
DEVELOPMENT PLAN PANEL

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Tuesday, 16th October, 2018
at 11.30 am

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

P Gruen (Chair)	B Anderson	C Campbell	T Leadley
C Gruen	Andrew Carter		
R Lewis			
J McKenna			
M Shahzad			
F Venner			
N Walshaw			

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2 of the Access to Information Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded)</p> <p>(*In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting)</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p>	

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstance shall be specified in the minutes).</p>	
4			<p>DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS</p> <p>To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13-16 of the Members' Code of Conduct</p>	
5			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p>	
6			<p>MINUTES</p> <p>To agree the minutes of the meeting held 11th September 2018 as a correct record</p>	1 - 6
7			<p>HOUSING NEEDS - CHANGES TO HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS AND GOVERNMENT METHODOLOGY/GUIDANCE</p> <p>To consider the report of the Chief Planning Officer on changes to national planning practice guidance, sub-national projections and the Government's approach to calculating housing needs via a standard methodology, all of which are relevant context to the housing requirement for Leeds as set out in the Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR).</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>	7 - 14

Item No	Ward	Item Not Open		Page No
8			<p>SITE ALLOCATIONS PLAN UPDATE</p> <p>To consider the report of the Chief Planning Officer on progress of the Site Allocations Plan (SAP). The SAP Inspectors have released a post-hearing note and a further response, which together provide interim views on broad locations/green belt and offers guidance on the next steps. This is the first feedback received on the SAP and provides a positive way to move the process forward.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>	15 - 20
9			<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>To note the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 13th November 2018 at 1.30 pm</p> <p><u>Third Party Recording</u></p> <p>Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts named on the front of this agenda.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title. b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete. 	

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 11th September, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor P Gruen in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell,
A Carter, C Gruen, T Leadley, R Lewis,
J McKenna, M Shazad, F Venner and
N Walshaw

11 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

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

12 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The agenda contained no exempt information.

13 Late Items

There were no late items of business.

14 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Jonathon Carr, Head of Development Management.

16 Minutes

RESOLVED – That, subject to an amendment to Minute No.8 to read “developing trend for applicants to lodge an appeal as *early* as possible”, the minutes of the Development Plan Panel meeting held on 20th June 2018 be approved.

17 Site Allocations Plan Examination in Public Update

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which provided an overview of Stage 2 of the hearings for the examination in public of the Site Allocations Plan and an outline of the process leading up to adoption of the Plan.

The Team Leader, Strategic Planning, presented the report highlighting the following:

- The intensive officer support to the hearings drawn from across the Department and the volume of interest and evidence from interested parties.
- The two Inspectors had reiterated their role as being to examine whether the Plan as submitted is sound under the provisions of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework transitional arrangements and adopted Core Strategy.
- The Inspectors had expressed general support for Leeds’ position regarding the need to avoid the release of too much Green Belt land, however had

indicated that comments would follow on the Leeds approach of including a Broad Locations policy and associated pool of sites.

- Throughout the hearings, the Inspectors had identified areas of further work to be undertaken; including consultation on transport modelling work in the Outer North East and Outer South East Housing Market Characteristic Areas (HMCAs); work on the designation of rural land to Green Belt in the Outer North East HMCA, work on the sustainability appraisals of identified site HG1 and updates on the status of sites with expired or no planning permission.

Comments from the Inspectors had been expected within 14 days of the last hearing; and although an actions list had been received (Note EX52) covering weeks 1, 2 and 3 of the hearings, a further document for week 4 was awaited. Should the Inspector identify any main modifications to the Plan, the Authority would respond through Executive Board.

Discussions covered the following issues

- The Department's capacity to deal with the comments of the Inspectors in a timely way, alongside the ongoing work for implementation of the CSSR and the resources available to support both process and any ongoing appeals.
- Members were keen to encourage receipt of early comments from the Inspectors to ensure the SAP continues to progress at pace.
- The positive view of the process so far.
- The ongoing work on matters and modifications raised in Note EX52.
- The need to respond to any suggested modifications swiftly.

