
Report of Director of City Development

Report to Development Plan Panel

Date: 3rd November 2017

Subject: Core Strategy Selective Review

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides a note of the workshop held for Development Plan Panel Members and others on 4th October 2017.

Recommendations

2. Development Plan Panel is invited to note and comment on the contents of this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.3 This report provides a note of the workshop held for Development Plan Panel Members and others on 4th October 2017.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Work commenced on preparation of the Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR) following approval of Executive Board in February 2017. This included amalgamation of the Housing Standards Plan which had commenced preparation in 2016. Six weeks of public consultation took place on the CSSR in June and July 2017 and the comments received were reported to the DPP meeting of 5th September 2017. The workshop held on 4th October was designed to enable Members to consider some of the choices available for drafting policies of the CSSR.

3 Main issues

3.1 Note of the Workshop

- 3.1.1 A note of the workshop is provided in Appendix 1. The workshop was structured around a number of themes relating to the scope of the CSSR:

- Housing Requirement – numbers and distribution
- Viability Choices
- Affordable Housing
- Green Space
- Space Standards
- Access Standards
- Sustainability of Buildings and new policy on Electric Vehicle Charging Points

3.2 Summary

Housing Requirement

- 3.2.1 The workshop discussed the housing requirement in the light of the Department of Communities & Local Government consultation paper “Right Homes in the Right Location” which had been released 14th September 2017. It was concluded that the choice of requirement for Leeds lies between 42,000 and 55,000 dwellings over the 2017 – 2033 plan period and that a balanced distribution across HMCAs will be important.

Viability Assessment

- 3.2.2 A presentation on progressing the economic viability study was given by consultant Dale Robinson. Hard choices will be necessary in setting policy requirements.

Affordable Housing

- 3.2.3 The results of the SHMA provide evidence of a continuing high level of need for affordable housing with a majority of the need being for social rented housing.

Members wanted housing that will be genuinely affordable for local people and greater clarity on definitions of affordable housing. Suggestions were made for a commuted sum premium and for geographical transfer of commuted sums to support regeneration areas. A number of current implementation issues were also raised which will be addressed separately, outside of the CSSR.

Green space

- 3.2.4 Anup Sharma introduced the policy. Members highlighted the varied needs of the city and raised the importance of maintaining green space effectively. The discussion touched on the uneasy relationship of Community Infrastructure Levy and S106 requirements for green space.

Space Standards

- 3.2.5 Nasreen Yunis introduced the proposal to adopt the nationally described space standards. It was concluded that the space standards should be applied to all dwellings with the exception of purpose built student accommodation.

Access Standards

- 3.2.6 Robin Coghlan introduced the topic. The SHMA 2017 provides evidence of need. What percentages of accessible dwellings can be justified will depend on viability testing. Purpose built student accommodation would be the only exception.

- 3.2.7 *Sustainable Buildings (Policies EN1 and EN2) and electric vehicle charging points*

- 3.2.8 Robin Coghlan explained that adjustments to Policies EN1 and EN2 are necessary as a result of a written ministerial statement of 2015 after the Core Strategy was adopted. Members were broadly supporting of the changes and new policy to require provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in new development.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The CSSR will be subject to public consultation as part of preparation. The reporting of the notes of the workshop requires no consultation of its own.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The council will need to consider any impacts that new planning policy is likely to have on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. Before the publication draft of the selective review is approved for consultation its new policy proposals will need to be subject to Equality Impact Assessment. The reporting of the notes of the workshop requires no separate assessment of equality and diversity.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The CSSR will have a number of consequences for the Best Council Plan 2017-18 which will be addressed as the proposed policies of the CSSR are developed. The notes of the workshop do not raise any other issues.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 Preparation of the CSSR will be met from existing budgets.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 As this report is not recommending the taking of any decisions it will not be subject to call-in.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 As this report simply presents the notes of the CSSR workshop no specific risks are identified.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The workshop was extremely useful in framing the issues and discussing Member concerns. Appendix 1 sets out a resume of issues raised and summary of key points.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Development Plan Panel is invited to note and comment on the contents of this report.

