

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is a Key Decision within the council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan

Report of the Place
Executive Director

Local Plan Publication Version Consultation and Submission for Examination

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval to carry out public consultation on the Local Plan Publication Version (LPPV) and to subsequently submit the plan for examination subject to any necessary modifications arising as a result of the consultation responses.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That, subject to being approved by Full Council, public consultation is carried out on the LPPV.**
- 2.2 **Following consultation, provided there are no significant amendments required, it is recommended that authority is given to the Head of Planning and Building Control in consultation with the Cabinet Spokesperson for Place to prepare the submission version of the Local Plan and associated documents and submit them to the Secretary of State for Examination.**

3. Introduction

- 3.1 Once adopted, the Local Plan will become the statutory development plan for Barnsley. This means that all decisions on planning applications will be made in accordance with it. With the exception of the Joint Waste Plan, it will replace the various documents we have at the moment which make up our development plan. This currently comprises of Core Strategy, saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies and the Education Sites Development Plan Document (DPD). It is important to have an up to date development plan to guide decisions on planning applications and to give certainty to developers and landowners.
- 3.2 Public consultation originally took place on a draft of the Local Plan from November 2014 to January, 2015. A further consultation relating to potential additional sites and policies was then carried out in November and December 2016. In total, over 5000 comments have been received in response to both consultations. A report summarising the issues raised in relation to the first

consultation is available on the Council's website and a summary of the comments made in response to the more recent consultation will be made available either before or when the consultation commences on the LPPV.

- 3.3 Key themes from the comments received include the consultation process, the loss of Green Belt, concerns about the capacity of existing infrastructure, the need for the quantum of housing and employment land and objections to specific sites. A number of alternative sites were also suggested.
- 3.4 The LPPV takes forward the majority of the policies shown in the original consultation draft but, where necessary, new policies have been added and existing policies amended in order to positively respond to representations received, additional evidence that has come to light since and legislative and/or national policy changes.
- 3.5 Whilst the overall spatial strategy retains the settlement hierarchy approach in both the adopted Core Strategy and Consultation Draft Local Plan that directs the almost all proposed development to Urban Barnsley and the Principal Towns, it has been necessary to revisit which sites would make up the land allocations. In respect of employment land, this continues to include the cluster of sites at J36 (Hoyland/Rockingham), the mixed use allocation at J37 (MU1) and the site adjoining the eastern boundary of Goldthorpe Principal Town. However, in doing so it has been necessary to revisit the precise amount of employment land in each of these areas.
- 3.6 In terms of proposed housing sites, again these are focussed around Urban Barnsley and the Principal Towns. In order to give us sufficient flexibility when we reviewed which sites to carry forward to Publication Stage, the Additional Sites Consultation included sufficient land to accommodate up to 4,000 further dwellings. Recent months have therefore been devoted to reassessing all the proposed allocations included within the Consultation Draft Local Plan, the Additional Sites Consultation as well as rejected sites and any other sites suggested to us in representations. These assessments have been carried out against the site selection criteria but with the benefit of additional evidence and the representations received. Accordingly, as indicated when we consulted on the Additional Sites last year, not all the proposed housing sites are being taken forward. Some are no longer allocated on the basis of suitability, availability or deliverability and some now accommodate a reduced quantum of housing either because of site constraints (e.g. archaeology/biodiversity value) or on the basis that planning permission has since been granted for a scheme with less housing than originally envisaged.
- 3.7 At the same time as the LPPV is issued for consultation a series of background papers will be published and available for comment. In no particular order, these will include:
 - Employment
 - Housing (including Gypsy & Travellers)
 - Transport
 - Duty to Co-operate

3.8 As well as the existing evidence that is already available (e.g. Green Belt Review), we will also publish the following:

- An updated Strategic Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)
- Additional Employment Land Evidence
- Transport Modelling
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Ecological & Archaeological Assessments
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Appropriate Assessment (Habitat Regulations)
- Health Impact Assessment
- Equalities Impact Assessment

3.9 Public consultation will take place for a period of 6 weeks beginning mid-June and will be carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

4 Proposal & Justification

4.1 In the past decade almost 6,000 jobs have been created in Barnsley, which exceeds the national average. Barnsley has also enjoyed a steady growth in its population since the turn of the century. However, it still has a low business base for its population and the unemployment rate is above the national average. Given that there have not been any new land allocations since the Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 2000, it is recognised that there is an urgent need to bring forward such land allocations to meet identified housing and employment needs and to enable the borough to build upon its recent success in relation to jobs growth.

