strategic Planning, working in partnership with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's Spatial Planning Team, the School has played an important role in shaping and developing the statutory City Region Spatial Development Strategy (SDS). This is the second year that this model of engagement has taken place with the Year 2 cohort on the Strategic Plan Making module.

The Year 2 students have taken part in workshops to consider 4 of the strategic Objectives and the associated policy approaches. The summaries of the workshops are set out in this report.

These workshops would not have been possible without the support and assistance of:-

Dr Sebastian Dembski - Lecturer in Planning and Programme Director Planning (UG)
Dr Chia-Lin Chen - Lecturer in Urban Planning

42 Year 2 students took part in the workshop. The demographics of the students involved were:-

- 100% (42) were within the 16-24 Year old Age Group

- 100% (42) were students

- 64.3% (27) were Female and 35.7% (15) were Male

- 59.5% (25) were BAME