

Development Plan Panel

Tuesday, 18th May, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor N Walshaw in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, C Campbell,
C Gruen, J McKenna, D Collins, K Ritchie,
K Brooks, H Hayden and A Lamb

62 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal.

63 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

64 Late Items

There were no formal late items.

65 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

66 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Carter and R Finnigan.
Councillor A Lamb attended as a substitute on behalf of Councillor A Carter.

67 Minutes

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the Development Plan Panel meeting held on 2nd March 2021, be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

Minute no 58 – Leeds Site Allocations Plan (SAP) – The Head of Strategic Planning informed the Panel that following endorsement of the Plan at Full Council, Leeds City Council submitted 39 Proposed Main Modifications to the Remitted part of the Leeds Site Allocations to the Secretary of State (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) for independent examination. Further to the main modification proposed for the site at Barrowby Lane, the Planning Inspector has identified an opportunity for consultation on that specific MM; comments can be put forward on MM39 only. Moving forward, the independent examination conducted by the Planning Inspectorate may involve hearing sessions, to respond to any matters raised by the Inspector.

Queen's Speech – Planning Bill. The Chief Planning Officer provided the Panel with a brief overview of the headlines on the scope of the policy details that are expected to emerge in due course, including the commitment to:

- Create a faster and more modern planning system;
- Ensuring homes and infrastructure can be delivered more quickly across England;
- Transforming the planning system efficiently through digital and map-based technology, whilst allowing for more active public engagement;

- Helping deliver vital infrastructure whilst protecting the environment;
- Changes to Local Plans, particularly in relation to zoning and the introduction of new design codes to ensure new homes are of high quality;
- Decreasing time for developments to go through the planning system;
- Replacing existing systems of funding for affordable housing and infrastructure for development with a more transparent Levy;
- Using post Brexit freedoms to enhance framework for environmental assessments;
- Reforming framework for locally led development corporations to ensure local areas have access to delivery vehicles to support growth and regeneration.

The Panel were informed that legislation is expected to be put before Parliament in Autumn and the Council are awaiting the Governments publication of the responses to the Planning White Paper. A suggestion was made that an update be brought before Panel Members in due course.

68 Leeds Local Plan Update - Public Consultation on the Scope of the Plan

Further to the minutes of the meeting held 19th January 2021, the Chief Planning Officer submitted a report that provided Members of the Development Plan Panel with the draft material for the forthcoming Local Plan Update (LPU) public consultation. The proposed scope for the LPU is a focus on new or revised policy to help further address the climate emergency.

Appended to the report included the LPU Scoping Consultation Material, 'Introduction, Scope and Summary' Paper and Detailed Topic Papers.

The Group Manager (Policy and Plans) introduced the report, noting the objective of the LPU being the introduction of new and enhancement of existing planning policies to help address the climate emergency. The Council propose to broaden the scope beyond carbon reduction, to include topics such as flood risk, green infrastructure, place-making and sustainable infrastructure.

The consultation period provides an opportunity to engage with a wide range of stakeholders to understand new technologies and ways of thinking in relation to key roles to play in planning, and how the planning system in Leeds can be adapted to address the climate emergency.

The Panel were provided with a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the format of the consultation as well as a summary of the 5 Thematic Topic Papers. The topic areas set a scope and a draft direction of travel, and the consultation seeks to explore views in relation to:

Carbon Reduction: The current policies do not meet the commitment for Leeds to be net zero by 2030, and changes to reduce emissions will be supported by, whole life carbon costs; reducing carbon emissions from buildings; sustainable construction; resilience to heat renewable energy generation and; heat networks and energy storage.

Flood Risk: It is important to ensure the Council's policies are informed by most up to date local evidence on flood risk. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is currently being updated and the LPU will explore how new developments can better manage

flood risk, whilst maintaining a balance with locating homes to facilities that people need. Further considerations include:

- Whether Functional floodplain should be expanded;
- Explore whether the LPU can be resilient for all users;
- The use of sustainable drainage systems to be strengthened;
- Permitted development rights that allow pavement over front gardens.

Green Infrastructure:

- To apply concepts such as ecosystems services and natural capital to Leeds;
- Further protection, improvements and extension of GI network;
- Planting more/protecting existing trees;
- Enhanced biodiversity net gain;
- Natural conservation and 'connectness';
- Improved green space in City Centre.

