

## **Development Plan Panel**

**Wednesday, 20th May, 2015**

**PRESENT:** Councillor N Walshaw in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell,  
R Charlwood, M Coulson, P Gruen,  
G Latty, T Leadley, J McKenna, E Nash  
and B Selby

### **38 Chair's opening remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

### **39 Late Items**

There were no formal late items, however the Panel was in receipt of a copy of a summary document relating to the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVLAAP), which the Head of Forward Planning and Implementation tabled at the meeting (minute 44 refers)

### **40 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests. A declaration of an 'other' interest was made later in the meeting (minute 42 refers)

### **41 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors J Lewis, M Rafique and J Procter, with Councillors B Selby, E Nash and G Latty substituting for their respective colleagues

### **42 Site Allocation Plan (SAP) - Sites at Weetwood (3378) & Tingley (1143B)**

With reference to discussions held at Development Plan Panel on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and Executive Board on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015, the Panel considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer in respect of two sites within the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) – 3378 Weetwood Lane and 1143B Tingley – and whether to recommend these should be included as housing allocations in the SAP

Large scale maps of the sites were displayed at the meeting

Officers presented the report and informed Members that both sites were located in the Green Belt; were reasonably accessible; were assets held by the Leeds Cricket, Football and Athletic Company Ltd and were being put forward as enabling development for the benefit of securing international cricket at Headingley, however in terms of the SAP process, Members were informed this last point was a side issue

The housing targets for North HMCA and the Outer South West HMCA were outlined, with Members being informed that for the North HMCA there was a surplus of 185 units, which did not include site 3378 – Weetwood and for the Outer South West HMCA, there was a shortfall of 166 units; this figure taking into account site 1143B – Tingley

The Chief Planning Officer stressed that any enabling development justification would need to be considered through the planning application process

Members discussed the report, with the main issues being raised relating to:

- the Panel's previous views and comments on the Weetwood site and that it should be retained as Green Belt, particularly as it prevented coalescence of the settlement and that its loss would lead to urban sprawl, together with the view that this site had been unused for many years; that it was on the fringe of a larger area of land running from Hyde Park towards Otley and that its proposed removal from the Green Belt would have limited impact
- the lack of detail on the mechanics of the enabling development
- the benefits which Test Cricket at Headingley brought to Leeds and the need for improvements to be made to the cricket ground in order for Headingley to remain a possible Test Match venue
- the nature of the decision before the Panel and that planning permission for development was not being considered
- the lack of detail on what the funds raised from the enabling development would be spent on at Headingley and the possibility of deferring a decision on these sites until further information had been provided
- the possibility of very special circumstances being put forward by the land owner to justify these sites being considered for residential development

The Panel's legal adviser – the Head of Service, Strategy and Resources – advised Members that there were two separate processes; the preparation of the SAP which was for this Panel and any consideration of a future planning application which could run in parallel but would be for the Plans Panel to determine. The matter before the Panel today was to consider whether it was appropriate to allocate these two sites for housing in the SAP. As had been evidenced at previous meetings, as part of that process and in order to meet the housing targets in the Core Strategy, some sites were being proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt. The main focus of the report before Panel was to consider the Green Belt purposes and whether in order to meet the required target numbers, the sites could and should be taken out. In respect of the test of very special circumstances, this was a matter for the planning application process and an applicant would need to demonstrate their enabling development case at that time

The Panel continued to discuss the issues, with further comments being made in relation to:

- the need to include the Weetwood site in the SAP and for the public to be able to express their views on the proposal through the consultation process on the SAP
- that the SAP needed to take account of wellbeing; the amount of land being proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt and that a surplus of housing existed in the North HMCA
- the short step between allocating a site for housing and it being developed

- the need for a carefully worded S106 Agreement, possibly submitted to Panel for consideration, in the event a planning application for enabling development was submitted on these sites

At this point, Councillor B Anderson brought to the Panel's attention that he was a member of Yorkshire County Cricket Club; that he had not expected the discussion to take the direction it had done and considered whether he should withdraw from the meeting. The Panel's legal representative clarified the nature of Councillor Anderson's interest, which was considered to be an 'other' interest rather than a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in the Localism Act 2011 and the Members Code of Conduct

Members' discussions continued:

- the principle involved in this matter and the possibility that there were other landowners who could put forward a case to justify their sites being considered for housing allocation
- that there was doubt about the enabling development
- the possibility of making a case for the Weetwood site in view of its previous history as a sports site (part of the site was a protected playing pitch) but in the case of Tingley, not only was this a considerable distance from Headingley, it had never had a sporting use, with concerns being raised that legal advice might be required on this matter as part of the planning application process
- the staged process and that including the site in the SAP for housing was the first stage. The Head of Service, Strategy and Resources stressed that whilst there were two separate processes, they could run in parallel and that for the SAP process, Panel had to be satisfied on the issues raised in paragraph 3.1 of the submitted report
- the need for clarity in reports in respect of issues relating to S106 and CIL

