

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 22nd November, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor F Venner in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell,
M Coulson, C Gruen, T Leadley, R Lewis,
S McKenna, J Procter, K Wakefield and
N Walshaw

37 Welcomes and introductions

Councillor Venner welcomed all to the meeting, particularly Councillor S McKenna as a substitute member, and brief introductions were made. Additionally, the Panel welcomed Councillor K Wakefield to his first meeting as a newly appointed member of the Panel.

38 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

39 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The agenda contained no exempt information.

40 Late Items

No formal late items of business were added to the agenda.

41 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

42 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J McKenna. Councillor S McKenna attended the meeting as substitute.

43 Minutes

The Panel noted the following amendments to the minutes:

Minute 30 Minutes – Remove the phrase “delete 1700”.

Minute 32 Bradford Core Strategy Inspector’s Report – Insert additional sentence “Members noted the overall housing target had reduced by 13%”

Minute 33 Planning Policy for Hot Food Take-aways - Amend the third paragraph, second sentence, to read “The Principal Planner, Strategic Planning, presented the report and clarified that current planning policies which control permission/development of HFTA, such as Policy H5, did not determine between a ‘healthy’ hot take-away and an “unhealthy” hot food take-away.”

RESOLVED- That, subject to the inclusion of the amendments detailed above, the minutes of the Development Plan Panel meeting held on 27th September 2016 be approved.

44 Matters Arising

Minute 32 Bradford Core Strategy Inspector’s Report – Regarding the current position, officers confirmed that a Holding Direction had been issued by The

Secretary of State; triggered at the request of Philip Davies MP (Conservative, Shipley). This would allow the Minister time to consider the issues raised by the MP, previously considered through the examination process and by the Planning Inspector. The Chief Planning Officer reported that there was no direct implication for Leeds and that Bradford MDC continued with the submission process.

Minute 33 Hot Food Take-aways – A copy of the planning policy in relation to the use of window/door shutters was displayed at the meeting. It was noted that this did refer to hot food take-aways.

Minute 35 Any Other Business:

Revised draft Outer North East HMCA – Consultation on the revised proposed had ended and receipt of approximately 3,700 representations was noted. A report setting out a proposed pre-submission timetable would be presented to the next Panel meeting.

Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan – The dates of the Public Inquiry hearing sessions were confirmed as 24th, 25th and 26th January 2017, in the Town Hall, Leeds

45 Core Strategy Selective Review

Further to minute 33 (iii) of the meeting held 19th May 2015, the Director of City Development submitted a report seeking consideration and support for the Council to consider the scope, commencement and timetable for a selective review of the Core Strategy. The report included a copy of Edge Analytics “Leeds Demographic Review September 2016” which provided an initial assessment of the new sub-national household projections released by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in June 2016 and information from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The Group Manager (Policy & Plans) emphasised that the areas considered to fall within the scope of the proposed review related to a targeted number of areas in the Plan - where significant changes to the evidence base or specific issues arising from the application of policies had prompted further consideration. DPP in May 2015 had recommended that a selective review be undertaken once the Core Strategy was adopted and subject to any changes suggested by central government. With this in mind, the report proposed a review – limited to the areas of housing requirements and to combine housing standards (rather than as a separate Development Plan Document); and having regard to the contents of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

This proposed selective approach was consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework Section 153 which allowed for Local Plans to “be reviewed in whole or in part to respond flexibly to changing circumstances”.

A review would be obliged to undertake a viability assessment of the Core Strategy as a whole; therefore it was appropriate to combine the two threads – housing number and housing standards – which would make the viability assessment more effective.

(Councillor J Procter joined the meeting at this point)

The adopted Core Strategy included a 70,000 net housing requirement – this reflected the outcome of the Inspector’s consideration which had balanced local views and concluded 70,000 as an appropriate Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) figure (local groups felt 50,000 appropriate, housing developers suggested 90,000). Following the adoption of the Core Strategy subsequent Government demographic projections pointed to a lower figure. Officers reiterated however, that in deriving the housing requirement of a Core Strategy Review, consistent with national planning guidance, population projections are the starting point in identifying Objectively Assessed Needs (OAN) for housing. This analysis also needs to take into account economic and social factors/evidence. The proposed review would seek to find a balance between the local drivers of economy and population.

A draft SHMA was in preparation and the process of LCC inter-departmental consultation had begun. A correction to paragraph 3.1.4 was reported to amend the 7th bullet point to read “the number of newly arising households likely to be in need of affordable housing”.