Place-making:

- Applying the 20-minute neighbourhood concept;
- Ensuring high quality design of places through good practice, standards, and design guides;
- Encouraging active travel;
- Improving the sustainability of windfall development.

Sustainable Infrastructure:

- HS2 and Leeds Station – shaping the development of HS2 into Leeds and seeking opportunities for new green and public spaces to be created;
- Mass Transit – to align with wider spatial priorities and deliver wider benefits;
- Leeds Bradford Airport – managing the future development of LBA and access to it;
- Digital infrastructure – supporting reliable, high-speed data at the outset to avoid later retro-fitting and to ensure a resilient and efficient economy.

The Panel were informed that the consultation material will be finalised prior to Executive Board approval and will include comments from Panel Members following discussions. The public consultation on 'Scope' is expected to begin in July 2021.

The Panel discussed the following matters:

- Clarity on issues related to the river network such as water quality, raw sewage and litter and the technologies / immediate actions available to deal with this issue. A suggestion was made to reference this matter under the Flood Risk Topic Paper;
- Concern that there is minimal reference in the Plan made to Child Friendly Leeds, and examples of ensuring developments are child friendly;
- Members emphasised the importance of including various community groups during the consultation period, particularly younger people, resident community groups, neighbourhood planning groups and parish councils; as well as harder to reach groups. There was a need identified to tailor presentations and materials to suit various audiences;
- Clarity on the timescales for implementing such policies, and the resources available across the Council to ensure policies are evidence based;

- Concerns regarding the loss of biodiversity and the ability to measure / demonstrate off-site Net Gain. The importance of having a robust mechanism to calculate the loss and replacing elsewhere was emphasised;
- Funding considerations to fund an integrated transport system, such as a transport levy on new developments;
- A suggestion was made to cross reference how Affordable Housing policies refer to the proposed policy areas, particularly in relation to seeking Affordable Housing through new development and strengthening references to all communities benefitting from better placemaking and access to services;
- It was acknowledged that identifying areas for solar farms, to contribute to wind turbine regeneration would maximise opportunities for local renewable energy generation;
- Clarity on accessibility standards for outer areas meeting the requirements of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept.

Responding to comments, officers provided Members with the following information:

- Officers are currently working with undergraduates at Leeds University as part of an engagement strategy and to strengthen engagement with younger people. Broader issues related to following up on key statutory undertakers such as Yorkshire Water and the Environment Agency;
- It was acknowledged that evidence is critical to ensure policies are ambitious as well as deliverable and comments from developers during the consultation, can demonstrate viable evidence. It is important to gauge ideas from practitioners and scientists on how to better commission future evidence as well as the local community. Officers are expecting to have draft policies at the end of the year / beginning of next year;
- Policies are being updated on a thematic basis, and part 2 of the scoping hasn't yet begun but could include aspects such as waste, residential design guides and up to date Supplementary Planning Documents;
- A resource pack, simplified PowerPoint and speaking notes can be provided to Members to use across communities as part of the consultation;
- Liaison with Leeds Climate Commission has identified cost effective measures, to achieve net zero by 2030. However, it was noted that the measures require change of behaviour amongst people as well as planning policy changes;
- Reduced car usage references form part of the Council's Connecting Leeds vision, and is better placed through conversations in that strategy. Although, ideas will form as part of this consultation;
- Developers will have to show there will be a Biodiversity Net Gain through new developments and any proposed gains off-site will have to be comparative.

In conclusion, the Panel supported the proposal to hold an informal workshop nearer the end of Summer / Autumn, to understand issues emerging from the consultation. It was agreed that key themes of the workshop will be considered once the consultation responses have been received.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) The contents of the submitted report and appendices, be noted;

- b) To note the intention to hold an informal workshop with Panel Members and relevant officers on the key themes of the consultation;
- c) That subject to the inclusion of comments made during discussion by Panel Members on the draft policy scope, Executive Board be recommended to approve the Local Plan Update for public consultation.

CHAIRS CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair thanked all for their attendance and acknowledged this would be the last meeting Councillor Ritchie will attend before taking on a new role. The Chair thanked him for all the contributions on the Panel and wished him well.

69 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 6th July 2021 at 1.30 pm.

(The meeting concluded at 14:25)