

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (City Development)

Date: 17th May 2016

Subject: Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): City and Hunslet, Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, Middleton Park, Temple Newsam, Garforth and Swillington and Rothwell wards.		
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 type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

1. The Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVL AAP) will form part of the Local Plan for Leeds also known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The scope of the AVL AAP was established by Executive Board in May 2005, to provide the future planning framework to guide the regeneration of an area of the Lower Aire Valley. The Aire Valley Leeds area extends from Leeds City Centre south east to the M1 and beyond. This is a key strategic location for Leeds and the City Region as a whole. The area includes the Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone and a range of major development opportunities including the South Bank of the City Centre. The area contains over 400 hectares of development land which can help meet Leeds' need for housing and provide new jobs.
2. The AVL AAP has been prepared in accordance with the LDF Regulations (specifically, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This has entailed three separate rounds of public consultation. The Plan is now at an advanced stage. At their meeting of 15th July 2015 Executive Board approved the Publication Draft of the AVL AAP for an 8 week period of public consultation. Following the completion of the consultation period (from 22nd September to 16th November 2015) and consideration of representations received, a small number of minor modifications have been made to the Publication Draft.

The next stage is for the AVL AAP (Publication Draft and schedule of modifications) to be formally "Submitted" to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination (pursuant to section 20 of the 2004 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act). This request has been agreed by Development Plan Panel at their meeting on 10th May 2016, the Report to Development Plan Panel is attached as Appendix 1. It should be emphasised, that once the Plan has been formally submitted for Examination, the City Council will have no power to formally withdraw the document, without the consent of the Secretary of State (Section 22 (2) Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004). Moreover any modifications at this time will be driven by the Planning Inspectorate.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board are asked to:

- a) consider the proposals that are to be referred to the Executive Board
- b) report any deliberations and conclusions to the Executive Board

1.0 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 This report charts the progress of the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan (AVL AAP). It is now at an advanced stage, having been through three rounds of public consultation. Development Plan Panel have provided oversight of the plan making process, with Executive Board endorsement at each stage of public consultation.
- 1.2 The Publication Draft of the AVL AAP is attached to this report as Appendix 2. This is the version which was consulted upon in Autumn of 2015 and is the final stage of consultation prior to submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Following the analysis of responses received as a result of the 8 week public consultation, a small number of modifications have been suggested and are included in a schedule which is attached to this report as Appendix 3.
- 1.3 As well as containing specific planning policies and site allocations, the AVL AAP: has an influencing role in supporting the City Council's priorities in the Best Council Plan 2015-2020 Update, specifically the following priorities:
 - 1 Supporting economic growth and access to economic opportunities
 - 3 Supporting communities, raising aspirations
 - 7 Providing enough homes of a high standard in all sectors
 - 11 Promoting physical activity
 - 15 Improving air quality
 - 16 Helping deliver a well-connected transport system
 - 17 Providing an inclusive, accessible range of transport options
 - 20 Enhancing the quality of our public realm and green spaces

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The scope of the AVLAAP was established by the Executive Board in May 2005 to provide the future planning framework to guide the regeneration of an area of the Lower Aire Valley. In July 2010 Executive Board agreed to broaden the objectives of the Plan and to extend the boundary to align it with the Urban Eco-Settlement Programme. Since then Plan preparation has been through several stages in accordance with Government LDF Regulations. Each stage has been the subject of extensive public consultation to 'front load' the Plan and ensure it represents the consensus of all stakeholders as far as possible, including local residents and businesses. This has also included stakeholders in the form of developers, landowners and statutory consultees like Natural England and also internal stakeholders from other departments of the Council including Regeneration, Economic Policy, Housing, Highways, Transport Policy, Education and Children's Services.
- 2.2 The AVLAAP plan area, whilst presenting significant opportunities for regeneration, growth and investment, is also complex and challenging in nature. Consequently, the Plan has been in production for some time. It has been necessary to develop a comprehensive evidence base for the Plan, make amendments arising from changes to national planning policy and for the adoption of the Core Strategy (2014) to help provide scope and directions to the proposals.

- 2.3 The first stage of plan preparation started back in 2005 and the plan has subsequently evolved through three stages of public consultation: Early Issues and Options in 2005; Alternative Options in 2006 and Preferred Options in 2007.
- 2.4 Since 2007 there has been a review of the proposals to take account of:
- the downturn in the economy post 2008, which has impacted on the viability of development;
 - potential new ways of funding infrastructure;
 - the need to make development sustainable e.g. promoting energy efficiency and green energy and industry;
 - The preparation and adoption of the Leeds Core Strategy and changes to national planning policy;
 - The Enterprise Zone which was designated in April 2012.
- 2.5 In addition, an informal consultation took place in 2011 to ask views on two key changes. These were:
- The promotion of the area as an Urban Eco Settlement (UES); and
 - Proposed boundary changes to include parts of the City Centre, Hunslet and Richmond Hill.
- 2.6 The Publication Draft consultation took place for 8 weeks from 22nd September to 16th November 2015. The Plan has also been subject to sustainability appraisal and a screening assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 Spatial Policy 5 of the Core Strategy sets a target to identify land for a minimum of 6,500 new homes and 250 hectares of employment land within AVL. In seeking to deliver these priorities, the AVLAAP identifies site allocations for new homes and jobs, as part of an integrated framework, which incorporates:
- An overall Vision and objectives
 - A Spatial Strategy and Plan wide Policies,
 - Area Plans and Placemaking
 - An Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

A local and strategic opportunity for Leeds and the Leeds City Region

- 3.2 A key focus of the Plan is the delivery of a transformational vision for the area, linked to the Core Strategy and Best Council Plan, including Policies for economic growth, job creation & skills and training, new housing, community infrastructure, transport connections and health. The basis of these principles is to provide an overall framework for thematic and Plan-wide Policies (Economy & Jobs, Homes, Healthy Communities, Transport & Connections, Green Infrastructure and Low Carbon Energy).
- 3.3 In taking this overall Policy framework forward, the AAP includes 5 Area Plans to underpin delivery at a local level. These areas are:
- South Bank
 - East Bank, Richmond Hill & Cross Green

- Hunslet
- Central Aire Valley
- Skelton Gate

3.4 The purpose of this approach is to recognise the identities of existing communities, their unique characteristics and future opportunities, within the overall framework of AVL. The Plan identifies a range of challenges and opportunities for each area, as a basis to present a series of proposals (and site specific requirements) to tackle key issues and to bring forward positive solutions. The focus of this is to ensure that common themes such as connectivity and placemaking are addressed and that as a whole these component parts all contribute to the role of AVL as an 'Urban Eco-Settlement', making sure that the framework helps make best use of the brownfield land assets of the area.

Planning for new Jobs & Homes (Sections 3.2 & 3.3 of the AAP)

3.5 In delivering economic growth and opportunities for job creation, a key focus of the Plan is the support (and to provide a wide planning framework for) the Leeds City Region Enterprise Zone (LCREZ). Located within Central Aire Valley the ambition of the LCREZ is to provide 7,000 new jobs by 2025. The zone is a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider Aire Valley, using the uplift generated, to support £550m of additional economic output by 2025. The LCREZ comprises of four large sites covering 142 ha. These are Newmarket Lane, Logic Leeds (Skelton Moor Farm), Temple Green and Thornes Farm. The AAP embraces these opportunities as part of the Plan as a whole and promotes improved public transport, Park & Ride, walking & cycling, improved connectivity and wider integration through Green Infrastructure links.

3.6 In promoting other key opportunities for economic development and job growth within AVL, the Plan also incorporates site specific and area based proposals. These include Leeds South Bank (a major regeneration and development opportunity & new City Park at the heart of the City Centre), a series of identified sites for offices (including as part of mixed use sites) and general employment¹ (Tables 1 & 2, Section 3.2 of the AAP document), a number of allocated sites for offices (including as part of mixed use allocations) and general employment (Tables 3 & 4, Section 3.2). Policy AVL5 of the Plan also seeks to improve the physical connectivity between communities and the location of job opportunities (through improved pedestrian, cycle links and public transport services) and via local employment agreements.

3.7 AVL is currently home to over 13,000 people, with the aim for an additional 6,500 (minimum) new homes over the Plan period (to 2028). The approach of the Plan to delivering opportunities for housing regeneration and growth, is through Identified sites and new allocations, with a focus on promoting brownfield land development for the majority of the area. Existing housing (and mixed use sites including housing) which have existing or recently expired planning permission are identified in the Plan. These sites include Hunslet Mills (AV42) and Yarn Street (AV43). In total Identified sites have potential to provide 1,842 dwellings.