Appendix 1

Core Strategy Selective Review

Note of Development Plan Panel Workshop Wednesday 4th October 9.30am

Attendees

Council Members:

Councillor Barry Anderson, Councillor Colin Campbell, Councillor Mick Coulson, Councillor Caroline Gruen, Councillor Peter Gruen, Councillor Graham Latty, Councillor Thomas Leadley, Councillor James McKenna, Councillor Neil Walshaw, Councillor Ronald Grahame.

Council Officers:

Tim Hill (Chief Planning Officer), Robin Coghlan (Policy and Plans), David Feeney (Policy and Plans), Martin Elliot (Policy and Plans), Steven Butler (Development Management), Philip Staniforth (Parks and Countryside), Antony Stringwell (Parks and Countryside), Anup Sharma (Policy and Plans), Nasreen Yunis (Policy and Plans), Daniel Golland (Policy and Plans) Sarah May (Regeneration).

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Councillor Peter Gruen opened the session.

2. Housing Requirement

- 2.1. Officers advised that the Government had released a housing requirement figure for Leeds of 42,384 dwellings through a DCLG consultation on a simplified methodology for calculating local authority housing requirements. It is likely to be confirmed as national planning policy in spring 2018. The methodology is very simplified and leaves out considerations of economic growth, jobs, commuting, and local demographic trends of migration and household formation. Local authorities may adopt higher figures as appropriate to their areas. It is also important to consider how adherence to the 42000 housing target might affect LCC bids for national housing infrastructure funding and to raise the cap for council house building? Ultimately the SAP Examination in Public (EiP) is going ahead, but there will be a pause for housing whilst technical work is prepared for the new housing figures. This may include looking at broad locations for Green Belt release rather than identified sites.
- 2.2. Members sought clarification about DCLG's simplified calculation. Some Members thought that 42,000 would be a good baseline figure for Leeds. Most thought it is too low to deliver Leeds' housing needs including affordable housing and economic growth. Also there are great differences in housing needs and development opportunities within Leeds and we need houses in the right areas.
- 2.3. The issue of addressing the backlog of housing under-delivery was discussed. Officers confirmed that any previous backlog would be wiped out by setting a new housing requirement.

HOUSING FIGURES SUMMARY:

- The 70,000 figure has been reviewed as promised
- The housing figure will lie somewhere between 42,000 and 55,000
- 42,000 is a starting point. Other considerations (economy, migration, commuting) can justify a higher figure.
- The SAP EiP will resume in Spring 2018 to discuss housing issues.

Distribution:

- 2.4. Members discussed whether a lower housing figure means that the distribution should stay the same? All Members agreed with keeping the 11 Housing Market Characteristic Areas (HMCAs), although there were some nonsensical detailed boundaries in certain locations.
- 2.5. Several Members felt that the distribution should be spread across the HMCAs. Others thought there was a case to review the distribution taking into account the quantity of dwellings that have been built or permitted.

DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

- An equitable distribution between the HMCAs should be sought
- Completions and commitments need to be taken into account
- The use of the 11 HMCAs should be continued but quirks in detailed boundaries should be looked at.

3. Viability Choices

- 3.1. Dale Robinson gave a presentation on the viability assessment of the CS review. He confirmed that it was yet to be fully completed and therefore no conclusions could be presented, but a map showing the change in market values over the last 5 years was presented and discussed. Dale also provided an outline of the policy choices being tested and an indication of where there will be greater or lesser challenges to viability. An overall conclusion was that choices will have to be made because not all policy target aspirations will be achievable.