Additionally, the Chief Planning Officer provided a precis of three main issues to consider so far:

- Justification for the green belt designation of former rural land – and whether using the LA boundary is appropriate
- Broad locations – the Inspector was reviewing mechanisms
- Whether any changes to sites would be recommended; and if the LA was asked to consider alternatives, would sites already discussed at Inspection be accepted

Members also considered the following:

- Measures to effectively communicate to residents the differences between the Site Allocations Plan and Core Strategy Selective Review processes.
- The likely timetable of meetings required to progress the SAP through to adoption by full Council. Members noted the intention to seek assurance that consideration of the SAP would not be delayed and that additional meetings would be called where necessary.

The Chair thanked all who attended the Inquiry sessions for their supportive approach to the SAP.

RESOLVED –

- i) To note the summary of the hearings outlined in this report as part of the independent examination in public of the Site Allocations Plan
- ii) To note that any actions arising will be listed and made available on the examination webpage. This includes:

- a. A note from the Inspectors is anticipated shortly outlining further work required and an indication of future timescales for this.
 - b. Consideration by the Inspectors of representations made on the transport modelling work affecting Outer North East and Outer South East HMCAs. The Inspectors shall outline any matters arising from this, which may include a request for a further hearing session.
 - c. A request by the Inspectors that the Council undertake further work to outline how the proposed designation of land as Green Belt from Rural Land in the Outer North East HMCA satisfies the tests outlined in paragraph 82 of the NPPF.
 - d. The Council submitting further work on identified sites, (HG1) including consultation on a sustainability appraisal of identified sites, and providing further updates on the status of sites with expired or no planning permission.
 - e. A request by the Inspectors that the Council submit further Main Modifications to the Plan, particularly in relation to some site specific site requirements, which arose following discussions at the relevant hearing sessions.
- iii) To note the Council's response to these actions will also be made available on the examination webpage in due course.
 - iv) To note the next steps in the process leading up to adoption of the Plan and application of the policies.
 - v) To note the intention to create a work plan to plot the process of the SAP against the council meetings necessary to secure its adoption.

18 Revised National Planning Policy Framework

Further to minute 74 of the meeting held 17th April 2018, the Chief Planning Officer submitted a report which provided the Panel with an understanding of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (RNPPF), which was issued on 24 July 2018, replacing the 2012 version of the NPPF with immediate effect.

The report focused on the revisions and reiterated that the changes took immediate effect for decision-making but would be implemented transitionally for plan making. Members noted that the Core Strategy Selective review was being considered against the NPPF 2012 under transitional arrangements.

Key matters discussed included:-

- Consolidation of the role of Neighbourhood Planning and in particular the ability to amend Green Belt boundaries in cases where the Local Authority has identified the need to make an amendment.
- A loosening of new policy requirements to encourage small and medium sized developers.
- Amendments to the town centre policies, to allow authority's to respond quickly to changing retail/leisure markets. It was noted that a review of the Council's current policies would be required in due course as the requirement to stipulate primary or secondary frontages had been deleted but Leeds could still retain designations for town centres/shopping areas.

- A revised planning delivery test for local authorities – a review of the implications for Leeds would be conducted within the Development Management Section and have regard to the findings of the Letwin Review on barriers to delivery.
- Development viability and the 5 Year Land Supply – a review of the impact on Plans Panel decisions would be required.
- The revised Affordable Housing targets; noting Leeds' current targets based on the adopted Core Strategy – seeking a split of social housing and social rent which remains with national guidance.
- A suggestion that a seminar be given to all Members of Council on the revised NPPF was noted for action

(Councillors Walshaw and Venner withdrew from the meeting for a short while)

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the implications of the 2018 NPPF both in relation to plan making and decision taking as set out in the submitted report.
- b) To note the work planned to review the implications for Leeds of the revised NPPF.
- c) To note the intention to hold a seminar for all Members on the revised NPPF.

19 Housing land supply interim update

The Panel considered the report of the Chief Planning Officer presenting an update on recent housing appeals and the supply and delivery of housing. The report detailed the collaborative work of the Housing Growth Team between Planning and Asset Management & Regeneration to support housing growth in order to meet the Core Strategy target. The importance of the adoption of the Site Allocations Plan; the impact of NPPF 2018 and the submitted Core Strategy Selective Review on the five year housing land supply were also highlighted.

The Principal Planner, Major Projects and Team Leader, Major Projects presented the report highlighting that although Leeds had not identified a 5 Year Land Supply, the Authority had successfully defended recent appeals with the outcome being that a 4.38 year supply had been identified with support from the Planning Inspectors.