Members considered how to proceed. Concerns continued to be raised about the message which would be sent if Panel agreed these sites could be allocated for housing. The Chief Planning Officer acknowledged the issues and the questions which had been raised about enabling development. However, having considered the sites it was the view of Officers that, on balance, the contribution they currently made in Green Belt terms was outweighed by the desirability of them going forward for housing allocation, although this was of course a decision for Panel

An amendment to the recommendation to enable the sites to be considered separately was made and voted upon, however this did not receive majority support

**RESOLVED** - To note the report and to advise that Development Plan Panel would support the allocation of both of these sites – 3378 Weetwood and 1143B Tingley – for housing

Under Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillors, Leadley, Campbell and G Latty required it to be recorded they voted against the matter

Under Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor B Anderson required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on this matter

#### **43 Site Allocation Plan - Strategic Housing & Employment Issues Outer North East (ONE)**

Prior to consideration of this matter, Councillor Charlwood left the meeting

With reference to discussions by the Development Plan Panel on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and Executive Board on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 on the SAP, Members considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer which reported back on the strategic housing and employment issues within the Outer North East (ONE) HMCA, as a basis to determine a way forward in the preparation of the SAP Publication Plan

Officers presented the report and reminded Members that the housing target for ONE HMCA was 5000 units and that at the Issues and Options consultation, two particular sites were identified – Thorp Arch (site 1055 A/1055B; EMP00326) and Headley Hall ( site 3391)

Members were informed there was a live planning application for a mixed use development and the creation of a new settlement at Thorp Arch which had last been presented to City Plans Panel in December 2013, although indications had been made that the applicant remained keen to progress the application and was working to resolve several issues relating to the proposals. In terms of the number of residential units proposed for the Thorp Arch site, Officers were of the view this would have a significant impact on the capacity of the rural road network

Reference was made to a recent letter from the applicant which raised concerns about how the Thorp Arch site was being presented and the options

The Headley Hall site was located in the Green Belt; was an 8ha site and was in a strategic location being close to the A1(M) and A64

The housing and employment target figures within the submitted report were outlined. Headley Hall had the capacity to deliver 3000 houses within the plan period and could offer critical mass to enable a settlement to be developed from the start, whereas it might be more difficult to integrate the Thorp Arch site and there were a number of issues to be resolved, including highways and land contamination

Members discussed the report, with the key areas of discussion relating to:

- the number of sites in the ONE HMCA which had been rejected
- other options available. Members were informed that whilst other options did exist, these related to smaller sites and would involve the release of PAS sites, with this not being as sustainable or as sequentially preferable as the proposals being put forward
- the length of time Officers had been discussing development proposals at Thorp Arch
- the need for some certainty for local residents and Ward Members
- the need for an update on the discussions with Selby Council. Officers advised that Selby District Council had an adopted Core Strategy and that although they were focusing development within settlements had indicated they would consider other sites, although the SAP process needed to be undertaken which would include public consultation
- that Ward Members considered the options put forward in the report as the best way of taking the issue forward

**RESOLVED** - To note the comments now made; the approach set out in the submitted report and to recommend to Executive Board the strategic housing (and employment) allocations for Outer North East for inclusion within the SAP Publication Draft Plan

#### **44 Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVLAAP) - Publication Draft Plan**

With reference to discussions held at the Development Plan Panel meetings of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and Executive Board of 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Members considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer which set out the AVLAAP Publication Draft Plan. A supplementary document which outlined the context; content and scope of the Plan; the key policies and proposals; the detailed area plans and next steps towards consultation, submission and examination was considered alongside the main report

Detailed discussions took place in respect of specific sites, with the following issues being raised:

- housing mix; the large number of flats being provided in the area; an acceptance of some flats if the proposal was for the conversion of an existing building but that family houses were required
- connectivity and the need to have a plan in place in the event the NGT project did not come forward
- the possibility of reopening closed railway stations and that consideration should be given to one at Stourton which was currently being used to facilitate Royal Mail
- the importance of referencing heritage assets, particularly the Golden Gate Public House and Hunslet Library and that consideration should be given to listing these buildings
- the orientation of Morrisons Supermarket at Hunslet which needed to be considered
- public realm and the extent to which the footpath along the River Aire had been lit and the need for this to continue to Hunslet Mill, in the interests of pedestrian safety

**RESOLVED** - To note the comments now made and to recommend to Executive Board that the AVLAAP Publication draft Plan be taken forward for public consultation

#### **45 Closing remarks**

Councillor J McKenna took the opportunity to pay tribute to Councillor Walshaw during his time as Chair of Development Plan Panel and for the excellent work he had done in this role. Members were informed that from the new Municipal Year, Councillor Walshaw would be the new Chair of North and East Plans Panel. Councillor McKenna wished the incoming Chair of Development Plan Panel, Councillor Congreve, well in his new role

#### **46 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds