

Local Plan Working Group



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Regulation 18 Stage 'Further Issues & Options' Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Specific Allocations (SSA) Local Plan Documents – Progress.	
Report No:	LOP/FH/15/004	
Report to and dates:	Local Plan Working Group	22 April 2015
	Cabinet	2 June 2015
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Lead officer:	Marie Smith Service Manager (Planning Strategy) Tel: 01638 719260 Email: marie.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To endorse the approach and note progress made on the Further Issues and Options Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Specific Allocations (SSA) Local Plan Documents. The outcome of the meeting will inform the preparation of the Further Issues and Options Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Specific Allocations (SSA) Local Plan Documents for consultation (Member approval will be sought from Cabinet on 2 June 2015).	
Recommendation:	<p>It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that the Local Plan Working Group:</p> <p>(1) Endorse progress made to the Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Specific Allocations (SSA) Further Issues and Options Local Plan Documents; and</p> <p>(2) Recommend to Cabinet that the Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Specific Allocations (SSA) Further Issues and Options Local Plan Documents</p>	

	are prepared alongside the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and be approved for public consultation.
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>	
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012, the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme.
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options for progressing the SIR and SSA Local Plan Documents were considered by the 16/10/14 LPWG.
Implications:	
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a requirement for Local Planning Authorities to produce a Local Plan and to undertake consultation during its preparation under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012.
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Risk/opportunity assessment:	The Local Development Scheme includes a risk assessment of issues that could affect the Councils ability to deliver the Local Plan(s) in accordance with the programme. Actions to manage the risks have also been identified. Failure to produce an up to date Local Plan programme may result in an unsound Plan or legal challenge.

Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Significant public opposition	High	Local Plan documents have the potential to be highly contentious. Whilst every effort will be made to build cross-community consensus, there is a high risk of significant public opposition.	Medium
Loss of Staff	Medium	The structure and staffing levels within the Place Shaping Team will be constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure that the appropriate level of skills and resources are maintained.	Low
Financial shortfall	Medium	In the short/medium term, the Council has allocated funds through its Financial Services Planning process to allow for the preparation of the Local Plan. In the longer term, should costs increase, a review of the financial allocation will be required.	Low
Changing Political Priorities	Medium	Proposals are discussed with Members of all parties via a variety of means, the Local Plan Working Group etc.). This helps build consensus and reduces the likelihood of wholesale change of direction from local politicians.	Low
Legal Challenge	High	As a measure of last resort anyone may issue a legal challenge within six week of adoption of the Local Plan. Officers will continue to seek to ensure that local plan documents are prepared within the legal framework in order to reduce the risk of successful legal challenge.	Medium
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards in the District.		
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>	<p>Forest Heath Core Strategy Development Plan Document (May 2010). http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/forestheathcorestrategy.cfm</p> <p>Forest Heath Core Strategy Policy CS7 Single Issue Review – issues and Options 2012. http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/fhcorestrategysingleissuereview.cfm</p>		

Documents attached:

Working Paper 1: Consideration of housing
distribution Options Paper

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Forest Heath Core Strategy was adopted in May 2010. Following a successful High Court Challenge in May 2011, parts of policy CS7 (Overall Housing Provision) were quashed. Consequential amendments were also made to policies CS1 (Spatial Strategy) and CS13 (Infrastructure and Developer Contributions).

The Council has resolved to revisit those parts of the Core Strategy that have been 'quashed' as well as a re-assessment of the overall housing needs / numbers as part of this 'review' process. This is known as the 'Single Issue Review'. An 'Issues and Options', (Regulation 18 stage), consultation was undertaken on the Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) in July to September 2012.

The final adopted Site Specific Allocations (SSA) Local Plan document will identify which sites should be developed, in order to achieve the visions and objectives of the Core Strategy, (including the outcomes of the Single Issue Review process which is specifically considering the quantum, phasing and distribution of housing growth. This Local Plan document will eventually include proposals for new housing, employment, shopping and other development, together with other uses of land such as parks and open spaces.

At the Local Plan Working Group of 16 October 2014, Members agreed to proceed with a 'combined' Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Specific Allocation (SSA) Local Plan document. However at this stage the documents need to be advanced separately to allow the emerging SIR to influence the content of the draft SSA.

Working Paper 1 is a technical report considering housing distribution options that represents the first stage of preparing the Forest Heath Core Strategy Policy CS7 Single Issue Review (Further) Issues and Options (2nd Regulation 18 stage) Consultation Document. This document looks at the level of housing to be provided within the district to 2031 and possible options for its distribution between towns and villages.

1.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 1.2.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives. Sustainability Appraisals are required for all local development documents. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Consultants have been appointed to undertake the SA and SEA work in relation to the emerging SIR and SSA consultation documents. This work has not been completed and therefore Members should note that the Working Paper attached to this report may be subject to amendment on receipt of the

appraisals. The SA and SEA process cannot be prejudged especially in relation to the assessment of options and reasonable alternatives in the SIR. A full report setting out the findings of the SA and SEA and the proposed SIR and SSA Regulation 18 consultation documents will be presented to Cabinet on 2 June 2015.

2. The Next Steps

- 2.1 Following approval by Cabinet it is envisaged consultation on the SIR and SSA documents will take place for a minimum of 6 weeks commencing in June 2015. Comments received will be reported to Members for consideration and amendments made where appropriate.

The Site Specific Allocations Local Plan Document will undergo a further Regulation 18 consultation in November / December 2015 putting forward the Councils preferred sites and other land use allocations.

The Local Development Scheme anticipates Pre Submission (Regulation 19) consultation for both documents taking place in April/May 2016, Submission to the Secretary of state in July 2016, the Examination in Public in November 2016 and Adoption in 2017.