

Report of Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 5th March, 2014

Subject: Response to the deputation to the Council on behalf of New Farnley Vision Group concerning the consultation process for the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Farnley and Wortley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Executive Board (9th May 2013) approved the Site Allocations - Issues and Options to go out for public consultation from 3rd June to 29th July 2013. A deputation to full Council on 15th January raised concerns regarding this early consultation on the plan. This plan forms part of the Local Development for Leeds (the LDF) and is concerned with housing, employment, greenspace and retail allocations up to 2028 and needs to reflect the overall approach of the Core Strategy.
2. The New Farnley Vision Group is concerned at not being consulted as part of this process, despite a site in New Farnley being considered for future housing allocation. The Group consider that this could undermine the recently adopted New Farnley Village Design Statement (VDS) which they recently produced in cooperation with the Council. The Village Design Statement was adopted in April 2013 as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which should be applied to planning decisions in the New Farnley area.
3. The 'Issues and Options' were subject to an extensive 8 week period of consultation. As part of this process, the consultant used by the New Farnley Village Design Statement Group (the main contact with the council during its production) was on the consultation mailing list and informed of the consultation. This email address had however been changed (the LDF consultation database has now been updated accordingly). The wider Group however, did become aware of the consultation and

representations have been received. All those groups and individuals on the LDF database and respondents to the consultation will be kept informed of the progress of the plan and will be informed of the next stage of public consultation. Any material planning considerations, including VDSs will help to inform which sites should be allocated for housing and other uses across Leeds in the preparation of the Publication Draft Plan. This will be the subject of further public consultation, anticipated late 2014.

4. Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to note the contents of this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report sets out the response to the deputation to full Council by the New Farnley Vision Group.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The New Farnley Vision Group submitted a written deputation which was presented to full Council on 15th January, 2014. A copy of the full deputation is available in Appendix 1.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The deputation raised a number of concerns regarding the early consultation process for the Site Allocations Plan, the main issue being that the members of the New Farnley Vision Group were not consulted, despite working closely with the City Council in the production of the New Farnley VDS. The consultant used by the Group in preparation of the VDS, who was the main contact with the Council during its production, is on the LDF consultation mailing list and was informed of the consultation. This included 16 consultation drop in events across Leeds throughout the consultation period. However, the email address used differs from one used in more recent correspondence with the Council. The mailing list has subsequently been updated to reflect this change. It should be emphasised that the wider Group did become aware of the consultation process and were able to make comments on this stage of the plan. All those on the LDF database and respondents to the consultation will be kept informed of the progress of the plan and will be informed of the next stage of public consultation, anticipated late 2014.
- 3.2 The deputation mentions that residents near the proposed site were consulted individually via letters from local Ward Councillors. Integral to the consultation strategy for the Site Allocations Plan was the need to work closely with Ward Members, in order to take advantage of their local knowledge and resources. Following this the 'Vision Group' arranged for letters to be sent to all residents in New Farnley. The Council would like to thank the Group for raising awareness within their area. At a District wide level, it was not practicable to write to all residents of Leeds and the consultation did encourage local groups and councillors to spread the word further.
- 3.3 City Development (Planning and Sustainable Development) notes the Vision Group's disappointment with the way the consultation process has been undertaken. The Group would like reassurance from the directorate that they will keep the Group informed and have regard to the adopted New Farnley VDS in the preparation of the plan. Para 3.1 above should give reassurance that the contacts we have will be kept informed of the next stages of the plan preparation. In terms of the VDS and its status as an SPD, it should be noted that as the Core Strategy is yet to be adopted, the SPD is supplementary to the existing Development Plan (the UDP). The Core Strategy will establish a very different context, planning for an additional 70,000 dwellings, including a target of 4,700 in the Outer West housing market characteristic area, which includes New Farnley.

The search for sites to meet these targets cannot be constrained by guidance that is supplementary to the plan being replaced. Nonetheless, the SPD provides important context for considering proposals within the New Farnley area and will continue to be relevant to the consideration of future planning applications once the pattern of allocations is established. The site allocations consultation process does not undermine or alter the validity of this planning document. Being a VDS this primarily offers advice on future development and is referred to by Officers when determining planning applications. There are only a few cross references to the Site Allocations Plan within the VDS, and these are all focused on one particular site.

- 3.4 New Farnley has one site (site 2123, Low Moor Side, New Farnley) in the Site Allocations Plan which has been colour coded as amber, defined as 'sites which have potential but there may be issues which need to be resolved, or the site may not be in such a favoured location as those highlighted in green'. The VDS reference to this site, which is currently allocated as a "protected area of search" (PAS). It states that 'this land may be considered for development in the future as part of a new site allocation plan'. Therefore, the Site Allocations plan is consistent with the VDS and the plan informs the public that this site may be subject to future allocation. Any material planning considerations, such as design statements, whether in a conservation area etc. will help to inform which sites should be allocated for housing and other uses across Leeds, and should any sites be allocated for development within such areas, design and amenity considerations will be further considered at planning application stage.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 This report is in response to a Council deputation and does not require any further consultation. The council sought to consult the New Farnley Vision Group via the consultant used in the preparation of the VDS and members of the New Farnley Vision Group did provide responses to the Site Allocations Plan during the consultation period once made aware of the material. These form part of the overall public response to the plan and will be used to inform the next stages. All those on the LDF database and respondents to the consultation will be kept informed of the progress of the plan and will be informed of the next stage of public consultation, anticipated late 2014.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The Site Allocations Plan has been subject to Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and further EIA screenings will be carried out at the appropriate stages of the progression to a final document. An EIA screening of this Executive Board report (attached as an appendix) reaches the conclusion that the Site Allocations Plan is the appropriate document to be subject to EIA because it determines policy and proposals.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 Preparation of the Site Allocations Plan is a key corporate priority which aims to deliver the Best Council Plan, objective 5 to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no resource/value for money considerations.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal considerations.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 Town Planning as a process of managing land use change inevitably generates strong objections from people affected by plans and decisions. Therefore, the Council needs to be responsive to deal with concerns effectively.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The concerns raised in the deputation are fully addressed in section 3 above. The members of the Vision Group have commented on the Site Allocations Plan and their comments will help inform the next stage of the process. There are no matters that are considered to generate the need to make changes to policy or practice, beyond ensuring that the relevant contacts are kept informed of the progress of the plan.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is asked to note the contents of this report.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.