



Appendix 2

Directorate of Development and Regeneration Services

John R Harrison DipEnvP, MRTPI
Director of Development and Regeneration

PO Box 16, 52 Derby Street
Ormskirk, West Lancashire, L39 2DF
Telephone: 01695 577177
Website: www.westlancs.gov.uk
Email: peter.richards@westlancs.gov.uk

Date: 30th September 2016
Your ref:
Our ref:
Please ask for: Peter Richards
Direct dial no: 01695 585046
Extension: 5046

Dear Sir / Madam

A Local Plan Review for West Lancashire

As a key stakeholder in relation to planning and development in West Lancashire I am writing to you to inform you that the Council's Cabinet recently endorsed a proposal from officers to begin a review of the current West Lancs Local Plan 2012-2027 with a view to preparing a new Local Plan for the Borough.

As part of that resolution to endorse a Local Plan Review, the Cabinet also approved a consultation exercise with key stakeholders such as yourself on what the scope of the Local Plan Review, and subsequent new Local Plan, should be, in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

As such, I invite your organisation to comment on the matters and issues that a new Local Plan for West Lancashire should seek to address, and the time period that the Plan should cover.

It is the Council's intention to prepare an Issues & Options Paper for the Local Plan Review for public consultation in February / March 2017 and so your input at this initial stage will be crucial in guiding which issues that Paper should cover but we will of course invite further representations from you on the Issues & Options Paper in the New Year, as well as all subsequent consultations on the Local Plan.

In order to inform your thoughts on any representation at this initial scoping stage, at the present time the following list of policy areas reflects the initial thoughts of the Council on what the Local Plan should cover.

Kim Webber B.Sc., M.Sc.
Chief Executive

Possible Policy Areas for the Local Plan, and their scope, include:

- Strategic Policies – encompassing the key sustainable development framework for the Borough, requirements for residential and employment development, releasing land from the Green Belt (if required) and the allocation of strategic development sites
- General Development Policies – encompassing development management policies that affect several types of development / land-use, including policies on settlement boundaries, safeguarded land, the design of development, and demonstrating viability in applications
- Economic Policies – policies setting out the strategy for economic development in the Borough, including allocations for employment areas and protection of existing employment sites
- Residential Policies – policies setting out the strategy for residential development in the Borough, including housing allocations, provision of affordable, specialist and older persons' housing, accommodating travellers and caravans / house boats, and student accommodation
- Infrastructure and Services Policies – policies guiding transport and highways matters, general utilities infrastructure, provision of community facilities and services and developer contributions towards new infrastructure
- Environmental Policies – policies guiding protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment, habitats for protected species, public open space and other green infrastructure and policies related to climate change

In addition, the Council are seeking your views on the length of time that the Local Plan should cover. Typically, Local Plans cover a 15-year period, but often have to safeguard land for beyond that timescale, particularly where Green Belt release is required in the Plan. This helps to protect the new Green Belt boundaries from encroachment and provides a greater degree of certainty and permanence about the Green Belt boundary beyond the Plan period.

However, recent planning appeal decisions across the country have made safeguarded land a more vulnerable designation than it once was, and instead safeguarded land is often used to provide flexibility where development is perhaps a little slower on allocated sites in the Plan (and even where it is not).

As such, one possible approach is to consider a longer Plan period that then does not require safeguarded land to be designated and gives the public more certainty over whether a site is allocated for development or not but also gives the development industry greater flexibility and choice. A longer Plan period also allows the Council and its partners to think longer-term in planning for infrastructure and growth and delivery of housing and employment land.

In this way, an argument could be made for a 20, 25 or even 30-year Plan period, and the Council would welcome your thoughts on this subject.

If you have any specific views on these proposed policy areas or believe that additional issues that have not been considered in the list above should be included, or you have

views on the length of the Plan period, please make your representation to the Council by **5pm on Friday 28th October 2016**, making clear reference to the Local Plan, either by post or email at the following addresses:

Peter Richards
Strategic Planning & Implementation Manager
West Lancashire Borough Council
52 Derby Street
Ormskirk
L39 2DF

Email: localplan@westlancs.gov.uk

If you have any queries regarding this letter or the Local Plan, please contact Peter Richards on 01695 585 046 or at the above email address.

For your information, the Council has also published a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the preparation of the Local Plan Review, and so if you wish to find out more about the process the Council will go through in reviewing the Local Plan and preparing a new one, you can download the LDS at:

<http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy.aspx>

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Peter Richards
Strategic Planning & Implementation Manager