The Panel noted that local developers had been canvassed to identify their plans to deliver homes with existing planning approval and noted a comment made recognising the need to identify a 5 Year Land supply as soon as possible.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the contents of the report and the comments made during discussions on the revised NPPF; and
- (ii) To note the positive position Leeds is in in regards to its five year housing land supply.

20 Neighbourhood Planning Update

The Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on neighbourhood planning progress across Leeds and key legislative changes.

The report also considered the opportunities to encourage a more even spread of neighbourhood planning activity across the city, with particular reference to the main urban area and the inner-city.

Appendix 1 of the report contained a schedule showing the progress of neighbourhood plans in Leeds and a map showing the geographical spread of plans across Leeds was included at Appendix 2.

The Neighbourhood Planning Officer and Strategic Planner, Forward Planning and Implementation attended the meeting to present the report and discussions included the following matters:

- Leeds had 35 designated neighbourhood areas and 9 Made Plans, with several more Plans anticipated to be Made during 2019
- The NPPF 2018 had confirmed government support for the neighbourhood planning process by strengthening the status of Neighbourhood Plans and their influence
- The Government funding available to support the development of Plans
- The possibility of creating a post within the LCC Communities Team to support establishment of NPs in Priority Neighbourhoods

(Councillor Carter left the meeting at this point)

In particular, Members discussed the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. In areas where a Made Plan exists, 25% of the CIL charge on each development in the area will be received, compared to 15% in no-plan areas. Table 2 of the report provided a breakdown of CIL payment per Community Committee area. Whilst Members welcomed the open manner in which CIL spending could be tracked at CCs, they were keen for the same accountability at Parish and Town Council level. The Panel recognised that some Town/Parish CCs and Community Committees preferred to save CIL monies in order to fund strategic or more substantial schemes in their localities.

(Councillors McKenna and Walshaw left the meeting at this point)

Members also noted comments on the following:

- Match-funding for small CIL amounts
- Leeds had largely dedicated CIL funding to education infrastructure projects
- Resources available to support Neighbourhood Planning, particularly to encourage inner city neighbourhoods, alongside the SAP and CSSR processes

Members noted that the duty to monitor Neighbourhood Plans would be covered within the Authority Monitoring Report; however requested that future reports include further detail on CIL spend

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the progress made by the Council in relation to Neighbourhood Plans
- b) To note the comments made during discussions

21 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Tuesday, 16th October, 2018

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 16th October 2018 at 1.30 pm.



Report authors: Robin Coghlan
(0113 3787634)

Report of the Chief Planning Officer

Report to Development Plan Panel

Date: 16th October 2018

Subject: Housing Needs – Changes to Household Projections and Government Methodology/Guidance

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): All	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Government has released Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to provide more detail on policies within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This updates how local planning authorities should plan for housing need and clarifies that the Government's standard methodology for calculating housing remains in draft. It is understood that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are to undertake further consultation on a revised methodology before the end of the year.
2. The Office of National Statistics have released the latest 2016-based sub-national household projections which reveal a 25% drop in household growth over the next 25 years, however they have indicated that further releases may change this figure and new variant projections are anticipated in December 2018.
3. These occurrences are already causing delays to plan making across the Country and it is important for the Council to consider the implications of the recent changes on the policies in the submitted Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR) so as to provide context for the hearing sessions and so as to ensure that the plan remains up to date and the most appropriate strategy moving forward.

Recommendation

4. Development Plan Panel is invited to consider the changing national policy position and changing evidential base for calculating housing requirements as set out in this report.

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of Development Plan Panel on changes to national planning practice guidance, sub-national projections and the Government's approach to calculating housing needs via a standard methodology, all of which are relevant context to the housing requirement for Leeds as set out in the Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR).

