

Report of the Chief Planning Officer

Report to Development Plan Panel

Date: 18th December 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. Leeds' Site Allocations Plan (the SAP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination on the 5th May 2017. Planning Inspectors Claire Sherratt DIP URP MRTPI and Louise Gibbons BA Hons MRTPI were appointed to undertake the examination with the public hearing sessions held at stage 1 during October 2017 and stage 2 hearings between during July and August 2018.
2. Development Plan Panel noted at its meeting on 16th October 2018 the initial views of the Inspectors, including their endorsement of the Council's desire to reduce the level of Green Belt release in light of a downward trajectory of housing needs and as part of that to review the SAP by 2023.
3. Due to this and as part of the examination process a number of proposed Main Modifications have been identified. A Main Modification is an amendment which is considered necessary to make the Plan sound, and is required in order to address concerns raised by either the Inspectors or other representors during the examination process.
4. At the request of the Inspectors, the Council has prepared a draft schedule setting out the proposed Main Modifications it considers necessary in order for the Local Plan to be found sound. They cover points raised by representors and

the Inspector during the hearing sessions and further actions required by the Inspectors in post hearing guidance notes.

5. The draft proposed Main Modifications document, along with further work on the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment have now been provided to the Inspectors. They are in the process of running technical checks on this material to provide a set of Main Modifications which they consider are necessary to make the Plan sound. At the time of drafting this report, the Inspectors views on the soundness of individual sites is still awaited. This, subject to a resolution of Executive Board (at a special meeting in January 2019), will be consulted on for a period of 6 weeks thereafter.

Recommendation

6. Development Plan Panel is invited to note the progression of the SAP and consider any feedback from the Planning Inspectors

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Development Plan Panel, with an update on the Site Allocations Plan.

2 Background Information

- 2.1 Members of Panel were updated on the SAP hearing sessions at their meeting on 11th September and further updated on interim views of the Inspectors at their meeting on 16th October.

- 2.2 Since these meetings the Council has also responded to various post hearing notes from the Inspectors and noted factual changes in circumstance which have a bearing on SAP policies. These are as follows:

- A response to the Inspectors Actions arising from the hearings, available on the Examination Website (EX75) comprising inter alia an SA and update to the planning status of identified sites, further justification for the extension of Green Belt in the Outer North East, statements of common ground and an update on HS2.
- The response (EX75) also includes reference to where the Inspectors Actions have been addressed through Main Modifications.

- 2.3 As part of these modifications two sites have been proposed for deletion:

- Water Lane Railway Triangle, City Centre HMCA (MX2-30) on the basis that it is no longer suitable due to the Flood Alleviation Scheme compromising its access
- Land at Fleet Lane/Esholt Lane, Oulton, Outer South HMCA (HG2-179) on the basis that the most recent construction plans for HS2 would render the site unavailable during the plan period

3 Main Issues

- 3.1 The Council's draft main Modifications were submitted to the Inspectors on 8th November. These include:

- Modifications to site requirements as agreed throughout the hearings and, in response to the Inspectors' request,
- Deleting sites that were proposed as Broad Locations in the Revised Submission Plan 2018, proposing that these sites (which were proposed housing allocations or safeguarded land designations in the 2017 Submission Draft Plan) remain as Green Belt.
- New policy for a SAP Review (HGR1) to review provision of allocations against Core Strategy Selective Review requirements before 2023
- New policy for Gypsy and Traveller site provision (Policy HGR2) to monitor and review provision against Core Strategy needs before 2024.

- 3.2 The Council has also submitted further information on the sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment (as directed in the Inspectors post-hearing note).
- 3.3 The Inspectors now have all the information they have requested to move the SAP to Main Modifications consultation and have been informed of the Council's desired timetable moving forward.
- 3.4 It is anticipated that officers will be in a position to update Members on any significant Main Modifications that arise at the Panel meeting.

4 Next steps

- 4.1 Executive Board will need to resolve to consult on the Main Modifications once these are received from the Inspectors. A special meeting has been arranged for January 2019.

5 Corporate Considerations

5.1 Consultation and Engagement

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

5.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 5.2.1 In the preparation of the Site Allocations Plan, 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.

5.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 5.3.1 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.

5.4 Resources and value for money

5.4.1 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.

5.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

5.5.1 The SAP follows the statutory Development Plan process (Local Plan). The report is related to a matter falling within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework and is not eligible for call-in, in any event no decision is being taken.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 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.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Development Plan Panel, with an update on the progression of the SAP.

7 Recommendation

7. Development Plan Panel is invited to note the progression of the SAP and consider any feedback from the Planning Inspectors