

Council Report

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 26 June 2017

Title

Rotherham Local Plan: Additional Consultation on the Sites and Policies Document

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Damien Wilson, Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment

Report Author(s)

Andy Duncan, Planning Policy Manager, Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Helen Sleigh, Senior Planning Officer, Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Ward(s) Affected

Hoober and Wath and the specific sites referred to in the report, but the Local Plan affects the whole of the borough.

Executive Summary

The report seeks approval to consult on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area. This is necessary to accommodate the changes required by the Planning Inspector. Consultation on these sites is required before the Council can continue with the independent examination of the Sites and Policies Document.

Recommendation

That the commencement of public consultation on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area be approved.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1: Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton consultation document.

Background Papers

The Rotherham Sites and Policies Document examination website provides further details of the Inspector's requirements and related documents.

<http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/localplanexamination>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 21 June 2017

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Rotherham Local Plan: Additional Consultation on the Sites and Policies Document

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the commencement of public consultation on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area be approved.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council is preparing a Local Plan for Rotherham. This is both a statutory requirement and a pro-active approach to meeting the need for new homes and jobs, promoting economic growth and continuing the regeneration of the Borough. The two key documents contained within the Local Plan are the Core Strategy (adopted September 2014), and the supporting Sites and Policies Document.

- 2.2 The Sites and Policies Document allocates land to meet the targets for new homes and jobs fixed in the adopted Core Strategy. Most new development proposed will be focused in the Rotherham Urban Area (including at Bassingthorpe Farm) and at Principal Settlements for Growth at:

- Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton
- Dinnington, Anston and Laughton Common, and
- Bramley, Wickersley and Ravenfield Common.

- 2.3 Following extensive community engagement over a number of years, the Council submitted the Sites and Policies Document to central Government on 24 March 2016 (Council Meeting 16/9/15, minute 55 refers). The document is being examined by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. Public hearings for the examination were held from July to December 2016.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Inspector has written to the Council setting out his initial conclusions. He has taken into account the Council's evidence, and submissions from others, and decided that limited changes to the document are required to make it sound and able to be adopted in due course. These changes, otherwise known as "Proposed Main Modifications", will be subject to consultation at a later stage.

- 3.2 The Inspector's letter, including his list of Proposed Main Modifications, has been published on the Council's Local Plan examination website. The website also provides an indicative timetable for the remaining stages of the examination. Key highlights of the Proposed Main Modifications are listed below:

- Todwick housing site (H84) removed
- Todwick North employment site (E16) removed
- Gypsy and Traveller site at Kiveton Park Station (GT1) retained

- 3.3 The Inspector also requires the Council to identify and consult on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area. This is to remedy a shortfall against the Core Strategy housing target for this area that has come to light as part of the examination. This consultation is required as an additional stage before the Council consults on the Inspector's Proposed Main Modifications.
- 3.4 This additional consultation stage will lengthen the examination period but the Inspector considers it necessary to ensure a robust and transparent process.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 Officers have identified two additional housing sites to remedy the shortfall in housing supply highlighted by the Inspector.
- 4.2 Although there are alternative sites that could have been selected, officers consider that the two sites set out in the consultation document at Appendix 1 are the most appropriate choices. They minimise the release of further Green Belt land and are the most sustainable sites to meet the shortfall against the target for this area. Together they will provide around 500 new homes. The sites are:
 - Land off Far Field Lane, Wath upon Dearne (site reference LDF0849)
 - Land between Pontefract Road and Barnsley Road, West Melton (site reference LDF0263)

- 4.3 It is recommended that the document at Appendix 1 setting out these additional housing sites is approved for public consultation.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed that public consultation on the additional housing sites will take place during July and August 2017. Officers will forward any comments received to the Inspector, who may then hold further hearing sessions. The Inspector will then confirm whether the additional housing sites are to be included in the Proposed Main Modifications.
- 5.2 Prior to the Cabinet meeting, officers held a drop-in session for all members at the Town Hall on 13 June 2017. This enabled members to ask any questions about the additional housing sites proposed in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area. It also allowed officers to brief members more generally on the Proposed Main Modifications to the plan.

- 5.3 The Local Plan Sites and Policies document has been subject to extensive public consultation, over a number of years. Consultation has been tailored to each stage of the process but has typically involved a variety of methods, such as press adverts, radio interviews, letters, emails, public drop-in sessions, member and parish briefings, web content, and hard copies in all libraries. At each stage of plan preparation, officers have carefully considered both the results of public consultation and the ongoing Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the draft plan. Where consultation comments and the IIA have raised material planning considerations, officers have made appropriate changes to the draft policies and site allocations.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 The timetable below shows the significant stages in the Local Plan process to date. It also gives anticipated dates for the remaining stages of the Sites and Policies Document examination and its eventual adoption. Dates shown for future stages are indicative and may be subject to change.

Date	Stage/action
2014	
September	Meeting of the Council adopted the Core Strategy
October/ November	Public consultation on the Final Draft Sites and Policies Document
2015	
September/ November	Sites and Policies Document published for statutory six week consultation prior to submission to Secretary of State
2016	
March	Sites and Policies Document submitted to Secretary of State
July/ December	Inspector held public hearings to examine the plan
2017	
March	Council received Inspector's letter setting out Proposed Main Modifications to the plan
June 2017	Council's Cabinet to consider additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area for public consultation
July/ August	Council officers to carry out public consultation on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area
October	Inspector to hold further hearing sessions if required and confirm Proposed Main Modifications
Late 2017	Council's Cabinet to consider Proposed Main Modifications for public consultation

2018	
Early 2018	Council officers to carry out public consultation on Proposed Main Modifications for statutory six week period
Spring 2018	Inspector to issue Final Report to the Council
Summer 2018	Council's Cabinet to consider recommendation to full Council to adopt the plan as modified
Summer/Autumn 2018	Meeting of the full Council to consider adoption of the plan as modified

7. Finance and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The costs of public consultation on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area will be met by the Planning Policy budget.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The preparation of the Local Plan has complied with the relevant legislation and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Once adopted, the Rotherham Sites and Policies Document will form part of the statutory development plan for the Borough and will be used to guide the determination of future planning applications.

9. Human Resource Implications

- 9.1 There are no Human Resource implications arising from this report.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 No direct implications arise from this report.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken during the preparation of the Sites and Policies Document as prescribed by legislation. This assessment has been submitted to the independent examination as part of the Integrated Impact Assessment of the plan.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 No direct implications arise from this report. However, there may be a requirement for relevant officers in other directorates (such as the Neighbourhoods Team) to assist with the consultation on additional housing sites in the Wath upon Dearne, Brampton Bierlow, West Melton area.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The Council may be open to legal challenge should the Local Plan not be prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation. Legal advice has been sought as necessary to minimise this risk.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Damien Wilson, Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment

Approvals Obtained from:

On behalf of the Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:
Jon Baggaley, Finance Manager

On behalf of the Assistant Director of Legal Services:
Ian Gledhill, Principal Officer, Legal Services

On behalf of the Head of Procurement (if appropriate):
Joanne Kirk, Purchase to Pay Manager, Finance and Customer Services