2 Background Information

- 2.1 The CSSR was submitted for examination on 9th August 2018 following consideration by Development Plan Panel (20th June) and Executive Board (27th June) and a Council resolution to submit the plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 11th July 2018.
- 2.2 The housing requirement proposed in the submission draft of the CSSR is 3,247 dwellings per year (51,952 over the plan period of 16 years) based on a Strategic Housing Market Assessment of local evidence. The Government had already published a draft simplified method ("standard methodology") for calculating housing requirements with a figure for Leeds of 2,649 dwellings per year (42,384 over the plan period). The Government's commitment to using a standard methodology was finalised in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 24th July 2018, however it remains in draft and consultation on further changes are expected (see section on Standard Method below).
- 2.3 In resolving to submit the CSSR Council agreed that the standard methodology was not the correct approach for Leeds. Council considered that it did not reflect the economic growth ambitions of the City or the City Region nor did it fully capture local evidence on affordable housing needs.
- 2.4 Since submission there have been two further changes. First, the Planning Practice Guidance, which provides more detail on the NPPF was updated on 13th September. Second, new 2016 based household projections were released on 20th September.

3 Main Issues

The Core Strategy Selective Review

- 3.1 The CSSR has been submitted under the transitional arrangements of the revised NPPF. Where plans are being prepared in this way, the plan will be assessed against the policies in the previous version of the NPPF published in 2012, alongside any previous guidance, which has been superseded since the new framework was published in July 2018.
- 3.2 In effect, the proposed housing requirement of 3,247 dwellings per year (51,952 over the plan period) would not have to be tested against the revised NPPF and the Council will not be required to justify why it has not used the standard method to calculate local housing requirements. However, it is important to consider what is happening with the standard method as wider context, for decision taking and to understand whether the CSSR is in conformity with the revised NPPF in any event.

The Standard Method

- 3.3 The Government has released further clarification on the standard method in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 3.4 However, it is important to note that the method remains unfixed at this time. This is because the Government is aware that lower than previously forecast household projections (see below) have significantly reduced the outputs associated with the standard method. When applied to Leeds the standard methodology when using the 2016-based most recently published projection would provide for a housing need of 28k homes over the next 16 years (in contrast to the 42k homes when using the 2014-based projections).
- 3.5 This situation, being played out in the majority of local authorities across the Country, has not met the Government's expectations as set out in their Housing White Paper reforms. The reasons for the introduction of a standard method for assessing housing need were about more homes being built not fewer. Government's ambition is to see 300,000 homes are built per year by the mid-2020s. Applying the method against the revised projections shows a need of up to 215,000 homes a year. In order to ensure that more homes are built the Government has stated that it intends to amend the methodology before the end of the year. It should be noted that MHCLG are sending clear messages not to rely on the recent low projections, and the combination of the methodology change and new variant projections suggest that the figure will rise again.
- 3.6 No further clarity has been provided at present on how the standard methodology may be amended. For example, the consultation the Government undertook, raised issues around the spatial imbalance inherent within the methodology, i.e. overheating of the south eastern housing market at the expense of much needed growth elsewhere in the country.
- 3.7 Notwithstanding that the method remains unfixed and therefore relatively unusable for the purposes of plan making at the current time, there is helpful clarity in the PPG on its use as follows:
- the standard methodology is a minimum need figure not a housing requirement
 - it is not mandatory and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) can use an alternative approach
 - higher figures may be justified e.g. if the LPA has a growth strategy or a housing deal with Government or if past rates of growth justify this
 - where an authority can demonstrate an alternative, which is higher than the standard methodology, that approach should be considered sound by an inspector as it will have exceeded the minimum starting point
- 3.8 This is useful clarification and helps support the locally driven approach of the CSSR were it to be tested against the revised NPPF. The Council views the standard methodology as a minimum and seeks to reflect local evidence to justify an uplift including on the basis of economic growth ambitions. This is

useful clarification from the Government that the Council's approach in the CSSR is sound and would also help allay demands from the housing industry to further increase the housing requirement, as has been the case in the past.

- 3.9 However, the PPG does not clarify one of the most challenging aspects of assessing housing need: that is the constant change in household projections. The guidance notes that projections are released every 2 years and that these can be applied to a plan period of at least 15 years but offers no guidance on how authorities may plan to avoid peaks and troughs of the projections.
- 3.10 This is precisely the difficulty faced by the Government in its application of the standard methodology highlighting that a 25% drop in base figures remains a significant evidential challenge which reduces confidence in national figures.

The 2016 Household Projections

- 3.11 The Office of National Statistics publishes household projections every two years. These are key inputs into assessing housing need whether using the standard method or a local approach like the Council.
- 3.12 For Leeds the latest household projections show a change to the figures used in the SHMA. Compared with the 2014 projections that were the baseline input into the SHMA, the 2016 projections show a reduction in household growth of over 12,000 households between 2017 and 2033.

