

At the meeting of the Local Plan Working Group on 9 September 2013, the Working Group resolved for this report to be discussed in the public domain

Forest Heath District Council

(This report is not a key decision. This report has been subject to appropriate notice of publication under the Council's Access to Information Rules)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Transport

**LOCAL PLAN
WORKING GROUP**

12 SEPTEMBER 2013

LOP13/013

SITE ALLOCATIONS LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENT

1. Summary and reasons for recommendation

- 1.1 The Site Allocations Local Plan Document (SALPD) will allocate sites to meet the districts housing, employment, retail, leisure, commercial and other needs to 2026 and in the case of housing to 2031.
- 1.2 The SALPD must conform to the policies of the adopted Core Strategy, including the Spatial Strategy, (Policy CS1), which defines a 'Settlement Hierarchy' and will need to allocate land in accordance with the emerging Core Strategy Single Issue Review – Housing Policy. The SALPD must also be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and take account of more recent studies and evidence bases so that our Local Plan is 'up-to-date and relevant' and consequently NPPF compliant..
- 1.1 The significant stages in the Council's preparation of the Site Allocations Local Plan thus far can be summarised as follows:
 - Evidence gathering, development and appraisal of 'Issues and Options' in consultation with a variety of stakeholders in 2006,
 - Planning Committee approval of 'Final Issues and Options', (former regulation 25), consultation document in April 2010.
- 1.2 Work on the Local Plan carried out by the former Local Development Framework Working Group, (LDFWG), and Planning Committee up to April 2010, and prior to the High Court Challenge, identified sites 'preferred' for a range of uses for consultation purposes, (the Site Specific Allocations 'Final Issues and Options' DPD). However, the consultation itself was held in abeyance pending the outcome of the Core Strategy High Court Challenge.
- 1.3 It is considered that the Single Issue Review, (SIR), process that is addressing the provisions of the High Court Order is at a sufficiently advanced stage for work on the Site Allocations Local Plan document to recommence.

1.4 It is not possible to table preferred sites until Members of this Working Group have considered the SIR Submission Document on 9 September 2013, however, to inform debate, three maps of each of the Districts towns are attached in Appendix A. These show respectively:

- Key environmental constraints
- Known available sites
- Proposed uses at the time of the April 2010 Consultation document.

1.5 It should be noted these maps show all sites and do not differentiate between those preferred and rejected in April 2010. A table of background information on each site will presented at the Working Group to assist discussion.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Members consider the available sites for the towns of Brandon, Mildenhall and Newmarket for inclusion in the Draft Regulation 18 Further Issues and Options Site Allocations Local Plan Document.

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3. How will the recommendations help us meet our strategic priorities?

2.1 The Site Allocations Local Plan document relates to a number of corporate priorities including housing, community development, the environment and economic development

4. Key issues

4.1 The NPPF, (para. 154), specifies that Local Plan documents should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and that they should set out the opportunities for development and clear policies on what will or will not be permitted and where.

4.2 Although focussing on the development of specific sites for a variety of uses, the 'allocation' of land within the context of this Local Plan document will not replace the need for planning permission. Rather, the proposals contained within the plan represent a statement of policy against which, (amongst other material considerations), planning applications will ultimately be determined.

4.3 This SA Local Plan must conform to the policies of the adopted Core Strategy, (as amended), including its Spatial Strategy, (Policy CS1), which defines a 'Settlement Hierarchy' and the need to allocate land for the quantum of be proposed by the Single Issue Review. The SA Local Plan must also be prepared

with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.

- 4.4 The significant stages in the Council's preparation of the Site Allocations Local Plan thus far can be summarised as follows:
- Evidence gathering, development and appraisal of 'Issues and Options' in consultation with a variety of stakeholders in 2006,
 - Planning Committee approval of 'Final Issues and Options', (former regulation 25), consultation document in April 2010.
- 4.5 Work on the Local Plan carried out by the former Local Development Framework Working Group, (LDFWG), and Planning Committee up to April 2010, and prior to the High Court Challenge, identified sites 'preferred' for a range of uses for consultation purposes, (the Site Specific Allocations 'Final Issues and Options' DPD). However, the consultation itself was held in abeyance pending the outcome of the Core Strategy High Court Challenge.
- 4.6 It is considered that the Single Issue Review, (SIR), process that is addressing the provisions of the High Court Order is at a sufficiently advanced stage for work on the SA Local Plan document to recommence.
- 4.7 The NPPF, (para.158), identifies that the LPA should ensure that their Local Plans are based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of their area.
- 4.8 The availability, suitability and viability of individual housing sites for inclusion within the Local Plan to address our housing requirements, as they emerge via the SIR process, will be evidenced via the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, (SHLAA). The SA Local Plan will also allocate sites to meet our employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development needs as evidenced and presented within the relevant policies of the Core Strategy, (2010), as amended but it will also take account of more recent studies and evidence bases so that our Local Plan is 'up-to-date and relevant' and consequently NPPF compliant.
- 4.9 The next stages of the Local Plan's preparation can be summarised as follows:
- Drafting of 'Further Issues and Options', (Regulation 18), Local Plan document for public consultation.
 - 6/8 week period of public consultation on the 'Further Issues and Options' to be held November/December/January 2013,
 - Consideration of representations and drafting of 'Submission', (Regulation 19/20), version of the Local Plan document.
 - Site Allocations 'Submission' consultation to be held May/June 2014,
 - Submission to Secretary of State in November 2014,
 - Examination in Public February 2015,
 - Inspector's Report June 2015,
 - Adoption by the Council July 2015.
- 4.10 Due to Committee deadlines it is not possible to table preferred sites until Members of this Working Group have considered the SIR Submission Document

on 9 September 2013. However to inform debate, three maps of each of the Districts towns are attached in Appendix A. These show respectively:

- Key environmental constraints
- Known available sites
- Proposed uses at the time of the April 2010 Consultation document.

4.11 It should be noted these maps show all sites and do not differentiate between those preferred and reject in April 2010. A table of background information on each site will presented at the working group to assist discussion

5. Other options considered

5.1 The forthcoming Site Specific Allocations Issues and Options consultation will consider all reasonable alternatives and options for growth within Forest Heath.

6. Community impact

6.1 The intention of our policies is the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes, range of job opportunities and services to widen opportunities to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

7. Consultation *(what consultation has been undertaken, and what were the outcomes?)*

7.1 The Local Development Framework, (LDF), Site Specific Policies and Allocations 'Issues and Options' consultation held in September 2006.

8. Financial and resource implications *(including asset management implications)*

8.1 It is considered that the development of the Site Allocations Local Plan document through to adoption can be delivered within the planning services budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

9. Risk/opportunity assessment *(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)*

Failure to proceed with the document's preparation through to adoption will leave the Authority with an incomplete Core Strategy, leading to less control over development across the district.

10. Legal and policy implications

10.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, (2004), requires Forest Heath District Council to prepare and keep an up-to-date Development Plan. A Development Plan is essential for the continuation of an effective planning service.

11. Ward(s) affected

11.1 All wards are affected by the provisions of this Local Plan document.

12. Background papers

12.1 None.

13. Documents attached

13.1 Appendix A – Town Maps.

- Brandon Key Planning Constraints
- Brandon Available Sites
- Brandon Proposed Uses (April 2010)

- Mildenhall Key Planning Constraints
- Mildenhall Available Sites
- Mildenhall Proposed Uses (April 2010)

- Newmarket Key Planning Constraints
- Newmarket Available Sites
- Newmarket Proposed Uses (April 2010)