

## Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 16th October, 2018

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Gruen in the Chair

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

- 22 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**  
There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.
- 23 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**  
The agenda contained no exempt information.
- 24 Late Items**  
No formal late items of business were added to the agenda.
- 25 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**  
There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.
- 26 Apologies for Absence**  
Apologies for absence were received from Tim Hill, Chief Planning Officer and Councillor F Venner. The Panel welcomed Councillor R Grahame as substitute.
- 27 Minutes**  
**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the Development Plan Panel meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018 be approved.
- 28 Matters Arising**  
Minute 16 Minutes 20/06/18 – A comment was made about the practice of some applicants submitting late/new/additional information during appeals to the Planning Inspector; the Panel was advised that concerns over this practice had been included in the Local Planning Authority's response to consultation on the Planning Appeals process. Additionally, Members noted comments about the impact of this practice on the planning application process as it made responding/commenting on applications difficult for local communities and decision makers. The Chair requested that these comments be referred to the Development Management Team for action.
- Minute 18 Revised National Planning Policy Framework– A request for a copy National Guidance on Affordable Housing targets was noted.
- Minute 19 Housing Land Supply – Members noted the intention for a report to be presented to the November 2018 Panel meeting on the latest update on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the housing delivery test. Members also noted that a session on Neighbourhood Planning

for Non-Parish Councils would be hosted at Leeds Civic Hall on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

## **29 Housing Needs - Changes to Household Projections and Government Methodology/Guidance**

The Chief Planning Officer submitted a report on changes to National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), sub-national projections and the Government's approach to calculating housing needs via a standard methodology, all of which provided relevant context to the housing requirement for Leeds as set out in the Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR) which had been submitted for examination on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

The Planning Strategy Team Leader introduced the report, noting that housing projections published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 had shown a 32% fall in the projection for Leeds, in the context of a 25% fall nationally. It was reported that the Government had advised that the September figures should be disregarded, with new ONS figures and further consultation on a revised methodology anticipated by the end of the year.

It was also reported that the revised NPPG provided more detail on the revised National Planning Policy Framework; and the clarity provided supports the locally driven approach of Leeds' Core Strategy:

- standard methodology figure is a *minimum need* figure
- standard methodology is not mandatory and LPAs can use an alternative approach
- higher housing requirement figures may be used – if they are evidenced by a growth strategy or a deal with the government or if past rates of growth can justify it
- 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

Discussions covered the following matters:

- Recognised the impact of the changes on plan making nationwide
- Noted the CSSR submission draft included a housing requirement of 3,247 dwellings per year (51,952 over the 16 year plan period) based on 2014 SHMAA evidence. However, using the 2016 standard methodology; the projection would be lower and start at 28,000 homes.
- The need for the Council to consider the implications of the changes on the policies within the submitted CSSR
- That support remained for the local approach adopted and evidenced by Leeds to the housing target figure supported by the work undertaken through the SHLAA
- Commitment to ensure that future housing growth is based on the right evidence at the right time

In conclusion the Chair commented that it would be impracticable to review every Plan/Strategy each time statistics were refreshed, however he noted the new Government advice that Plans should be reviewed every 5 years. The

Panel also discussed the timing of the CSSR process whilst the Government advice was under review; acknowledging the pressure the Local Planning Authority was under from developers seeking to progress applications. Members supported the timely conclusion of the process, which may involve additional meetings.

**RESOLVED** – To note the changing national policy position and changing evidential base for calculating housing requirements as set out in the submitted report and the contents of the discussions.

### 30 **Site Allocations Plan Update**

Further to minute 17 of the meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018, the Panel considered the report of the Chief Planning Officer which provided an update on the progress of the Site Allocations Plan (SAP).

The Group Manager, Policy and Plans, introduced the report and highlighted the contents of a post-hearing note received from the SAP Inspector providing interim views on Leeds' approach to Broad Locations/green belt:

- The Inspector agreed with the proposed Plan period and Leeds' approach to remove fewer sites from the Green Belt
- The Inspector did not agree that the Broad Locations approach was necessary and had invited the Authority to remove them from the Plan.

One further issue was highlighted – the Inspector suggested that modifications based on the post-hearing note should be made to the initial draft SAP, not the modified SAP submitted for inspection which included Broad Locations. In response, officers were currently undertaking work to achieve the modifications to the initial draft SAP, including the requested sustainability appraisal on conversion of rural land/green space in the east of the City, with the intention that the modifications would be submitted to the Inspector in November.

At that stage, the Inspector will consider whether any further modifications should be made to the SAP; and if necessary, indicate any sites that she considers are not sound and request the Authority seeks alternative sites from within the same Housing Market Characteristic Area. Executive Board will then consider and approve all modifications be subject to consultation after which, the Inspector's final report will be issued and presented to full Council with a recommendation to adopt the SAP.

Members discussed the following:

- The timescale for each stage of the process and likely implementation, recognising the need for possible additional meetings to ensure the SAP process progressed at speed.
- Any parts of the SAP **not** identified for modification by the Inspector would carry weight at appeals the Authority defends or any planning applications to be determined during the SAP process.
- Noted the SAP Inspector had also been appointed for the separate CSSR inspection process and would be familiar with Leeds – with likely CSSR hearings to be held in February 2019.

Members sought assurance that consultation would be undertaken should the Inspector identify sites to be removed from the SAP and seek alternatives. It was noted that there would be no public consultation on the modifications submitted by the Council at that stage, but that consultation with Members would be carried out and then all main modifications recommended by the Inspector would be subject to statutory consultation. It was noted that the Chief Planning Officer, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning did have delegated powers to approve modifications which would assist the speed of the SAP process. The Panel was advised that at this stage in the process, the Inspector had not required the Authority to revisit any of the sites put forward in the SAP; rather to revisit the use of the Broad Locations approach and repackage the sites accordingly.

A request that any future communication from the SAP Inspector setting out any modifications or view of the SAP be shared with Panel Members was noted for action.

In conclusion the Chair reiterated that the Department had the resources necessary to respond swiftly to future communications from the Inspector and that relevant officers; the Chair and Executive Member were committed to the SAP and aware of the need to respond in a timely fashion with the Panel where necessary. Additionally he thanked officers for the work undertaken so far; and thanked members of the Panel for their collective approach to the SAP

**RESOLVED –**

- a) To note the Inspectors initial views on the Site Allocations Plan.
- b) To request that any future communication from the SAP Inspector setting out any modifications or view of the SAP be shared with Panel Members.

**31 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED** –To note the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 1.30 pm.