

## **SEEDA's IMPACT ON URBAN RENAISSANCE**

Views have been requested on the impact of SEEDA's work on urban renaissance, responses to the questions raised in an email and the context and issues paper are set out below.

What are the key priorities and challenges for achieving an urban renaissance in the region?

- Ensure the growth agenda is delivered with high quality development and supporting infrastructure. This is a big challenge as 25% of new housing needed is required in the south east.
- Tackling the problem of affordable housing
- Focus development on brownfield sites and bring empty properties back into use.
- Ensure delivery of large regeneration sites.
- Improving and maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres in the region.
- Attracting inward investment and new businesses to the area
- The need to sell the growth agenda to certain areas and local communities in the region as some areas are against development and change. One way to do this is through the promotion of good practice and highlighting successful developments.
- Promoting sustainable development

What can be done to ensure that urban renaissance effects every street and neighbourhood in the region?

- Improve the public realm including small actions such as keeping areas clean so that everyone sees some improvement.
- Ensure all have access to opportunities that arise from urban renaissance for example as access to new jobs created.
- Community participation in projects and initiatives

What are the barriers to progress in improving quality and standards of design of buildings and spaces in the region and what can be done to overcome them?

- Knowledge
- Funding
- Standardisation (lack of individualism in design)
- Resistance to increased density and development

Overcome:

- Training
- Provide examples of good practice
- Provide a guide to good design
- Taking a strong stance and refuse developments of poor design
- Effective master planning
- Use initiatives such as the Councillors toolkit to gain political sign up and public support to the growth agenda.

### Discussion issues put forward in the paper prepared for SEERA

What is SEEDA's role in the housing dimension to sustainable communities plan and the skills dimension to Egan review and their application to urban renaissance?

- Ensure high quality high density development takes place
- Bring forward (or help to bring forward) the development of major sites
- Use funding resources to remediate land to enable development of brownfield land
- Use CPO powers or funding to acquire land for development

- Work together with other agencies (EP and LA's) to deliver the housing agenda
- Fund master planning
- Provide expertise
- Taking up membership on the regional housing board
- Implement the regional centre of excellence
- Work with Learning and Skills Council to improve skills and training in urban renaissance
- Promote good practice
- Advertise or set up conferences / seminars on relevant issues
- Encourage internal training on urban renaissance issues
- CPD events

Are SEEDAs resources for urban renaissance enough or are they spread too thinly especially in the context of Government expectations and the level of funds provided to RDA's?

- It depends to an extent how much other departments, within SEEDA, contribute towards the work on urban renaissance since SEEDA state that urban renaissance is mainstreamed throughout the organisation

What is the specific role of SEEDA relative to SEERA, EP, CABE, GOSE, LAs and others in implementing policy for urban renaissance?

- Using CPO powers to assemble land
- Using funding to aid development of brownfield land especially if it is contaminated
- Use funding to bring empty properties back into use and to improve the physical infrastructure
- These roles will be complimentary to the work of the other organisations

How can AIFs be used more effectively to support the delivery of urban renaissance?

- May need to ensure that AIFs cover specific areas and focus on the key priorities rather than every bit of investment that is needed. (Key areas for investment to get development off the ground)

SEEDA is effective in setting up partnerships for area based regeneration and development sites – how could SEEDA best help partnerships deliver urban renaissance or address specific blockages?

- Take a leadership role and ensure the partnership works well together and drives things forward.
- Use CPO powers where there are many landowners involved in one scheme but they can not agree on what should be done
- Use the funding available to enable development to go ahead
- Use examples of good practice where SEEDA have been involved before.

How can SEEDA ensure that master planning is more than a vision and is an on-going process to facilitate urban renaissance?

- Ensure that master plans include clear and practical development proposals as well as a vision for the area
- Encourage master plans to include an implementation section to indicate how they will be delivered on the ground

Should SEEDA ensure that activities are focused on deprived areas and include measures that ensure benefits reach those in most need or recognise that urban renaissance is a broader concept which is relevant to all urban areas in the South East?

- Urban renaissance is relevant to all urban areas as it is about making urban areas places where people want to spend time and live. The main focus should be on deprived areas but there will be issues that are area wide and not just relevant to deprived areas.

How can SEEDA address more convincingly the urban renaissance skills agenda?

- Work more closely with the LSC and higher education organisations to promote training in areas where skills are lacking.
- Tap into existing initiatives and organisations while waiting for other initiatives to come on line.

Is urban renaissance recognised by all SEEDA staff as it is by the senior manager team?

- This is difficult to answer but it is suspected that urban renaissance is not as mainstreamed as it should be throughout the organisation.

What are the most cost effective and efficient actions for SEEDA to focus on?

- Working in partnership to ensure projects get off the ground
- Use AIFs to attract investment for areas in the region
- Ensure high quality design and disseminate good practice on design
- Ensure sustainability flows through all SEEDAs work.