Members’ attention was directed to Figure 2 within Appendix 1 of the report on the changing demographic evidence for Leeds, which showed the 2008 projection suggested Leeds’ 1m population by 2033 against the 2014 projection which suggested a figure of 857,000. A review now would assess whether the Core Strategy requirements continued to be based on up to date evidence and in line with Government Guidance.

Additionally, Members were directed to table 5 within Appendix 1 showing housing growth alternatives. Here, officers highlighted the latest demographic evidence for Leeds which suggested a lower housing growth outcome than the adopted Core Strategy - the more recent 2014 ONS/DCLG benchmark of 41,600 with a suggested demographic starting point of development of 2,600 homes per year (against the adopted Core Strategy figure of 70,000 and an average of delivery of 4,700 homes per year to the end of 2027/28).

In conclusion the Group Manager (Policy & Plans) referred to the proposed timetable for the review; and sought support to focus the review on the two key housing elements. As part of this it was emphasised that the submission of the Site Allocations Plan remains a priority for the City Council, to the agreed timetable, as a basis to meet housing land supply requirements. The Chief Planning Officer commented also that the commitment to the Core Strategy Review would not mean a concurrent review of the Site Allocations Plan and a removal of sites from the Plan at this stage. The outcomes of the Core Strategy Review process and supporting evidence would need to be considered in due course, including implications for the Plan-period. Panel agreed that the evidence for the Core Strategy Review should be available for the Site Allocations Plan Examination.

The Panel welcomed the report and the opportunity to review the housing elements and went onto make the following comments:

- Housing Growth Alternatives – with reference to Table 5 of the Edge Analytics report, a comment was made that, at the time of the Core Strategy

Examination, Members did not feel that they had been made aware of the range of housing growth alternative figures.

- The full range should be discussed in order to properly balance the population projections; housing need considerations and economic and employment projections/aspirations
- The need to consider alternative options including a “no change” approach
- Concern that to progress with the 70,000 (net) figure could leave Leeds vulnerable and in the position of releasing land for housing development which may not be needed

(Councillor M Coulson withdrew from the meeting for a short while)

The Panel also made the following observations:

Evidence

- Queried the reliability of GP registrations as a source for population figures, when the Electoral Roll or Children’s Services information on the number and location of children and their families in Leeds could be utilised
- The role of Edge Analytics in this initial process; noting that no decision on the procurement of future SHMA work had been undertaken
- Officers confirmed that Neighbourhood Plans and their evidence bases would be considered in the SHMA.

Concurrent with the Site Allocation Process

- A view was expressed that Leeds should not now allocate up to the 66,000 figure but closely monitor the number of housing units actually required.
- Would the review allow Leeds to present evidence to the Inspector to support the removal of allocated sites from the SAP in order for the Inspector to make an informed decision on housing allocations? The Chief Planning Officer reiterated views minuted above on the progression of SAP concurrently with a Core Strategy Review
- The Site Allocations Plan (SAP) timetable to be referenced in future presentations to provide a timeframe comparison.

Consultation and Engagement

- The need to provide an early indication to Councillors of their role; likely involvement and commitment in order to achieve the proposed timetable and retain momentum
- Consideration of how the public will be kept informed and involved
- The involvement of neighbourhood groups and forums; using their evidence as a resource, and the role of the Neighbourhood Officer
- The creation of a SHMA working group - similar to the SHLAA Partnership Group which included Councillors and appropriate local/neighbourhood planning representatives in its membership alongside representatives from the development industry.

(Councillor R Lewis joined the meeting at this point)

Scope of the Review

- Highlighted the need to retain focus on quality, space and housing standards throughout this process

- Viability and affordability for residents to remain key focus
- Public space and green space – noted comments that there must not be a diminution of green space, although acknowledged the balance between provision of private green space for individual homes and provision of public green or public spaces within the whole development site

Noting the level of public interest in housing allocations, evidenced by the 3700 responses to the ONE HMCA consultation process, the Panel discussed revising the proposed submission timetable in order to maintain public interest and achieve adoption of revised housing allocation figures by summer 2018. Officers reported the intention to present a draft review document to the December Panel meeting. A suggestion to hold informal workshops throughout the process with Members to assess the evidence and assumptions was noted.