Household Projections	2017	2033	Increase	Annual Increase
2016 Based	329,596	356,208	26,612	1,663
2014 Based	334,142	373,315	39,173	2,448

- 3.13 The nation-wide drop in projections is likely to be a result of a change in methodology by the ONS. This change has stopped drawing in data from as far back as the 1971 census and only uses figures that go back to 2001. There is a concern that this loses a period of household formation, when the ability to form a household i.e. purchase a house, was easier and over emphasises the difficulties for household formation this century. Clearly, when projected forward, a period of constrained household formation will simply be repeated rather than addressed. The ONS have clarified that they will publish a different version of the 2016 figures on 3rd December where household formation rates for younger adults (those aged 25 to 44 years) are higher. Given that the objectives of the Council (and Government) are to make a better housing market for younger people this is to be welcomed. But in the meantime there are uncertainties over the new national figures, which as published remain problematic for policy making.
- 3.14 The 2016 based household projection figures have produced some dramatic results for neighbouring local authorities. For Bradford, the average annual increase in households over 10 years is only 772. For Wakefield it is 922. For York 442. These are significantly lower than housing requirements being planned for. Nationally, at least six local authorities, including the Greater

Manchester Authority, have put their plans on hold in light of the recent changes.

Next Steps

- 3.15 There have clearly been a number of contextual changes to the approach to assessing housing need and the base national inputs since submission of the CSSR. At this stage the most positive aspect of this is the confirmation in planning practice guidance that the Council's approach to a local approach which exceeds the standard methodology on the basis of economic growth and local needs would be justified, albeit the CSSR is being examined under the transitional arrangements.
- 3.16 There remains uncertainty over the application of the standard methodology and the latest household projections with Government advice being to avoid relying on the latest projections. Consequently the position remains dynamic. Some further clarity may arise when ONS publish their variant projections in December. These numbers alongside any recommended modifications to the CSSR can be considered by Members at that time.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR) has already been subject to public consultation on the scope of changes (June-July 2017) and the publication draft of the plan (Feb 2018). If further changes to the plan are proposed these would be presented as "Main Modifications" to the plan and subject to further formal public consultation.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 It is considered that the changing context of national planning policy and publication of new household projections for Leeds will have little direct impact on equality, diversity cohesion or integration of the population and communities of Leeds. However, if Leeds plans for less new housing than is actually needed this could have negative implications for certain groups with protected characteristics including young people and poorer people who may find it more difficult to access housing.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 Having sufficient housing to meet the overall needs of Leeds will be essential to meet the Best Council Plan (2018/19 – 2020/21) priorities for "housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places" for providing housing to support older and vulnerable residents and for promoting health and wellbeing and inclusive growth.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The cost of preparing the Core Strategy Selective Review is already budgeted for. Should the need arise, the extra cost of commissioning work on housing need can be covered by existing budgets.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.6 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

4.7 Risk Management

4.7.1 National policy on calculating housing requirements remains in a state of flux which creates uncertainties for local authorities seeking to set a housing requirement which is supposed to enable planning for 15 years.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The effect of new national practice guidance and new household projections on the proposed housing requirement for Leeds is important context. At this stage there are no reasons for considering that the CSSR figure requires amending to reflect the latest evidence, although this will be kept under review. The key intention will be to ensure that the CSSR process concludes with a housing requirement that is right for Leeds in terms of up to date and reliable local evidence.

6 Recommendation

6.1 Development Plan Panel is invited to consider the changing national policy position and changing evidential base for calculating housing requirements as set out in this report.

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Report authors: Martin Elliot
(0113 37 87634)

Report of the Chief Planning Officer

Report to Development Plan Panel

Date: 16th October 2018

Subject: Site Allocations Plan Update

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): All	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Site Allocations Plan (SAP) was considered by two independent inspectors at a public examination in October 2017 and July/August 2018. The initial submission of the SAP was in May 2017, with a revised submission in March 2018.

2. As part of the revised submission, the Council proposed protection from development for 33 sites in the green belt which had previously been identified as being the possible locations for 6,450 future homes. This proposal had been put forward reflecting the Council's desire to protect the green belt as much as possible, in light of a downward trajectory of overall housing need targets for the city based on the latest Government guidance and up to date evidence.

