

Local Plan Working Group



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Core Strategy Single Issue Review (SIR) and Site Allocations (SSA) Issues and Options (Regulation 18) – Progress	
Report No:	LOP/FH/15/005	
Report to and date/s:	Local Plan Working Group	30 June 2015
	Cabinet	14 July 2015
Portfolio holder:	James Waters Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth Tel: 07771 621038 Email: james.waters@forest-heath.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Marie Smith Service Manager (Planning Strategy) Tel: 01638 719260 Email: marie.smith@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<p>To endorse progress made on the Core Strategy Single Issue Review (CS SIR) and Site Allocations (SSA) Issues and Options Local Plan Documents for consultation.</p> <p>The outcome of the meeting will inform the final draft Core Strategy Single Issue Review (CS SIR) and Site Allocations (SSA) Issues and Options documents for consultation. (Member approval will be sought from Cabinet on the 14 July 2015).</p>	
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 (CS SIR) and Site Allocations (SSA) 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) Issues and Options Local Plan Documents and accompanying SEA/SA together with supporting documents be approved for public consultation.</p>	

<p>Key Decision:</p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<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.
<p>Alternative option(s):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options for progressing the SIR and SSA Local Plan Documents were considered by LPWG on the 16 October 2014. Housing Options Paper was considered and endorsed by LPWG on 22 April 2015. Working Papers 1 and 2 set out a series of reasonable alternative options for consultation.
<p>Implications:</p>	
<p><i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <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.
<p><i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Risk/opportunity assessment:</p>	<p>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.</p>

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: DRAFT Core Strategy
Single Issue Review for Overall Housing
Provision and Distribution 2011 – 2031
(Regulation 18: Issues and Options
consultation)

Working Paper 2: DRAFT Site Allocations
(Regulation 18: Issues and Options
consultation)

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 detailing how the overall housing need would be distributed between the settlements over a 20 year period (to 2031) were quashed (removed from the Strategy). Consequential amendments were also made to policies CS1 (Spatial Strategy) and CS13 (Infrastructure and Developer Contributions).
- 1.1.2 The Council has resolved to revisit the quashed part of the Core Strategy as well as a re-assessment of the overall housing needs / numbers, which was necessary to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 47 policy on meeting full, objectively, assessed housing needs.
- 1.1.3 This is known as the Core Strategy Single Issue Review (CS SIR). An 'Issues and Options' (Regulation 18) consultation was completed on the Core Strategy SIR in July to September 2012.
- 1.1.4 **Working Paper 1** is the second 'Issues and Options' (Regulation 18) consultation. This document considers two options for the level of housing to be provided within the district from 2011 to 2031 (in accordance with the legal advice outlined at the Local Plan Working Group on 16 October 2015) and reasonable options for its distribution between towns and villages.
- 1.1.5 The Site Allocations (SA) Development Plan 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 and distribution of housing growth. This Local Plan will provide a planning framework for the allocation of sites in Forest Heath district up to 2031.
- 1.1.6 **Working Paper 2** is the second Site Allocation Issues and Options consultation; it updates and supersedes the issues and options consultation undertaken in 2006.
- 1.1.7 The purpose of these documents and the consultation is to stimulate debate on the most appropriate way to distribute the housing need throughout the District and consider sites for housing, employment and community and leisure uses.
- 1.1.8 Each document asks questions and invites comments from both the public and statutory stakeholders. The Council is evidence gathering and are not making decisions at this stage.
- 1.1.9 Members of Local Plan Working Group should note that the Working Papers are draft documents and not in final form. Members are being asked to comment on the clarity and accuracy of the documents to avoid any omissions, which will be fed into the final versions that will be considered by Cabinet on 14 July 2015.

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.

- 1.2.2 Consultants have been appointed to undertake the SA and SEA work in relation to the emerging SIR and SSA consultation documents. A full report setting out the findings of the SA and SEA and the proposed CS SIR and SSA Regulation 18 consultation will accompany the documents for consultation.

1.3 **Infrastructure**

- 1.3.1 The Council are planning for long term growth to give certainty in how and where settlements will grow within the district. This will ensure that service providers can plan and deliver the necessary infrastructure to enable the planned growth to happen when it is required. This would include such facilities as roads, sewers and water infrastructure.
- 1.3.2 A draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has also been prepared and accompanies the Core Strategy SIR and Site Allocations document. Following a workshop with infrastructure providers on the 13th April, the document begins to set out the infrastructure issues and requirements for the district. Comments can also be made on the draft IDP.

2. **The Next Steps**

- 2.1 Following the meeting of the Local Plan Working Group, the final documents will be prepared for approval by Cabinet on 14 July 2015.
- 2.2 The design and printing of the documents will take a further three weeks from the Cabinet meeting; therefore consultation is planned from 11 August 2015 for an eight week period (ending 6 October 2015).
- 2.3 Comments received during this consultation will be considered and brought back to the Local Plans Working Group before being fed into the a further Regulation 18 consultation for both the Site Allocations and Core Strategy Single Issue Review in February / March 2016 putting forward the Councils preferred approach to housing distribution sites and other land use allocations.
- 2.4 The final version of Pre Submission (Regulation 19) consultation for both documents taking place in August/September 2016, Submission to the Secretary of state in November 2016, the Examination in Public in February 2017 with Adoption in August 2017.
- 2.5 The change in consultation date for the Issues and Options consultation has meant an update to the Local Development Scheme (timetable for plan preparation) is required and will be published on the Council's website alongside the consultation documents in August.