¹ Mainly industrial and storage & distribution uses

3.8 In addition to identified sites, new housing development in AVL is focussed on five broad locations. Each of these is strategically important to delivering the overall housing requirement and to support Plan wide regeneration aspirations. The main locations for new housing development are as follows:

- The **South Bank** area (part of the wider proposed mixed use area to transform this key location in the City Centre, which also includes a new City Park),
- **East Bank** area (along East Street from Marsh Lane to South Accommodation Road),
- **Cross Green** (residential area, focussed on the redevelopment of the Copperfields College site),
- **Hunslet Riverside** (south of the Inner Ring Road, on a number of brownfield sites, centred upon the listed Hunslet Mills),
- **Skelton Gate** (the creation of a new sustainable community on the eastern edge of AVL, east of the M1, between the Temple Newsam Estate and the River Aire).

3.9 Based on identified housing sites and the capacity of housing and mixed use allocations (which incorporate housing), the total estimated capacity for the AAP is 7,950 dwellings against the minimum requirement of 6,500 dwellings. This is as a result of the view of Development Plan Panel members in wanting to identify further opportunities for housing where possible. This overall total and approach provides a degree of flexibility towards meeting the housing requirement (within the AVLAAP and across Leeds through the SAP). Table 5 (Section 3.3 of the AAP document), sets out the overall total and broad distribution within AVL. For cross reference, Table 6 identifies the number of new homes by HMCA, which make up the AVL area (City Centre, Inner Area and East Leeds). Where appropriate, sites have been allocated to provide for older or disabled people and independent living.

Transport & Connections (Section 3.5 of the AAP)

3.11 The location of AVL in relation to the strategic transport network, supports the ambition to deliver large scale economic development. Within the context of the priorities set out in the West Yorkshire Transport Plan (LTP3) and the Core Strategy SP11, the transport strategy for AVL is guided by a number of key principles. These include: the need to deliver the transport network and infrastructure to support regeneration and growth, to minimise the need to travel by car, to connect communities in east and south Leeds to the job opportunities within AVL (by reducing barriers and creating pedestrian/cycle links), to plan the area to integrate key national and City Region transport proposals (including HS2 and the NGT Trolley bus system, to make better use of the rail and waterways network as a mode of transport for freight and enhance the role of the waterways network for leisure. Policy AV12 sets out proposals for Strategic Infrastructure and individual Area Plans incorporate local measures, to reflect the principles outlined above.

Green space & Green Infrastructure (Section 3.6 of the AAP)

3.12 The AAP provides a major opportunity to provide a connected network of spaces and places, which link the heart of the City to open countryside and the range of visitor attractions which lie along the waterways corridor. These multifunctional green spaces form an overall network of Green Infrastructure in accordance with the principles set out in Policy G1 of the Core Strategy. An important consideration

of this approach has been to ensure that the Green Infrastructure network helps to reinforce and establish local identity, incorporates both strategic and local connections and enhances development opportunities, rather than being a constraint.

Environment & Healthy and Thriving Communities (Sections 3.7 & 3.4 of the AAP)

3.13 The Plan encourages investment in maintaining and enhancing an attractive environment, through the effective management of waste (and the links to the adopted Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan) and the desire to establish a network for District Heating (consistent with the principles set out in the Core Strategy EN4) set out in AAP Policy AVL17.

3.14 An integral component of the Plan, through the planning process, is the desire to tackle issues relating to public health. Green space provision and 'affordable warmth' have a key role to play, as well as the need to secure opportunities to delivering new jobs (and access to them) and homes, promoting 'Child Friendly Development', encouraging physical exercise, promoting food growing and improving community facilities. In reflecting these priorities, Policy AVL8 sets out the proposals which seek to improve public health.

Area Plans and Place making (Section 4 of the AAP)

3.15 As outlined in para. 3.3 above, in presenting the overall Core Strategy and AAP requirements at a local level, the Plan has been subdivided into 5 distinct Area Plans. These are included within Section 4 of the Plan. For each area a Spatial Vision, Aims and Objectives and a description of the area is provided. This is followed by Area-Specific Policies and Proposals, within each area. Incorporated within this approach are site requirements to underpin proposals and in some Area Plans a number of 'Opportunity Areas' have been identified (such as Hunslet Riverside – Hunslet Area Plan). The purpose of identifying such opportunities is to reflect wider aspirations for local areas, in association with specific proposals, whilst recognising that existing uses and activities are operating within these locations. This approach builds upon the approach previously taken in the UDP, for example the identification of Marsh Lane as a 'Prestige Development Area and Hunslet Riverside as a 'Strategic Site'.