3. The two independent government-appointed inspectors, Claire Sherratt DIP URP MRTPI and Louise Gibbons BA Hons MRTPI, have issued interim views on the SAP which support the council's approach regarding green belt protection. They also address a procedural matter about moving the plan forward.

Recommendation

4. Development Plan Panel is invited to note the Inspectors initial views on the Site Allocations Plan.

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of Development Plan Panel on progress on the Site Allocations Plan (SAP). The SAP Inspectors have released a post-hearing note and (following a letter from the Council seeking clarification) a further response, which together provide interim views on broad locations/green belt and offers guidance on the next steps. This is the first feedback received on the SAP and provides a positive way to move the process forward.

2 Background Information

- 2.1 The Leeds Core Strategy, which sets the strategic planning framework for Leeds, was adopted in November 2014 and this included a housing requirement of 70,000 (net) new homes between 2012 and 2028, of which 66,000 homes were to be identified as allocations through the Site Allocations Plan (SAP).
- 2.2 The initial submission of the SAP was in May 2017 and the process was paused between Stage 1 and Stage 2 to allow for amendments to the proposed release of land from the Green Belt. The initial direction from the Inspector was that the SAP should set out locations for future housing, as set down by the Core Strategy. The Council amended the housing element of the SAP so as to reflect lower overall housing targets on the basis of new evidence and the publication of revised Government consultation ('planning for the right homes in the right places') in September 2017.
- 2.3 The outcome of this amendment was to provide protection for 33 sites in the Green Belt, which had previously been identified as being the proposed allocated locations for 6,450 future homes. The Council identified these as "broad locations for future growth" (remaining in the Green Belt) so that it could both retain their Green Belt protection whilst identifying a pool of land for future development, which complied with the advice to meet land for 66,000 homes.
- 2.4 On 23 March 2018, the Council submitted a Revised Submission Draft Site Allocations Plan to the Secretary of State. It incorporated revisions to the Council's approach to strategic allocations for housing as outlined above. It included revised policies relating to housing allocations, broad locations, safeguarded land, phasing and associated explanatory text. The revised SAP was subject to consultation between 15 January and 26 February 2018 and all representations were considered and sent to the Inspector.
- 2.5 Stage 1 hearings covered allocations for employment, retail, greenspace and accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpersons and were held at the Civic Hall over 2 weeks during October 2017.
- 2.6 Stage 2 hearings covered all outstanding matters including housing and mixed-use allocations and were held at the Civic Hall over 4 weeks from 9th July until 3rd August 2018. The hearings involved 470 participants, 36 Council witnesses and up to 60 people "around the table" at any one time.
- 2.7 The inspectors provided clarity to participants about the manner in which they were examining the Plan through guidance notes on the Examination web-

site.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1 The SAP Inspectors have released a 'post-hearing note' and (following a letter from the Council seeking clarification) a 'further response', which together provide interim views on broad locations/green belt and offers guidance on the next steps. This is the first feedback received on the SAP and provides a positive way to move the process forward.
- 3.2 The initial views of the Inspectors are that the Council's approach to reducing Green Belt release, in light of the likely reduction in housing growth, was the correct one, and that:-
- given that national policy attaches great importance to the Green Belt and only envisages altering boundaries in exceptional circumstances, *significant* releases of land from the Green Belt would not be justified at this stage
 - it is clear that there is a lower trajectory of housing growth in Leeds because the Council's emerging work on housing need identifies a lower figure
 - to that end, *significant* releases of land from the Green Belt would not be justified at this stage
 - there remains uncertainty about what the need figure (and requirement) should be pending the examination of the Core Strategy Selective Review
 - it is pragmatic and sound to only provide housing supply, including any Green belt release required for years 1 to 11
 - the Plan should be subject to a review process, to bring it in line with the Core Strategy Selective Review, no later than 31st March 2023
- 3.3 In effect, and following on from their initial thoughts at the hearing sessions the Inspectors have also indicated that broad locations in the SAP would not be justified and have asked the Council to carry out further work to remove these from the plan (and retain the land as Green Belt) along with the removal of any references to phasing. At this stage all other allocations for housing would remain as proposed.
- 3.4 The Inspectors have stated that they remain keen to ensure no unnecessary delays at this juncture and have clarified the procedure moving forward. The initial part of the Inspector's post-hearing note raises and deals with a procedural matter; the impact of which requires the Council to re-present the amendments contained in the revised submission plan as main modifications to the initial submission plan (May 2017).
- 3.5 This work is underway, alongside a work to respond to a series of actions set out in the Inspectors weekly action notes (on the Examination web-site as EX52). The headlines from this work were discussed at Development Plan

Panel meeting on 11th September.