4.2 The LPPV therefore continues to make provision for an additional 17,500 job opportunities to be created over and above the 14,500 opportunities that may have been created through natural growth. Based on this requirement the borough's additional employment land need has been assessed as around 316 hectares to 2033 but we are also carrying forward a reserve site at Goldthorpe measuring 98 hectares.

4.3 Having established the level of job creation sought during the plan period it has been possible to identify the objectively assessed housing need. This figure, which remains at 20,330 homes over the plan period, has been informed by evidence commissioned by both Leeds and Sheffield City Regions including demographic forecasting and commuting trends.

4.2 The LPPV seeks to strike a balance between allocating sufficient land to meet identified needs whilst at the same time protecting our most important areas of

Green Belt as well as conserving and enhancing our natural and built environment. In this regard, the LPPV proposes to retain approximately three quarters of the borough as Green Belt.

- 4.3 The LPPV retains the strategic employment allocations close to junctions 36 & 37 of the M1 and at Goldthorpe. Having commissioned further robust evidence on the suitability, availability and deliverability of these sites, as well as reviewing what other sites could be considered suitable, available and deliverable, it is recognised that employment land is unviable unless it is in locations that are attractive to the market. The fact that Barnsley is strategically located within the M1 corridor between Leeds and Sheffield means it is reasonable to assume that employment sites well connected to motorway junctions will come forward within the plan period, particularly where infrastructure requirements can be accommodated. Indeed, Wakefield provides a good local example of what can be delivered where land is brought forward for employment purposes within close proximity to the M1.
- 4.4 The Council has already secured money from the Sheffield City Region Investment Fund (SCRIF) to provide infrastructure and unlock sites around J36 and a bid has been submitted for similar investment at J37.
- 4.5 Compared with the Consultation Draft Local Plan, the LPPV includes a number of significant changes in relation to the following:

Education Provision: No sites were originally proposed for education purposes but, following a detailed review, it has been decided to identify x sites for primary school provision. These sites are located in areas where needs are currently highest and where significant quantities of new housing are proposed (Urban Barnsley, Wombwell etc)

Gypsy & Traveller Sites: The Consultation Draft Local Plan showed three proposed sites aimed at accommodating an unmet need for 35 pitches, which was based on the 2011 South Yorkshire Accommodation Needs Assessment. However, since then, we have carried out a Barnsley specific needs assessment, which identified a reduced need. Consequently, as well as seeking to meet the unmet need, we are proposing to provide the equivalent of a 10 year supply (17 pitches). We recently granted planning permission for a permanent pitch at Brierley and are currently considering a planning application for 8 pitches at Burntwood Cottages, Brierley on a site we showed as a proposed allocation in the Additional Sites Consultation. It is possible that we may not be able to issue a decision on this application until after the plan is adopted but this site and a further site at Carlton accommodating approximately 8 pitches make up the allocations proposed in the Local Plan Publication Version.

4.6 The background papers and evidence base that underpin the plan will provide a much more detailed justification for the spatial strategy, quantum of land proposed and the approach taken in relation to the various themes.

5. Duty to Co-operate

5.1 This is a legal duty that must be satisfied in preparing the Local Plan. Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 places a duty on local planning authorities (and, where relevant, the bodies prescribed in the Act) in relation to planning of sustainable development so far as relating to a strategic matter.

5.2 NPPF paragraph 181 states that Local planning authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their local plans are submitted for examination. Cooperation should be a continuous process of engagement from initial thinking through to implementation, resulting in a final position where plans are in place to provide land and infrastructure necessary to support current and projected future levels of development.”

