



CABINET: 11 September 2018

Report of: Director of Development and Regeneration

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Hodson

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SUBJECT: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME UPDATE

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek approval for an updated Local Development Scheme, reflecting a slightly amended timetable for the Local Plan Review.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Local Development Scheme attached at Appendix A be approved for publication and to take effect from 1 October 2018.

3.0 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW UPDATE

3.1 The Local Plan Review, approved by Cabinet in September 2016, has progressed well through the first two years of the timetable, with only a small delay in the publication of the Issues & Options Papers for consultation in March 2017 and subsequently for the publication of the Preferred Options document for consultation, which is the subject of a separate item on the Agenda for Cabinet on 11 September 2018.

3.2 To account for these small delays, the timetable for the Local Plan Review has been updated, although it is still envisaged that the Council will be able to adopt a new Local Plan by the end of 2020, subject to how long the Examination in Public takes (which is not within the Council's control). The timetable for the Local Plan must be incorporated into the Local Development Scheme, a

document which the Council are required to prepare and publish regularly in order to keep it up-to-date and to enable members of the public and interested parties to see the progress on the Local Plan Review.

- 3.3 As such, an updated Local Development Scheme has been prepared (see Appendix A) and Cabinet are asked to approve this for publication at recommendation 2.1 above.

4.0 EVIDENCE BASE STUDIES

- 4.1 A key part of the Local Plan Review is the preparation of evidence base studies which can then inform the direction policies, or the Local Plan as a whole, take on certain issues. The list of evidence needed to support a Local Plan Review is wide-ranging and extensive and is made up of three broad types:

- Analysis and interpretation of data that is already available to the Council;
- Studies which Council officers have the expertise to undertake and for which it is a wise use of Council resources to use officers to undertake; and
- Studies which require expertise that the Council does not have or for which it is more cost-effective to use external support.

- 4.2 Council officers carried out much of the analysis and interpretation of available data (mainly Census data and other ONS statistics) prior to the preparation of the Issues & Options Papers and, indeed, this evidence directly informed the identification of issues that the Local Plan Review might address. Council officers have also carried out, and continue to carry out, several studies "in-house" that will form key elements of the evidence base of the Local Plan Review. These include:

- the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA);
- the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS);
- the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA);
- the Sustainable Settlement Study;
- a series of Technical Papers bringing together the evidence related to a key topic; and
- a range of Thematic and Spatial Evidence Papers (prepared for the Issues and Options consultation).

- 4.3 In relation to those studies which the Council has sought external, consultancy support on, most are now complete and will be made available to view on the Council's website alongside the forthcoming Local Plan Preferred Options consultation, if they are not already on the website (www.westlincs.gov.uk/LPR). A few, however, are still in progress either because they could only be started once the Preferred Options had been prepared or, in the case of one study, the

Council were unable to initially secure a suitable consultation to undertake the work. These studies include *[status in italics and square brackets]*:

- Liverpool City Region Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA) *[prepared jointly with LCR authorities, study finalised and awaiting formal sign-off from LCR Combined Authority]*
- Housing Requirement Policy-on Scenarios for West Lancashire *[study complete and on website]*
- Liverpool City Region Assessment of the Supply of Large-Scale B8 Sites (Stage 1) *[prepared jointly with LCR authorities, study finalised and awaiting formal sign-off from LCR Combined Authority]* and Stage 2 *[recently commissioned by the LCR Combined Authority]*
- Affordable and Specialist Housing Needs Study *[study complete and on website]*
- Traveller Needs Assessment *[study complete and on website]*
- Retail and Commercial Leisure Study *[study complete and on website]*
- Playing Pitch Strategy Review *[draft complete and to go on website shortly]*
- Open Space Study *[draft complete and to go on website shortly]*
- Traffic Impact Assessment for the Local Plan Preferred Options *[draft complete and to go on website shortly]*
- Viability Assessment of the Local Plan Preferred Options *[draft complete and to go on website shortly]*
- Renewable Energy Study *[study recently commissioned]*

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 While there are no direct implications for sustainability of the recommendation Cabinet are being asked to consider in this report, the outcome of a Local Plan Review (i.e. a new Local Plan) clearly will have implications for sustainability, but it is impossible to predict what those may be at this very early stage.

5.2 However, the Council are required to prepare a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Local Plan as it progresses through preparation, with the SA directly informing the policy formulation of the Local Plan, and so the issue of sustainability will be directly addressed and the principle of sustainable will necessarily run through the Local Plan as a key guiding principle.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 It is anticipated that costs associated with the Local Plan Review and the preparation of the new Local Plan will be met from existing budget provisions of the Development and Regeneration Service, aside from the additional budget previously agreed by Cabinet for consultancy support on evidence base studies.

However, the Examination of the Local Plan, once it has been prepared and submitted for Examination, will be a significant separate cost that will require additional funding and will form part of a budget growth bid for 2019/20.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The only risk associated with the recommendation in this report is that if the LDS is not kept up-to-date, the Council may be deemed to have failed in one of the legal tests applied to the preparation of a Local Plan once the Local Plan is Examined by a Planning Inspector, which would mean that the Local Plan could not be taken forward to adoption and the Council would need to re-start their preparation of a new Local Plan.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision Cabinet are being asked to make is simply related to the publication of the Local Development Scheme (essentially a timetable and project plan for the Local Plan Review) and the provision of Council funds to allow the preparation of additional evidence required for the Local Plan Review and so there is no direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore, an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

Appendices

Appendix A – Local Development Scheme (September 2018)