

Report of Director of City Development

Report to Development Plan Panel

Date: 17th April 2018

Subject: Core Strategy Selective Review (Publication Draft Response Overview)

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| 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 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. This report provides initial feedback on the scale and nature of public consultation responses made to the Core Strategy Selective Review Draft Submission Plan.

Recommendations

2. Development Plan Panel is invited to note the headline outcomes of the consultation.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides Development Plan Panel members with an indication of the scale of representation received and the nature of comments and objections raised to the Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR) Submission Draft Plan.
- 1.2 These comments will be considered to ascertain whether there is a need to make any changes to the Plan prior to Submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

2 Background

- 2.1 There have been a series of reports to Panel since November 2016 concerning the preparation of the Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR). Recently, Development Plan Panel commented on the proposed content of the CSSR and made recommendations for Executive Board to approve the Submission Draft Plan ("publication version") of the CSSR for public consultation. Development Plan Panel in November 2017 made recommendations on the housing requirement and distribution. Meetings in December 2017 and January 2018 considered and made recommendations on the other policy areas of the CSSR including affordable housing, green space, housing space standards, accessible dwellings, sustainable construction and electric vehicle charging points. Executive Board of 7th February 2018 resolved that the Submission Draft Plan of the CSSR be made available for public consultation, which took place between 9th February and 23rd March 2018.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Duly made representations have been received from over 200 respondents raising a variety of issues. The majority of responses were made to Policies SP6 and SP7 concerning the housing requirement and distribution. This included a standard letter signed by approximately 100 people concerned about housing numbers and green belt release in Aireborough. It included a good proportion of responses from or on behalf of house builders and developers and from organisations representing particular interests. A number of parish councils and neighbourhood forums also put in representations. Officers should have
- 3.2 Given the relatively short period of time between close of consultation and the preparation of this report there can only be a headline summary of the main issues raised. Early indications of the type of matters raised are as follows:

Housing Requirement / Distribution

- 3.3 The proposed housing requirement of 51,952 dwellings is set in Policy SP6. Many of the responses from residents and community groups felt that the requirement was too high and the 42,000 figure of the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) should be used instead. A standard letter from residents groups in the Aireborough HMCA followed this line. However, other community responses were supportive of the proposed requirement figure.
- 3.4 In contrast, housebuilder responses suggest the 51,952 figure is too low, failing to have regard to the job growth scenarios of the Leeds Growth Strategy and ignoring

the higher growth scenarios of the SHMA 2017 without justification. The allowances for windfall development and demolitions are also questioned.

- 3.5 Regarding the proposed plan period for housing supply of 2017 – 2033 some residents felt that this was a deliberate attempt to obfuscate and confuse the public over the calculation of the housing requirement. They suggested the period of 2012 – 2028 should be retained, or at least dwelling requirements calculated for 2012-28 and 2028-33.
- 3.6 Housebuilders claim that not enough support is given to the needs of small and medium enterprise (SME) house builders including a failure to reflect current proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework proposed by MHCLG.
- 3.7 Housing distribution in Policy SP7. Some resident and community responses claimed that there is no case to build on Green Belt with a lower housing requirement and that the distribution should be varied to reflect this factor. In contrast, the development industry felt there needs to be a wide distribution of housing land supply in different housing markets in order to optimise overall delivery of housing.
- 3.8 It is also suggested that the HMCA percentages lack evidence of delivery, and there are concerns from developers about deliverability and achievability of the targets given that the City Centre, Inner and East HMCAs account for nearly 50% of the distribution. The inference being that relatively low market areas would find it harder to build more homes.
- 3.9 There are also suggestions to set figures for Major Settlements, Smaller Settlements and Other Rural Areas. Community groups suggest that SP7 ought to go further in specifying mix of types, sizes and tenure of dwellings needed in different HMCAs.

Affordable Housing

- 3.10 Affordable Housing (Policy H5). Community responses raised concern about the non-affordable remainder of dwellings on a site being accessible to middle income households (e.g. 85% in Outer South Zone). On-site delivery should be the priority rather than commuted sums. Housebuilders consider that the Economic Viability Study does not justify raising the target requirements for Zones 3 and 4. They also point to viability issues raised in the EVS about Zone 2.
- 3.11 There is also a suggestion that the acceptance of viability statements in paragraph 5.2.20 should be firmed up by including it in the policy itself. There should be recognition that affordable flats are often not attractive to Registered Providers and the policy reworded to accept commuted sums in such circumstances.
- 3.12 Build-to-rent developers have objected to the affordable housing requirements for build-to-rent in Policy H6. It is suggested that the 20% national target is not applicable locally unless it is viability tested, which Leeds have not done.

