

Examination of the Draft Garforth Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 18 Decision Statement

Date: 05/06/2023

Report of: Head of Policy and Plans

Report to: Chief Planning Officer

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The Garforth Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by the Garforth Neighbourhood Planning Forum following the process set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended in 2015 and 2016. It was Submitted to The Council for Independent Examination on 17/10/2022.

The Council appointed Independent Examiner Tony Burton to examine the Plan with the agreement of Garforth Neighbourhood Planning Forum. The Council received Tony Burton's final Examiner's Report on 01/03/2022

The Council has considered the contents of the Examiner's Report and accepts the recommended modifications and reasons set out by the Examiner. All of the proposed modifications are set out in the Decision Statement appended to this report. The Council considers that subject to these modifications being made, the Garforth Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and should proceed to Referendum.

Recommendations

- a) Agree the Independent Examiner's recommended modifications to the Garforth Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) Agree that the Garforth Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to Referendum.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report highlights key elements in the Examiner's Report for the Garforth Neighbourhood Plan and sets out the Council's response to the contents, especially the recommended modifications. It also looks forward to the Referendum stage.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 If there is a successful Referendum then the Garforth Neighbourhood Plan will help the Council in determining planning applications in the Garforth Neighbourhood Area.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 3 Neighbourhood Planning helps to deliver on the pillars of the Best City Ambition by enabling local communities to have a voice in shaping the future growth of their areas, not only through local sustainable planning policies but through the neighbourhood planning process itself where community relations can have a wide ranging boost through local volunteering and the subsequent building of local capacity.

4 Best City Ambition Priorities

i) **Better homes for health and wellbeing**

neighbourhood plans can identify and allocate sites for housing development to help meet local needs and can help shape the delivery of housing allocations;

ii) **Promoting mental health in the community**

neighbourhood plans can address health and wellbeing by protecting and improving green space and green infrastructure, and set out locally distinctive policies that celebrate local identity, heritage and culture; As well as this, the active participation by individuals in the neighbourhood planning process has helped to foster local relationships and have a positive impact on the mental health of many participants;

iii) **Inclusive green jobs**

neighbourhood plans can identify opportunities for green jobs, via policies and projects;

iv) **Learning outcomes for social mobility**

Neighbourhood Plans can include policies and projects to improve neighbourhood sustainability including the designation of Local Green Spaces and the protection of Community Facilities. The active participation in neighbourhood planning groups has provided both personal development and career opportunities for a number of people across Leeds;

v) **Responding to the cost of living crisis**

neighbourhood plans can include policies and projects relating to retail, jobs and the local economy. In the process of preparing a neighbourhood plan, some groups in Leeds have tackled the cost of living crisis directly by volunteering at food banks and delivering food parcels to vulnerable people.

- 5 The Garforth Neighbourhood Plan identifies two 'golden threads' of Health and Wellbeing, and Climate Change. Through these, the Plan also links Inclusive Growth to Health and Wellbeing through employment and housing policies which make specific reference to improving health outcomes for Garforth residents.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 6 The Garforth Neighbourhood Plan is based on extensive public engagement that took place between 2014-2021. A wide-ranging approach was taken including drop-in events, stalls,

consultation with neighbouring Parish Councils, surveys and use of online communications over 2020.

Ward Members were not actively engaged in the plan preparation process but have been kept informed throughout.

Ward Members and Councillor Hayden have been consulted on the Decision Statement.

Wards affected: Garforth and Swillington

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

What are the resource implications?

7 The Garforth Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Garforth Neighbourhood Forum with the support and assistance of The Council. There have been good working relationships during the preparation of the Plan.

The Council has previously claimed the full grant funding available to local authorities from DLUHC to help cover the cost of supporting neighbourhood planning groups. In addition to the £10,000 that has been previously claimed on designation of the Garforth Neighbourhood Area and Forum, a further £20,000 can be claimed to assist with Examination and Referendum costs. The Referendum will take place on 29/06/2023.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

8 There are risks that:

- the Plan will not receive more than 50% 'yes' votes in the Referendum
- the Plan will be the subject of a legal challenge or judicial review

The Council will continue to work closely with the Neighbourhood Forum to manage and minimise these risks.

What are the legal implications?

9 Neighbourhood planning is taking place within a fast-changing national planning background which is focussed on economic growth, localism and sustainability. The Government are currently considering reform to Neighbourhood Planning more generally, sitting alongside wider planning reform. The Council is well underway in the preparation of the Local Plan Update and taken together, this provides opportunities for neighbourhood planning groups and the Council to work together. Once made, the Garforth Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the Development Plan for Leeds and will be used to help determine planning applications within the Garforth Neighbourhood Area.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

10 The decision to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan for Garforth was taken by the Garforth Neighbourhood Forum. No other options were considered.

How will success be measured?

11 The Garforth Neighbourhood Plan will be successful if more than 50% of voters vote 'Yes' in the Referendum.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

12 The Referendum will take place on Thursday 29th June. If there is a 'Yes' vote, LCC will be responsible for 'making' the Plan.

Appendices

- Garforth Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement

Background papers

None.