5.3 A series of specific Duty to Co-operate meetings have taken place during the plan preparation stage and will continue through the consultation process. In addition, the Council is leading on a Statement of Co-operation for Sheffield City Region, which we anticipate being finalised before the plan is submitted for examination. This includes a common approach to Green Belt Review, which has already been agreed within SCR. Common methodologies across both Sheffield and Leeds City Regions are also being used in respect of Objectively Assessed Housing Needs and updating the Strategic Market Housing Geography to ensure it adequately reflects where there are shared housing markets with neighbouring authorities.

5.4 There are many strands of work that the Council as a whole is involved with that may be relevant in a Duty to co-operate context. Where strategic issues are discussed this information will form part of our Duty to Co-operate evidence base.

6. Next Steps

6.1 It is proposed to consult on the LPPV (Stage 2) in June and July 2016 for a period of 6 weeks.

6.2 Following this, the key milestones for preparing the Local Plan are:-

- Stage 3 Autumn 2016 Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State
- Stage 4 February 2017 Examination of the Local Plan (although this will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
- Stage 5 Summer 2017 Adoption of the Local Plan

6. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 7.1 The Sustainability Appraisal that accompanies each stage of the Plan considers alternative spatial strategies for the borough (e.g. creating a new settlement, dispersing development across the borough – including villages) as well as different amounts of land allocations within the plan. The latest version of the Sustainability Appraisal will be made available when consultation commences on the LPPV.
- 7.2 The only other alternative approaches would be to either delay the timescale for consulting on the LPPV or not taking forward the Local Plan to Publication Stage. However, neither of these represents a credible alternative given the need to urgently bring forward land allocations in order to create the step change deemed necessary in order to positively transform Barnsley’s socio economic credentials whilst at the same time being able to protect and enhance our environment. Moreover, the Government has set out a clear intention to intervene where authorities are failing to make sufficient progress in respect of plan making. As such, significant delay could result in Barnsley losing control of plan making within the borough.
- 8. Implications for local people / service users**
- 8.1 Public consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement that was adopted last year.
- 9. Financial implications**
- 9.1 Approval was given to fund the Local Plan preparation costs by moving £250k from the resources set aside as part of the Jobs and Business Growth Plan.
- 9.2 There are no other financial implications arising from the recommendations.
- 10. Employee implications**
- 10.1 There are no employee implications arising from this report.
- 11. Communications implications**
- 11.1 There are communications implications arising from this report. Communications support will be required in preparing and disseminating press releases and dealing with social media.
- 12. Community Strategy and the Council’s Performance Management Framework**
- 12.1 Public consultation will be carried out in accordance with the revised Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how local people and stakeholders can engage in, and influence, planning decisions. Therefore it supports the corporate priority of people achieving their potential.
- 13. Promoting Equality & Diversity and Social Inclusion**
- 13.1 The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement which acknowledges that some support or reasonable adjustments will be necessary for some groups such as preparing information in accessible formats or meeting people face to face in small groups. There will be a need to liaise with the network of Equality Forums that

facilitate engagement with some of the diverse groups who have historically been harder to involve.

14. Tackling Health Inequalities

14.1 There are no direct matters of relevance arising from this report but a Health Impact Assessments of the proposals will produced and made available when we consulted on the LPPV.

15. Climate Change & Sustainable Energy Act 2006

15.1 There are no direct matters of relevance arising from this report but the emphasis of the NPPF is to promote sustainable development and the Local Plan must provide the evidence that proposals take account of the impact on the environment.

16. Risk Management Issues

16.1 There is a risk that the plan could be found unsound, especially if the evidence base underpinning the plan is not robust. In order to reduce this risk we consulted on additional sites last year to give us sufficient flexibility to positively respond to representations. This time has also been used to obtain more detailed evidence, which will be made available when we consult on the LPPV.

16.2 Wider implications of the Local Plan being found unsound or being delayed have been identified in other reports.

17. Conservation of Biodiversity

17.1 The plan identifies designated and non-designated wildlife sites and protects them from development. Ecology Assessments have been carried out in relation to proposed site allocations and some of the rejected sites. In some cases sites have been rejected due to their biodiversity value and where development is proposed, the plan requires biodiversity value to be enhanced.

18. List of Appendices

Local Plan Publication Version Document

Office Contact: Joe Jenkinson	Telephone No: 2588	Date:
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Financial Implications / Consultation	Date:
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Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Acting Executive Director, Finance