



# Overview Select Committee

Date of meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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## **Draft Leicester Local Plan (2019 – 2036) - Public Consultation**

Report of the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: all
- Report author: Fabian D'Costa
- Author contact details: 0116 454 2974
- Report version number: 1

### 1. Summary

The report outlines the main strategies and policies of the draft local plan for public consultation in January/February 2020.

### 2. Recommendations

That the key local plan strategies and policies, and provisions for consultation be noted and comments passed to the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation for consideration.

### 3. Draft Local Plan

#### 3.1 Background

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires all local planning authorities to produce a local plan. In view of this, officers have been working on a new plan which will replace the current core strategy (2014) and saved policies from the previous local plan of 2006.

The draft plan will cover the period 2019 – 2036 and seeks to:

- Meet the needs for homes, jobs, shopping, and leisure;
- Allocate sites for development including strategic development sites; and
- Set clear planning policies that guide decisions on planning applications

The replacement local plan process involves a number of stages before the plan is ultimately adopted by the council. Following on from previous consultations, the council is now in a position to publish a draft plan for public consultation. The plan will be supported by various evidence documents and assessments, including an Equality Impact Assessment.

The plan also needs to be viable and deliverable and should not be a burden on development.

### 3. 2 Key Strategies and Policies in the draft Local Plan

- Housing need for the city over the plan period is 29,104. Supply of land is proposed as follows:

#### Strategic Sites

- Former Western Park Golf Course (LCC) – Including employment and open space
  - East of Ashton Green (LCC) – Including employment and open space
  - Land North of A46 bypass (LCC/Private) – Including open space
  - Land at Billesdon Close and the Paddock (Private)
  - Leicester General Hospital (Private)
- 85 other sites will be allocated for housing and a large number of dwellings will also be provided on city centre and brownfield sites within the Central Development Area (CDA).
  - The Central Development Area (CDA) will provide around 4900 dwellings to contribute towards housing supply but also focus on retailing, culture, leisure and entertainment.
  - However, there will still be an insufficient supply of land, which means there will be a shortfall of 7,813 dwellings which will be distributed through agreement with district councils
  - Officers have carried out a detailed analysis of areas (e.g. building heights, local character, heritage assets) within the CDA which has identified 9 key character areas and 4 'other' areas, each with their own objectives.
  - Employment – To meet 45ha employment need, new sites are allocated at the former Western Park Golf course, East of Ashton Green, and Beaumont Park. The city centre will still be a focus for offices.
  - Open Space – Balance between housing, employment and open space. Some green wedge will be lost and public open space reduced. However, there will be opportunities to secure new open space on strategic sites and enhance the quality of existing public open space.
  - Transport – The plan will support the emerging local transport plan, which includes improving key transport hubs, providing a fast and efficient bus network, and promoting walking and cycling.

### **3.3 Key planning policies that planning applications will be judged against.**

- Climate Change – Includes air quality, transport, energy and flooding
- Health and Wellbeing – Good design, open spaces, employment, cycling and walking
- Internal Space Standards – City wide
- Affordable Housing - 30% on greenfield sites
- Policies in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's), student housing and retention of family housing
- Delivering Quality Places – Includes tall buildings, landscaping, shopfronts, and protecting residential amenity
- Policies to preserve heritage assets and to support tourism in the city
- Maintaining and enhancing the quality of open space
- Protecting designated bio-diversity sites and support for net gain (awaiting government guidance)
- Policies to protect existing sports pitches and support for new ones
- Support the city's retail hierarchy and leisure and cultural facilities

### **3.4 Local Plan Timetable**

Subject to emerging Government policy and any associated changes in plan making requirements, the current timetable for the local plan is as follows:

- Issues and Options - Public Consultation (Complete)
- Emerging Options, Sites and Development Management Policies – Public Consultation (Complete)
- Full Council 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

- Public Consultation to commence end of January/Early February 2020
- Submission Local Plan Consultation – Summer 2020
- Public Examination Autumn 2020
- Adoption 2021

#### **4. Public Consultation**

Officers have recently revised the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document, which sets out how we will involve the public, developers, businesses and other agencies in the preparation of the council's planning policy documents.

It is intended to use a variety of methods of communication for consultation on the local plan. These include letters and e-mails, press releases, exhibitions, workshops and the internet to ensure that there is appropriate public consultation and participation.

#### **5. Financial, legal and other implications**

##### 5.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications from this report as support for the development of the Local Plan is being resourced through existing staffing and operational budgets.

Paresh Radia – Finance.

##### 5.2 Legal implications

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report as it simply outlines the main strategies and policies of the draft local plan for public consultation. Any changes to planning policy will be brought into effect by the formal local plan process in due course.

Clare Sinnott, Solicitor (Commercial, Property and Planning Team) (ext. 37 1408)

### 5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Land use and development have been identified as key factors which will affect Leicester's ability to respond to the climate emergency declared on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019. The Local Plan therefore represents an important opportunity to ensure that, as far as possible within the legal framework set by central government, including for the viability of development, changes to the city's land use and built environment support the necessary rapid progress towards carbon neutrality and climate-adaptation.

The Committee should note that the council's proposals for responding to the climate emergency include "Land use, green space and development" as one of six key themes. Public consultation on these is currently underway until 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020. They are being considered by the Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission on 4<sup>th</sup> December. It is also proposed to bring them to the Housing Scrutiny Commission and the Overview Scrutiny Committee.

Duncan Bell, Corporate Environmental Consultant. Ext. 37 2249

### 5.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Meaningful consultation on the local plan will be an important method of collating evidence around any potential equalities implications and should aid the authority in paying due regard to the aims of the PSED. The local plan is a high-level document. In order to foster a meaningful approach to assessing the equalities impacts, in the initial stages a high-level assessment of potential equalities implications is being undertaken to indicate the key issues and where more intensive focus is required in the following stages of local plan development.

Therefore, prior to a final decision on the local plan in 2021, at the next 'submission' stage of consultation in summer 2020, a more detailed impact assessment on policies will be undertaken drawing upon equality information and the results of consultation and engagement activity. Building an evidence base is a vital part of equality impact assessment and should include protected characteristic groups (through established groups, support organisations and individually as part of a representative sample of consultees) and other groups at risk of exclusion. A key part of this will be understanding how current policies and issues affect different groups. This will be an iterative process and should be undertaken in such a way that equalities considerations influence the final decision.

Where disproportionate negative impacts on any protected characteristic/s are identified, decision makers must consider steps to mitigate those impacts. It is important that, throughout the process of decision making, decision makers are aware of and act upon their duty to pay due regard to the PSED.

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None applicable

**6. Background information and other papers:**

Appendix C1 - Local Plan Presentation