VIABILITY SUMMARY

- Hard choices will have to be made about priorities

4. Affordable Housing

- 4.1. Robin Coghlan introduced the topic. He stated that the evidence presented in the SHMA requires a similar, slightly increased quantity of affordable units than in 2011. The issue of starter homes was discussed and whether they constitute genuinely affordable units. However DCLG have yet to confirm if starter homes will be a requirement for all Local Authorities. It was confirmed that we cannot ask for affordable units (or commuted sums) on developments of 10 units or less as a result of changes to national legislation.

- 4.2. Members suggested types of affordable housing are needed that will be genuinely affordable to local people. Also, the definitions of affordable housing need to be understandable to the 'layperson'.
- 4.3. Commuted sums should not lead to fewer affordable dwellings being achieved. There is a case for a commuted sum "premium" to address this.
- 4.4. Members were interested in who actually inhabits affordable dwellings. Could monitoring be undertaken?
- 4.5. Discontent was expressed about developments of 10 units or less being exempt from providing affordable units or a commuted sum.
- 4.6. Concern was expressed that "discounted sale" affordable housing units can be fully bought-out then fall into the private rent market.
- 4.7. Some Members suggested wider use of the commuted sums from developments in wealthier areas to fund the building of affordable dwellings in poorer areas. Others felt that that all localities have a need for affordable housing that should be delivered locally.
- 4.8. Issues relating to implementation and delivery of affordable housing were also raised including provision of sheltered housing which will be addressed by officers separately.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUMMARY:

- DPP supports viability testing of all the affordable housing policy options.
- Look into a simpler definition.
- Consider the principle of transferring commuted sums between LCC areas, but subject to member consultation
- Importance of monitoring take-up of completed affordable dwellings

5. Green Space

- 5.1. Anup Sharma introduced the policy and stated that the current Green Space policy is not delivering the right quality and quantity of Green Space that is required.
- 5.2. Members recognised the varied needs for green space across the city. They expressed concerns about the importance of future maintenance arrangements and about the reluctance of developers to provide quality green space in the right locations on site.
- 5.3. Discussion included the legal limitation of using both CIL and S106 to seek green space, and the restriction of not pooling more than 5 S106 contributions. The option of agreeing a list of spend schemes in advance to speed up the planning application process was mooted.

GREEN SPACE SUMMARY:

- There are circumstances where green space should be provided on-site in an appropriate location to meet resident needs
- There are circumstances where commuted sums are needed to improve existing green space

- CIL needs to be removed from the CIL 123 List to enable commuted sums to be legitimately sought in appropriate circumstances
- Paying for and securing the future maintenance of green spaces is a major issue.

6. Space Standards

- 6.1. Nasreen Yunis explained the proposal to adopt the nationally described space standards. Members welcomed this as a means of improving quality of new dwellings. They were generally against broad exemptions, but heard the technical reasons why purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) cannot be included. Other forms & types of dwellings should normally meet the standards but regard may be given to scheme circumstances.

SPACE STANDARD SUMMARY:

- Apply the space standards to all new dwellings with the exception of PBSA

7. Access Standards

- 7.1. Robin Coghlan explained the two types of accessible accommodation defined in Building Regulations: M4(2) a general level of accessibility roughly equivalent to the old “lifetime homes” standard and M4(3) wheelchair accessible dwellings (that can be “accessible” or “adaptable”). Based on SHMA household survey findings different percentages are being viability tested. The M4(3) dwellings have a more significant effect on viability because of their large size. Student housing will be the only exemption because it has its own accessibility standard (1:20 bedspaces) in the building regulations.

8. Policies EN1 and EN2 and new policy for Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- 8.1. Robin Coghlan explained that changes to EN1 and EN2 are necessary to conform to the 2015 Written Ministerial Statement which sets Building Regulations as the main vehicle for controlling the sustainability of new buildings, but allows pre-adopted plans to have higher requirements for energy and water. The policy requirements for non-residential buildings can remain. Members were broadly supportive of the changes and new policy to require provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in new development.