



Report of the Director of City Development

Executive Board

Date: 11th Sept 2007

Subject: Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan Preferred Options

Electoral Wards Affected:

Burmantofts & Richmond Hill, Gipton & Harehills, Killingbeck & Seacroft, Temple Newsam, City & Hunslet, Middleton Park, Garforth & Swillington and Rothwell.

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Preparation of the Aire Valley (AVL) Area Action Plan has been progressing since 2005. In summer 2005, the Council consulted on issues for AVL and again on alternative options April – June 2006. The comments received have been used to inform preparation of the City Council's "Preferred Options" for the AVL area. The Preferred Options set out for consultation, the Council's proposed policy direction in the AVL over the next 15-20 years. The options show the location and type of land use change proposed within the area. This consultation document provides an opportunity for communities and stakeholders to respond to the Preferred Options. A formal 6 week period of consultation is proposed for 5th October to 16th November 2007. Responses received will inform preparation of the AVL Area Action Plan. Following consideration by the Development Plan Panel, the Executive Board is asked to approve the Preferred Options for public consultation.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to obtain approval of the Executive Board to consult on the Preferred Options for the AVL Area Action Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The preparation of Development Plan Documents such as the AVL Area Action Plan divides into 3 main stages:

- Issues and Options (Regulation 25)

- Preferred Options (Regulation 26)
- Submission of Draft Plan and Public Inquiry (Regulation 28)

2.2. In May 2005 Development Plan Panel gave approval for informal consultation to commence on the AVL AAP “Stage 1 Issues for Consultation” document. This document raised awareness of the issues affecting the AVL area and sought views from stakeholders and the community to deliver the Vision for Aire Valley.

2.3 Subsequently, the Development Plan Panel gave approval for further informal consultation (this time on the Alternative Options) and Leeds City Council published its consultation document for the land use “options” in April 2006.

The broad role for the AVLAAP is to:

- provide a co-ordinated approach to the sustainable regeneration of the Aire Valley Regeneration Area, including its spatial planning within the context of the City-Region, compatible with the significance of the area in terms of its potential to contribute to the growth and success of the regional economy,
- establish a framework giving spatial expression to the implementation of the Strategic Vision and comprehensive regeneration of AVL and its “Window to Leeds”, agreed by Executive Board (2002),
- ensure that the importance of the regeneration of AVL to the adjacent communities, including East, South East Leeds, Hunslet, Middleton and Belle Isle is fully recognised in securing connectivity, linkages and employment opportunities; and
- contribute to the wider regeneration/renaissance objectives of the City Council and the Leeds Initiative.

2.4 A wide range of verbal and written comments were received, from forums, workshops and from the questionnaire (the details of which are set out in a separate report). The general conclusion from this response was that there is general support for the level of employment land being allocated/retained and for sites being identified for mixed use. A majority of respondents also agreed that there was a need for a “new village” or other large scale housing development in AVL. With regards transport, 92% of respondents feel there is a role for managed transport and to restrict traffic levels as part of a development package. Integrated planning of road and public transport capacity is by far the most popular managed transport measure being supported by 88% of respondents.

2.5 Further work has been undertaken, such as the Employment Land Review and an accessibility assessment of the potential sites. Together with the consultation comments this information has informed the proposals and content of the Preferred Options.

3. THE PREFERRED OPTIONS

3.1 The Preferred Options have been prepared having regard to the following considerations:

- Conformity with and links to national, regional and local plans, policies and strategies.
- Feedback from informal consultation on issues and alternative options.
- Results of the sustainability appraisal and how the alternative options scored in terms of key sustainability criteria.
- Continued development of the evidence base.

3.2 The Preferred Options must not only meet the strategic objectives of the Vision for Leeds, but also the 9 objectives identified for the AVL Regeneration Initiative and the AAP. These objectives seek to bring about: sustainable mixed use regeneration, enhance Leeds as a regional economic centre, diversify employment opportunities, improve connectivity

(particularly public transport), improve the environment and overcome both physical and social barriers. The Preferred Options provide the framework to transform AVL and create a place where people wish to work, live, visit and is recognisable not only as Aire Valley Leeds, but also as the “Window to Leeds”.

3.3 The Preferred Options for AVL are structured as follows and the full document proposed for consultation is attached as Appendix 1.

1. **Introduction** - what is an AAP, what is its purpose and the timetable.