- 3.6 At this stage the Inspectors have provided no findings on specific sites. Should they provide any further views on specific sites they will be asking the Council to find alternatives within the same HMCA, as was specified at the hearing sessions.

Next Steps

- 3.7 The Council has committed to providing a set of main modifications to the Inspector by the end of October, which once considered by the Inspector, alongside any modifications they recommend, will be subject to further consultation, following approval by Executive Board in due course. It is difficult to know how long the Inspector will take to consider the Council's proposed main modifications and whether any further views will be issued or clarification will be necessary as a result of the actions (discussed by DPP at their September meeting). It is envisaged consultation is likely to take place in December/January with receipt of the Inspector's report soon after.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Further main modifications recommended by the Inspector to make the Plan sound will be advertised for a 6 week period for further comment.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 In the preparation of the SAP, due regard has been given to Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration issues. This has included the completion of EDCI Screening of the SAP and meeting the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, which has meant that these Plans are subject to the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal. The purpose of such Appraisals is to assess (and where appropriate strengthen) the document's policies, in relation to a series of social (and health), environmental and economic objectives. As part of this process, issues of Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration, are embedded as part of the Appraisal's objectives. The SAP material follows on and reflects the approach set out in the Core Strategy, which has also had the same regard to these issues. Further consultation on a sustainability appraisal of identified sites was agreed with the Inspectors during the hearings.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The Site Allocations Plan 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, the Plan seeks to implement key City Council priorities. These include the Best Council Plan (2018/19 – 2020/21) (in particular priorities relating to Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth, Safe Strong Communities, Culture, Child Friendly City, Housing (of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places) and 21st century infrastructure) and Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy 2018 –

2023 (concerning getting people to benefit from the economy to their full potential). Once adopted, the Plan will form part of the overall development plan for Leeds, alongside the Core Strategy, the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan and the Natural Resources and Waste Plan and any made neighbourhood plans.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The preparation of the statutory Local Plan is a necessary but a very resource intensive process. This is due to the time and cost of document preparation (relating to public consultation and engagement), the preparation and monitoring of an extensive evidence base, legal advice and Independent Examination. These challenges are compounded currently by the financial constraints upon the public sector and resourcing levels, concurrent with new technical and planning policy pressures arising from more recent legislation (including the Community Infrastructure Levy and Localism Act). There are considerable demands for officers, members and the community in taking the Development Plan process forward.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The SAP follows the statutory Development Plan process (Local Plan) and has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 as well as the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Without current allocations Plans for Leeds MD in place, aspects of the existing UDP allocations will become out of date and will not reflect or deliver the Core Strategy Policies and proposals (including District wide requirements for Housing and General Employment Land) or the requirements of national planning guidance. Early delivery is therefore essential to enable the Council to demonstrate that sufficient land will be available when needed to meet the Core Strategy targets. The more the work progresses, the more material weight can be given to it. In addition, the Government is intervening in authorities without Plans in place.

4.6.2 The latest correspondence from the Inspector clarifies the process moving forward which reduces the risk to the Council of delay.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The Inspectors' interim views provide a welcome and practical clarification on the procedure moving forward and on the status of broad locations in the SAP. They are as follows:

- the Council's approach to avoiding release of Green Belt in light of lowering housing need, instead of meeting full Core Strategy targets, was the right one
- in continuing to protect Green Belt the Council doesn't now need to designate Broad Locations and these should be removed from the Plan

5.2 The Council now needs to prepare a list of modifications to the Plan for consideration by the Inspector. The Inspectors will then determine and recommend Main Modification to the Plan they require to make it sound and then, following to resolution of Executive Board in due course, they will be subject to further public consultation. Following the consultation exercise, the Inspectors will issue their final report on the Plan and recommend it, subject to the Main Modifications, as sound and capable of adoption

6 Recommendation

6.1 Development Plan Panel is invited to note the Inspectors initial views on the Site Allocations Plan.