Planning for Infrastructure (Section 5 of the AAP)

3.16 An important dimension of the Plan, is the need for infrastructure to support the aspirations for regeneration and growth. Where appropriate, specific proposals (and infrastructure) have been incorporated into policy and site requirements. Where relevant, existing infrastructure commitments and priorities (such as strategic transport interventions) are reflected in the Plan and included in a supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Evidence Base

3.17 The Plan has been supported by an extensive evidence base including: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment; an employment land assessment; transport and highway capacity modelling; the Leeds Open Space and Recreation Assessment; a green infrastructure study; a flood risk sequential and exception test; retail needs assessments; heritage assessments; heat mapping and district heating

feasibility work and other work undertaken to support Council and City Region regeneration programmes such as the South Bank and Enterprise Zone.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.18 Sustainability appraisal has been carried out alongside all main stages of plan preparation in accordance with the requirements of the LDF Regulations and to comply with the SEA Directive. This identified the main economic, social and environmental effects of the plan and suggested mitigation for any negative effects that were identified. Mitigation was then fed back into the plan for example as site requirements for specific site allocations.

4.0 Corporate Considerations

As noted above, the AVL AAP forms part of the Local Development Framework and as such forms part of the development plan for Leeds. It cannot be considered to be part of the development plan until it has been examined and found sound and will then need to be formally adopted by the Council.

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The AVL AAP has been subjected to a number of public consultation exercises as part of its preparation and as required by the LDF Regulations. A Report of Consultation will be required for submission of the Plan which will be tested by an independent examiner to ensure that the plan is legally compliant.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening was carried out on the Publication Draft of the AVL AAP. This report has been updated in the light of further changes to the Plan but has not resulted in any material change to the EIA Screening conclusion.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The Aire Valley Leeds AAP plays a key strategic role in taking forward the spatial and land use elements of the Vision for Leeds and the aspiration to be 'the best city in the UK'. Related to this overarching approach and in addressing a range of social, environmental and economic objectives, this Plan seeks to implement key City Council priorities. These include the Best Council Plan (2015-20) (in particular Objective 2: to 'promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth') and Leeds Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2013-2015, currently being updated).

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The AVL AAP is being prepared within the context of the LDF Regulations, statutory requirements and within existing resources. Substantial work has been undertaken to ensure that the Plan represents a consensus of all the relevant stakeholders (both internal to the Council and external). This should help to reduce time and money needed for the Council to take the Plan through examination and on to adoption.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The final decision as to whether to submit the AVL AAP to the Secretary of State is being referred to Full Council, this report is being brought before this Scrutiny Board as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The AVL AAP is being prepared in accordance with the LDF Regulations and therefore this reduces the risk of it being unsound. Policies in the Plan are founded on a robust and credible evidence base however, the extent to which an evidence base can be considered to be sufficient is subjective and it will be up to the Inspector to examine this issue. Even after examination by an independent Inspector there is a risk that someone could mount a High Court Challenge however the Council has taken all necessary steps to reduce this risk.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Following a substantial period of plan preparation, sustainability appraisal and public consultation in accordance with the LDF Regulations, the City Council can now proceed to submit the AVL AAP for independent examination prior to adoption.

6.0 Recommendations

Scrutiny Board are asked to:

- a) consider the proposals that are to be referred to the Executive Board
- b) report any deliberations and conclusions to the Executive Board

7.0 Background documents²

7.1 Although there are no formal background documents to this report, a substantial number of documents are available representing various stages in preparation of the Plan. These are available on the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan web pages or by contacting Paul Bingham on Leeds 2478130.

² 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.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Development Plan Panel Report and Appendices

Appendix 1A:

Schedule 1: Comments and Modifications relating to Sites

Schedule 2: Comments and Modifications relating to Policies, wording and general sites

Schedule 3: Comments and Modifications relating to newly proposed sites

Schedule 4: Council proposed Modifications

Appendix 1B: Working Draft 'Track changes' version of 'Submission Draft Plan' with modified maps

Aire Valley Leeds AAP Submission Working Draft Plan

Appendix B-AVL Map 4 Transport Network Improvements Map A3

Appendix B-AVL Map 7 South Bank Area Map A3

Appendix B-AVL Map 8 East Bank, Richmond Hill & Cross Green Area Map

Appendix B-AVL Map 9 Hunslet Area Map A3

Appendix B-AVL Map 11 Central Aire Valley Area Map A3

Appendix B-AVL Map 12 Skelton Gate Area Map A3

Appendix B-AVL Map 13 Proposal Map April 2016 A3

Appendix B-AVL Map 14 Proposal Map April 2016 A3

Appendix 1C: Updated Sustainability Scoring of Sites (referred to as Appendix 7 and Appendix 8)

Appendix C-AVL AAP SA Appendix 7 - sites proposed for allocation

Appendix C-AVL AAP SA Appendix 8 - sites not proposed for allocation