2. **Location and Characteristics**

3. **How the Preferred Options have been developed**

4. **AAP Objectives**

5. **Preferred Options Themes**

1. Employment
2. Housing
3. Town Centre uses
4. Transport
5. Waste management
6. Recreation
7. Design & Environment

6. **Character Areas – 1 to 11**

7. **Implementation and Delivery**

1. Introduction
2. Physical infrastructure
3. Social infrastructure
4. Environment improvements
5. Training & Employment
6. Urban Design
7. Planning and Highway obligations
8. Delivery & Phasing

8. **Next Steps**

4 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

4.1 It is a requirement of the new planning system that Local Development Documents are subjected to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The purpose of this is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the proposals from the outset of the preparation process. This ensures decisions can be made that accord with the objectives of sustainable development. The SA complies with the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

4.2 A Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken of the alternative options and this has helped to inform the Preferred Options. A copy of the SA Summary is attached as Appendix 2.

5 CONSULTATION

Advance consultation

- 5.1 In developing the Preferred Options, a Development Plan Panel and local Ward Member briefing was held on 19th March 2007. Comments made by Members at the briefing are summarised below.
- the area deserves something iconic and special to set it apart
 - concern about barriers to accessibility to AVL from people travelling from Rothwell
 - support rail station to provide accessibility but concern as to timing or delay in provision
 - Rail operators should accommodate changes proposed for the Aire Valley
 - disappointment with proposals for the AAP south of the river, little is being done for the Belle Isle Community in terms of access to AVL
 - proposals for Park & Ride - don't solve the problem of access for local residents
 - Park & Ride at Temple Newsam would support events in the Park
 - not clear what pedestrian routes are being proposed from the 'new village' to the new railway station
 - need detailed plan showing all the new pedestrian cycle facilities
 - extend plan boundary to Hunslet
 - lack of greenspace in the proposals
 - need to enhance existing riverside walks - a rare opportunity, similar to what other major cities have done
 - concern about rumours relating to new development – need to keep people advised
 - does the plan include cycle routes from Rothwell Country Park?
 - residential development should be linked to the waterfront
 - the area needs to make a bold statement - perhaps good quality public art
 - need for the Plan to have a human dimension – and address how we are to get people out of unemployment and worklessness and change the agenda for local people – there needs to be good access

- 5.2 A presentation of the Preferred Options, as work in progress, was made to the Aire Valley Board on 18th April 2007. Officers have been closely involved with the AVL Regeneration Initiative which complements the AAP.

Consultation Strategy

- 5.3 The LDF regulations and consistency with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement requires a consultation period of 6 weeks and notification to be sent to those organisations who the Council considers will be interested in, or affected by the proposals. It is also required that the documents be made available at public places, such as libraries and on the internet. Formal consultation on the Preferred Options is proposed during a 6 week period (5/10/07 – 16/11/07). Documents will be made available on the LCC website and in hardcopy at the Leonardo Building, the Central Library and libraries and One Stop Centres within and adjoining the AVL area.
- 5.4 A database has been developed which builds upon existing mailing lists and includes key stakeholders, all major landowners and community groups who have commented at the "Issues and Options" and "Alternative Options" stages. They will all be notified of the publication of the Preferred Options and given the opportunity to provide comments. In addition, advertisements, leaflets, and press-releases will be used to publicise the proposals. Officers will also provide details of the AAP consultation to Local Forums and Area Committees which meet during the consultation period and will attend where appropriate. Partnership working with all stakeholders and in particular major landowners will continue and be encouraged to inform and aid delivery of the Draft Plan.
- 5.5 Public exhibitions have been arranged at the following venues; Belle Isle Family Centre, Skelton Grange Environment Centre, St Hilda's Church Hall, East Leeds Leisure Centre and Hunslet Library; for the first week of the proposed consultation period to allow people the maximum time to consider the proposals and make comments. Large scale display plans will be available and a non-technical summary of the Preferred Options will be prepared to

complement the full document. Staff from City Development will be on hand to explain and discuss the AAP proposals.

- 5.6 On the 12th June 2007 Development Plans Panel agreed the Preferred Options for consultation and the proposed consultation strategy and recommended that the Executive Board approve the publication along with its Sustainability Appraisal and other supporting documents and formally invites representations between 5th October and 16th November 2007.
- 5.7 However, since that time in June further work has been undertaken on the “site selection” study to assess those sites which have the potential to accommodate waste management facilities. This has resulted in some minor modifications to the Preferred Options to in effect reduce the areas identified. The identification of sites which are considered to be the most suitable to accommodate waste management facilities, in line with the agreed waste strategy, now provides more clarity.

Further stages in the AAP

- 5.8 Following the public consultation, responses will be analysed and a consultation statement prepared. The AAP will be prepared and submitted as a Draft AAP to the Secretary of State.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Preferred Options present a significant step toward adoption of the AVL Area Action Plan. The options show the location and type of land use change within the AVL area over the next 15-20 years. It is important that the public consultation is wide ranging and effective in raising awareness of the Plan proposals and provides the opportunity for individuals and organisations to comment.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:
- approve the AVL Area Action Plan Preferred Options for publication along with its Sustainability Appraisal and other supporting documents and formally invites representations between 5th October and 16th November 2007.