

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 16th June, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor D Congreve in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell,
R Grahame, T Leadley, R Lewis,
C Macniven, J McKenna, J Procter and
N Walshaw

1 Late Items

There were no formal late items, however larger plans of the Housing Market Characteristic Area plans, within the submitted report had been sent to Members as a supplementary document

Officers also tabled additional information in relation to the employment proposals

2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Coulson, with Councillor R Grahame attending in his place

4 Site Allocations Plan - Publication Draft

Members received a report of the Chief Planning Officer on the employment, retail and green space sections of the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) Publication Draft Plan for Panel to consider the report and appendices and to recommend to Executive Board that the Plan is agreed to go forward for public consultation

Large scale plans were displayed at the meeting, with photographs and graphics also being displayed of particular sites

The Head of Forward Planning and Implementation advised that the draft plan was based on the allocations which had been considered through Development Plan Panel meetings and Executive Board, with several updates and proposed amendments

Members initially considered the site allocation proposals for employment land

Officers presented the proposals and referred to two minor alterations to sites in Armley and two sites in Otley

In relation to Leeds Bradford International Airport (LBIA) a proposed amendment to paragraph 2.85 of the draft SAP and policy EG3 – Leeds Bradford International Airport – Employment Hub was circulated

The Economic Development Programme Leader who was in attendance provided details of a report which had been commissioned to investigate the need for more employment land in the Aireborough and Outer North West areas, with a report expected on this in the following week

A detailed discussion took place on the proposed amendments and employment site allocations in the Aireborough HMCA, with the main issues relating to:

- concerns about the lack of information presented to Panel to justify the proposed release of 36.23ha of Green Belt land for employment uses in this area
- the possible uses of sites around the airport with concerns that one particular large scale site could be used for car parking and the need for information from LBIA on proposed uses
- the lack of clarity as to LBIA's proposals and future development
- the need for a masterplan and other, relevant information to be provided to Panel
- the need for an objective assessment of land requirements around LBIA in view of the differing views of landowners
- the levels of available employment land in this area and the lack of demand for employment use
- the disconnect between different sections of City Development, with Plans Panels being presented with applications on employment sites, but seeking approval for different uses
- the lack of evidence to support the proposals being put to Panel in respect of LBIA and where these proposals had emanated from
- the possibility that site EG1-3, if released, could be used as additional car parking rather than employment use and the need for clarity from LBIA about its future plans
- concerns that the proposal to release so much land from the Green Belt in this area could have a detrimental impact in terms of the future development of surrounding brownfield sites, some of which were in a poor state and needed to be redeveloped
- that when considered in January, the general employment allocation had been close to being met, however there was now, a deficit of 48.4ha

Officers responded to Members' queries and comments and provided further information which included:

- that the proposals constituted a long-term plan
- the wider benefits and opportunities of supporting LBIA's aspirations
- there was a desire for businesses in North West Leeds to expand and remain in the area, as well as businesses wishing to relocate there

The Chief Planning Officer, Mr Hill, accepted the comments regarding the need for the masterplan of LBIA to be submitted (as well as a surface access statement) to substantiate the case for the release of land for employment use and referred to the general requirement from local businesses who wished to expand in this area. Members were advised that the starting point for this being proposed by Officers was to release land adjoining LBIA to provide the best opportunities to meet this future demand

The Panel then considered the employment allocations proposed for Thorp Arch. An amended plan of the Thorp Arch Employment Sites was tabled at the meeting

Members were informed that the proposal was to retain the 3 UDP employment allocations as indicated on the tabled plan. Subsequently during

discussions it was identified that the tabled plan identifying the current UDP employment allocations at Thorp Arch was incomplete, and that the visual representation shown on screen identified additional existing UDP employment allocations. Reference was also made to representations made by the owners of Thorp Arch Trading Estate (TATE) who had stated it was not possible to allocate 72ha of the site for general employment uses due to the level of employment and retail uses currently on site and issues relating to the necessary land decontamination