Housing Standards

- 3.13 Space Standards (Policy H9). Housebuilders suggest there is insufficient evidence of need to justify introducing this policy and that the Council should have primary sources of need from e.g. surveys of residents. Build-to-rent developers suggest that

their product is not suited to the nationally described space standards and should be exempt. Certain developers suggest flexibility be built into the policy to accept innovative approaches.

- 3.14 Accessibility Standards (Policy H10). The Centre for Aging Better and Leeds Older People's Forum think that the percentage targets are too low to meet needs. Housebuilders suggest there is insufficient evidence of need to justify introducing this policy, and it is unnecessary because Building Regulations already require provision of accessible dwellings. Build-to-rent developers suggest the targets are too high for the build-to-rent market based on their own market research. Certain developers suggest flexibility be built into the policy to accept innovative approaches.

Green Space

- 3.15 Green Space (Policies G4-G6). Several community organisations object to the reduction in the green space requirement per dwelling. Others suggest that on-site provision should always be first preference. Others note that maintenance of green space is an increasingly important issue which is not captured in the policies.
- 3.16 Housebuilders have suggested that the EVS only tested 20, 40, 60 and 80 sqm/dwelling targets rather than the proposed policy requirement which sets targets for different sizes of dwellings. Viability in Zone 2 is questioned based on the EVS raising concerns about this Zone. Student housing providers consider that the requirement of 18sqm/bedspace is ill-defined and too onerous.

Sustainable Design and Construction

- 3.17 Sustainable Design and Construction (Policies EN1 and EN2). Housebuilders suggest there is no evidence of need to justify a renewable energy target and more onerous water consumption target. The policies should be deleted and the Building Regulations relied upon instead.
- 3.18 Electric Vehicle Charging Points (Policy EN8). Community and specific organisation responses query whether the policy could extend to provision for existing housing. There are suggestions that the policy set out minimum specifications for the charging infrastructure. Housebuilders suggest the policy is too onerous and prescriptive and should be reworded to "seek" provision rather than "require" provision and include qualifications such as where practical / feasible.

Other

- 3.19 Housebuilders suggest there is a need for an updated monitoring framework, including monitoring triggers for delivering a five year housing supply. They also suggest that the Duty to Cooperate obligation has not been thorough enough, particularly given the MHCLG's proposals for Statements of Common Ground between local authorities.
- 3.20 Some suggest further areas of the Core Strategy are also in need of review including employment land (SP9), Green Belt (SP10), Housing Phasing (H1), Housing Mix (H4) and Infrastructure (ID2).

Next Steps

3.21 Officers will prepare a report of consultation which specifically addresses the comments made and this will accompany other submission material when the CSSR is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

3.22 Submission is programmed for the Summer, which maintains progress against the timetable set out in the Executive Board report of 8th February 2017.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Consultation on the scope of the review was carried out for 6 weeks from 19th June until 31st July 2017. Consultation on the Submission Draft took place over 6 weeks between 9th February and 23rd March.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 Equality diversity, cohesion and integration has been an integral part of the formulation of policies of the Core Strategy Selective Review. Equality Impact Assessment screenings will be undertaken at key stages of the process to ensure that policies are embedded in equality considerations.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

4.3.1 It is considered the CSSR will contribute to the Best Council Plan 2017-18 in terms of its priorities for Good Growth, Health & Wellbeing, Resilient Communities, Better Lives for People with Care & Support Needs and Low Carbon.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The cost of preparation of the CSSR will be met from existing budgets.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The preparation of the CSSR as a development plan document is in compliance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

4.5.2 As a development plan document the CSSR falls within the Council's budget and policy framework and as such, will be referred by Executive Board to the relevant Scrutiny Board for consultation. .

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The Government is currently in the process of reviewing national planning policy concerning housing matters. A Housing White Paper was published in February 2017 followed by a consultation paper in September 2017('planning for the right homes in the right places') which included proposals on how local housing requirements should be calculated. Consequent, national planning policy in respect of housing issues is in the process of a dynamic period of change. There is a risk that changes to national policy could make the CSSR Publication Draft proposals out of line with national policy. To reduce this risk officers have tried to anticipate the direction of travel as

closely as possible, as a basis to 'future proof the document'. If this does happen, , the Council will have a further opportunity to bring the CSSR back to accord with national policy in the Submission Draft of the Plan which is anticipated to be prepared in Summer 2018.

5 Conclusions

5.1 This report sets out the initial headlines of the consultation.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Development Plan Panel is invited to note the headline outcomes of the consultation.