RESOLVED – That, having considered the contents of the report and the comments made during discussions, the Panel agreed to commence a Selective Review of the Core Strategy and agreed the following:

- a) the targeted scope of the Review
- b) the timetable to progress the Review as;
 - i. Evidence gathering, scoping and early consultation: Early 2017
 - ii. Drafting the Plan for Publication: Spring 2017
 - iii. Formal consultation (6 weeks): Summer 2017
 - iv. Consideration of responses and submission with any necessary modifications: January 2018
 - vi. Examination: Spring 2018
 - vii. Adoption Summer 2018
- c) to note that future reports will include the Site Allocations Plan timetable for reference

46 Models of Housing Delivery

The Panel considered the report of the Director of City Development on implementation activities considered necessary to support the delivery of the Local Development Framework (LDF). The report gave context to the proposed programme of development briefs intended to help guide the implementation and delivery of major sites; and other sites of a locally complex and/or sensitive nature, as identified within the Local Plan (Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan and Site Allocations Plan).

The Team Leader (Major Projects), Policy & Plans Group, presented the report and highlighted the main concerns identified by local residents through previous consultation processes about the release of sites in respect of housing need; housing mix; infrastructure and green infrastructure and local sensitivities. Concerns such as these would be dealt with throughout the Plan process however “development briefs” were now suggested to assist the delivery of those sites; and an initial list of sites were identified in Appendix 1.

The Panel were assured that the local planning authority still sought the release of Brownfield before green sites, however where green sites were proposed; a development brief could ensure concerns about the issues are addressed. Additionally, a map which plotted the sites was tabled at the meeting and a

correction was reported to Table 1 to show that HG2-41 (land south of Rawdon Road, Horsforth) was a Phase 1 site (not Phase 2 as stated in the report).

Information was also provided on the following matters:

- The role of Small and Medium Sized house builder's (SME's) role in housing delivery and the need to promote collaboration to continue provision of smaller schemes.
- The work undertaken on 'stalled schemes' and to incentivise bringing Brownfield sites back into use, noting that developers remain less inclined to build on Brownfield
- The role of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) as an emerging sector in the home building industry
- The involvement of a number of Neighbourhood Planning Groups interested in the development of Development Briefs and Community engagement was key to success

Additionally officers reported that the Phase 1 release equated to the release of large Green Belt sites (sites over 750 units) – which had raised local concerns. High standard design and delivery, focussing on swift build out, was required to ensure that development complies with the Core Strategy. The report detailed what issues could be considered and explored in a development brief, including quality, viability, commitment to delivery, construction, engagement, Community Infrastructure Levy and technical issues.

During consideration of the proposed approach to development briefs, Members commented on the following:

- Transport forward planning. Liaison with transport providers earlier in the process was key to provide them with an overview of development proposals to factor into their transport service provision. This would support the Councils' own focus on sustainable developments
- Approach to new developments or expansions. Members noted that infrastructure was more easily incorporated into new developments; however expansion of existing settlements was more restrictive with less scope to provide whole new infrastructure
- Ambitious planning. Development Briefs were an opportunity to emphasis Leeds focus on better ways of living through ambitious developments – with zero emissions, zero carbon footprint, and Passivhaus approach
- Identified housing needs. To ensure Leeds delivers to the need identified in the Core Strategy – such as one/two bed properties
- Volume House Building - Disappointment was expressed over those volume housing developers who were in possession of sites earmarked for development/with extant planning permissions but had not commenced development
- Interventions & approach. Noted that one fixed approach was not suggested – some sites would require a formal Supplementary Planning Document such as East Leeds, others would benefit from a Planning Brief instead, such as Red Hall.

The Panel additionally raised the following matters:

- Whether development briefs for sites with existing approvals would be appropriate - to facilitate a review of their infrastructure needs and whether there was any appropriate action which could be taken to address those sites with “technical starts” on site, but not actual start of development
- Whether issues relating to the cumulative impact of development and/or the impact of development on neighbouring areas could be considered through development briefs
- Role of local ward Councillors in development of planning briefs
- Officer time – and whether there were enough resources to steer the AVLAAP, the SAP and Core Strategy Review at the same time, noting the response that there was a specific team to focus on the Core Strategy Review
- requested an update on progress of the creation of the Brownfield Land Register
- Comment that some of the sites in Table 1 may not be required if the outcome of the Core Strategy Review is to decrease the Leeds housing allocation requirement. Additionally, concern remained that 11 of the 12 sites lay within the greenbelt

(Councillor C Gruen left the meeting at this point)

In conclusion officers reiterated that Ward councillor involvement was key to the success of the development brief approach, with workshops planned to involve statutory bodies, including the NHS and also discussions with external organisations.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and the comments made by the Panel be noted
- b) That having considered the report, the contents and the initial programme for the preparation of development briefs (as set out in Appendix 1 of the submitted report) be agreed.

Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Leadley required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on this matter

47 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 13th December 2016 at 1.30pm