

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 06 March 2024

Report Title

Local Plan: Sites and Policies Document Five Year Review

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

In line with legislative requirements, the Council has undertaken a five year review of the Local Plan Sites and Policies Document to assess whether some or all of it may need updating. The review concludes that the document is still fit for purpose and that no update is required at this time.

Recommendations

1. That the Strategic Director approves the Sites and Policies Document Five Year Review and its publication on the Council's website.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Sites and Policies Document Five Year Review
Appendix 2 Equality Part A – Screening
Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

National Planning Policy Framework

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made>

Rotherham Sites and Policies Document

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/478/sites-and-policies-document>

Rotherham Annual Monitoring Reports

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/download/76/annual-monitoring-reports>

Planning Practice Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Local Plan: Sites and Policies Document Five Year Review

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Local Plan provides a long-term development strategy, setting out policies and proposals for new development. It consists of several documents, including the Core Strategy 2013 – 2028, the Sites and Policies Document, the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan and those Neighbourhood Plans that have been adopted to date. Taken together, these planning policy documents are used to make planning decisions and determine planning applications.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy (adopted 10 September 2014) sets out the spatial strategy for the whole Borough and identifies the broad locations for delivering new housing, employment and other development. It sets out how much new development is needed, where it should go and when it should happen. It also sets out the strategic policies and the required new infrastructure to make this happen. The detailed development management policies and site allocations for new development are set out in the separate Sites and Policies document (adopted 27 June 2018).
- 1.3 Local Planning Authorities are required by legislation to review Local Plan documents at least every five years from the date of adoption, and to decide either that their policies do not need updating, or that one or more policies do need updating.
- 1.4 The Council has undertaken a review of the Sites and Policies Document in line with Government guidance, which has considered:
 - Changes to national planning policy, including the introduction of a standard methodology for calculating local housing requirements.
 - Suggested changes in the draft Core Strategy Partial Update.
 - A review of housing need and delivery.
 - A review of employment land.
 - An assessment of planning appeals performance.
 - The results of Local Plan monitoring.
 - Duty to co-operate findings.
 - Other changes in circumstances.
- 1.5 The Sites and Policies Document Five Year Review is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The Council is progressing a partial update of the adopted Core Strategy with several strategic policies proposed for amendment to improve their consistency with national planning guidance, to reflect more recent changes in evidence and to reflect the Council's Climate Change Declaration and Nature Emergency Declaration.

- 2.2 The update to the Core Strategy will take account of Central Government changes to national planning policy, which introduced a national methodology for housing targets and the housing delivery test to measure local authority performance on housing delivery. The introduction of the national housing target methodology results in a lower figure for Rotherham. This means that the supply of housing land in the Sites and Policies Document, is sufficient for a longer time period.
- 2.3 As housing growth is not now expected to be as high as anticipated within the plan period of the adopted Core Strategy, the need for jobs remains in alignment with national housing and population growth targets. The employment land required to meet future job growth needs is not therefore expected to increase beyond current requirements. The sites already identified for employment purposes are sufficient to meet all identified employment needs, enabling the employment land supply to also be spread over a longer time period than envisaged in the adopted Core Strategy.
- 2.4 Implementation of Rotherham's Local Plan is assessed through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to see if an update may be required before its end date of 2028. With respect to the Sites and Policies document, there is no indication that an update of this document would significantly improve the effectiveness of the Plan.
- 2.5 Several Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) have been prepared and adopted by the Council since 2018, to enable greater clarity for applicants and improve outcomes for local communities. These SPDs are successfully aiding the implementation of the Local Plan, although in themselves they do not introduce new planning policies. Further SPDs may be introduced to clarify the interpretation of policies in the Sites and Policies Document in light of changes to national planning policy and regulations, for instance to reflect changes to the use classes order.
- 2.6 Taking all these factors into account, the five year review of the Sites and Policies Document confirms that the Sites and Policies Document remains up to date and complies with the requirements set out in national planning policy; therefore, there is no necessity to update or prepare a further Sites and Policies Document at this time. The Document remains fit for purpose.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 In accordance with national planning policy and guidance, the review considers whether the Sites and Policies Document:
- Is consistent with current national planning policy.
 - Reflects current legislation.
 - Continues to align with the Council's vision and aligns with other corporate strategies.
 - Is delivering development as intended.
 - Needs to respond to new opportunities and/or challenges.

3.2 Option 1: Do not update the Sites and Policies Document

Following the five year review of the Sites and Policies Document, it is considered that an update is not currently required. There is no identifiable requirement at this time to undertake either a full or partial update of the document.

3.3 Option 2: Update the Sites and Policies Document

The five year review of the Sites and Policies Document concludes that this is not required at this time. An update would have significant time, resource and cost implications, and would require the Council to be consistent with the new plan making approach set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (October 2023). This would require a full Local Plan to be prepared, considering amended or new site allocations and potentially a review of the green belt boundary.

3.4 Option 1 is the recommended option. Option 2 is not considered either necessary or appropriate. At this stage in the Plan period, it is not considered that the site allocations and development management policies in the Sites and Policies Document require substantive change. Both remain fit for their intended purpose.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 There is no requirement to undertake consultation on the five year review of a Local Plan document. Regard has been had to comments received from relevant services, including Transportation, Housing, Ecology, RiDO, and Drainage in the preparation of the review.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Subject to approval, the five year review of the Sites and Policies Document will be published on the Council's website for information.

5.2 To achieve consistency with the Council's document style, minor changes to numbering, formatting and images may be made prior to publication of the document.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

6.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Section 17 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require Local Planning Authorities to review local plans at least once every five years from their adoption date to

ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community, and to publish their reasons if no update is necessary.

7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021), Para 33 states that “Policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary.”

7.3 The Council has carried out a five year review of the Sites and Policies Document as required by legislation and concluded that no update is required at this time. As the document is not being updated then no further formal approvals are required.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications associated with the recommendations of this report, for children, young people and vulnerable adults, as no changes to planning policy are recommended.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no Equalities and Human Rights implications associated with the recommendations of this report, as no changes to planning policy are recommended.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no CO2 Emissions and Climate Change implications associated with the recommendations of this report, as no changes to planning policy are recommended.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. There are no implications for partners, associated with the recommendations of this report, as no changes to planning policy are recommended.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There are no risks identified arising from the outcomes of this report not to progress with changes to development plan policies or site allocations at this stage in delivering the Local Plan.

14. Accountable Officers

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration & Environment

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).