The Panel discussed the Thorp Arch site, with the main issues relating to:

- the lack of evidence to support the view put forward by the owners of TATE and that Members had not seen the letter which had been submitted
- that the housing numbers had been robustly examined and recently tested through a recent appeal, but that Officers appeared to have been persuaded to change their views
- that some sites capable of being used for employment purposes were not being put forward
- that the Panel's previous views on this should remain and form the basis of the public consultation
- whether using the UDP employment site allocations was the best option and the need for clarification of the historic employment site boundary

The Chief Planning Officer advised that the benefit of the UDP allocations were that they had been through public consultation and been found acceptable, with there being no reason to think these were less favourable now than 20 years ago

Regarding TATE, Mr Hill confirmed that Officers had considered the information within the letter from the owners of this site and had advised that further consideration would be required. However, it was felt there were sufficient questions raised by the owners in respect of the viability of the site being developed to provide 72ha of employment land. It was also confirmed that the Proposals map would identify TATE

Further discussions took place on:

- the number of sites where owners were unsupportive but that the sites were being retained
- site EG2-3 (2900040) – land off Ilkley Road Otley and the need to reflect in the document the pre-application discussions which were on-going for part of the site to be used for housing. The Chair confirmed that this request could be accommodated

The Panel then considered the retail proposals

Members were informed that changes made since the last time this information had been considered related to The Core, in the City Centre, which due to the low levels of A1 use it contained, was no longer proposed to be a protected shopping frontage and at Kirkstall where a new primary shopping area was being proposed. An error on the plan relating to Cardigan Road was corrected

The Panel discussed the proposals and commented on the likelihood of the proposed supermarket site at Kirkstall Town Centre being developed for this use, with the suggestion being made that housing could be considered as an alternative use

Members then considered the proposals in relation to green space, with the small number of changes from what had previously been presented being outlined in appendix 2 of the submitted report

Reference was made to representations which had been received from the Friends of Allerton Grange Fields, who were supporting the proposed amendments

In respect of site 1762 – Red Hall Playing Fields, representations had been received. Members were informed that the site would be considered at the meeting held on 26th June and that an area equivalent to two playing pitches would be retained for informal play use and that a planning brief for the site would be prepared. Concerns were raised about the amount of land proposing to be retained as green space and the need for clarification on the exact size of the playing pitches to be retained, as these varied

Discussions also took place on the process for proposals made as part of a Neighbourhood Plan; how these could be fed into the process and that the support of the Council for such proposals added weight to them when taken forward in the public consultation process. The Head of Forward Planning and Implementation advised that any proposals could be reflected in the policies of the individual Neighbourhood Plans; that they would have status and would form part of the Development Plan

Reference was also made to a detailed representation received earlier that day relating to open spaces and the assessment of these. Officers advised that a detailed response would be produced

Concerns were also raised about how sites below 0.2ha which had been excluded could be protected from development, with Members being informed that Policy N8 would be relied upon to provide protection

A further request was made for detailed plans to be provided to the Panel relating to those Local Authorities which bordered Leeds, indicating their SAP proposals, as part of the Duty to Co-operate

The need for the facility to reinstate land classified in the UDP as ‘white land’ was also raised

In view of the discussions which had taken place on LBIA, the Panel considered how to proceed. It was Members’ view that additional information on the employment land proposals relating to the LBIA employment hub was required. In view of the urgency in presenting the Panel’s advice to Executive Board at its meeting in July, it was suggested this matter be considered at the meeting on 26th June, albeit possibly as a late item, in view of the tight timescales involved

RESOLVED - To defer consideration of the proposals for LBIA to the Development Plan Panel meeting on 26th June 2015, for additional information to be provided and, subject to the amendments made at Thorp Arch, namely to retain the existing UDP employment allocations, to recommend to Executive Board that the SAP Publication Draft Plan sections in relation to Employment, Retail and Greenspace is agreed for publication consultation

5 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Friday 26th June 2015 at 10.00am in the Civic Hall, Leeds