



Heritage, Culture, Leisure, Tourism and Neighbourhood Services Committee

Date of meeting: 20th September 2022

Leicester Local Plan (2020 – 2036) - Public Consultation on Submission Plan (Regulation 19)

Report of the Director of Planning, Development and
Transportation

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: all
- Report author: Fabian D'Costa
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- Report version number: 1

1. Summary

The report outlines the main strategies and policies of the submission City of Leicester Local Plan for public consultation in November 2022.

A presentation will be made at the Scrutiny Commission meeting covering this report and related details.

2. Recommendations

That the key local plan strategies, policies, site allocations, and provisions for consultation be noted with any associated comments.

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 key consultation stages are shown in section 4 below.

The draft plan will cover the period 2020 – 2036 and seeks to:

- Meet the needs for homes, jobs, shopping, and leisure
- Allocate sites for development including strategic development sites
- Protect important sites such as those with heritage value
- Set clear policies that guide decisions on planning applications
- The plan is required to be viable and deliverable

This will be the final consultation before the plan is submitted to the independent Planning Inspectorate for an Examination in Public (EIP) early next year.

3.2 Previous 'Reg 18' Local Plan Consultation

- Previous consultation on the Draft Leicester Local Plan (Reg 18) was delayed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic until September - December 2020
- All policies and proposed site allocations have been reviewed in the context of the consultation responses received and comments from Scrutiny Commissions made at the Regulation 18 Consultation stage. Revisions to the list of proposed development sites have also had to be made following consultation and as a result of the withdrawal of some proposed allocations by site promoters.
- Comments from previous Scrutiny Commission meetings held at the last local plan consultation stage have been considered and responses provided as set out in appendix 1.

3.3 Key Strategies and Policies in the draft Local Plan

- Housing need for the city over the plan period is 39,424 dwellings (2,464 dwellings per annum).
- This is an increase of 12,512 dwellings from the Reg 18 previous plan due to Central Government publishing a new standard method for calculating housing need. This resulted in our housing need increasing by 35%, adding a further 9,712 homes to our need between 2020 and 2036. In March 2022 the Government published new data (affordability ratios) which increased housing need in the city by a further 2,800 homes to 2036.
- However, there will be an insufficient supply of land available in the city, which means there will be a shortfall of approximately 18,700 dwellings and 23 ha of employment land.
- A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) on the redistribution of 18,700 unmet housing need and 23ha of employment within Leicester and Leicestershire was approved in April and would support our Local Plan progressing to an examination subject to approval by the individual councils.
- Housing Supply (See appendices for full list of allocated sites) will be provided as follows:
 - Four Strategic Sites
 - Former Western Park Golf Course (LCC) – Including housing, employment and open space, and permanent Gypsy and Traveller provision
 - East of Ashton Green (LCC) – Including housing, employment and open

space

- Land North of A46 bypass (LCC/Private) – Including housing and open space
- Land at Billesdon Close and the Paddock (Private)

- 48 other sites will be allocated for housing

- There has been a net reduction of 23 sites from the local plan since the last Regulation 18 plan version

- The Central Development Area (CDA) will provide around 6286 dwellings largely on brownfield sites to contribute towards housing supply but also focus on retailing, culture, leisure and entertainment. This is an increase on the previous Regulation 18 plan version of 1386 dwellings.

- Employment – To meet 42ha of employment need, new sites remain proposed to be allocated at the former Western Park Golf course; East of Ashton Green and Beaumont Park as well as two smaller sites at Thurcaston Road/Hadrian Road and Mountain Road. The city centre remains the focus for office proposals. Note, one or both of Beaumont Park and Thurcaston/Hadrian Road sites could provide Gypsy and Traveller transit sites.

- Open Space – The plan provides for a balance between Housing, employment and open space. Development site proposals include some green wedge loss and public open space reductions. However, there are opportunities to secure new open space on strategic sites and enhance the quality of existing public open space through developer contributions.

- Transport – The plan will support the emerging Leicester Local Transport Plan, in particular improving key transport hubs; providing a fast and efficient bus network; and promoting and cycling.

3.4 Key planning policies that planning applications will be judged against

The following key policies included in the Reg 19 Local Plan are highlighted:

- 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, Student Housing and retention of family housing
- Delivering Quality Places – includes tall buildings where suitable, landscaping, shopfronts, protecting residential amenity
- Policies to preserve our 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 Bio-diversity net gain
- Policies to protect existing sports pitches and support for new one
- Support the city’s retail hierarchy and leisure and cultural facilities

3.5 Local Plan Timetable

The following provides a summary of key dates and an estimated forward timetable to plan adoption.

- Housing and EDTCE Scrutiny meeting – 19th Sept (To be re-arranged)
- HCLT and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny meeting – 20th Sept
- ASC, CYPE and Health – 21st Sept
- Special Meeting of OSC – 27th Sept
- Special Full Council – 11th October
- 6 Week Regulation 19 Consultation – from mid-November
- Submit Plan to Government – Spring 2023
- Examination in Public – mid 2023
- Local Plan formally adopted – end 2023

4. Public Consultation

The emerging local plan has been subject to extensive consultation as follows:

- Public Consultation on Key Issues and Options
- Public Consultation on Emerging Options and Development Management Policies
- Public Consultation on Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18)

The final plan (Regulation 19) and supporting evidence will be available for consideration at Full Council on the 11th October.

Officers plan to commence consultation in November in line with the approved Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document. This sets out how we will involve the public, developers, businesses and other agencies in the preparation of the council's planning policy documents.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

Whilst a great deal of officer time and effort goes into the development of the Local Plan, these costs are largely funded through existing staff budgets and reserves set aside for this purpose.

Stuart McAvoy – Acting Head of Finance

5.2 Legal implications

The draft local plan will be subject to a further period of public consultation; a public hearing before an independently appointed Inspector prior to adoption by the Council.

Legal

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Buildings and land are responsible for the majority of Leicester's Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions, with new development leading to both operational and embodied emissions. Considering the council's declaration of a climate emergency and ambition to reach carbon neutrality, it is therefore vital that these emissions are considered and addressed, including through the new Local Plan.

The council's current Climate Emergency Action Plan includes an action to ensure that the new Local Plan addresses the climate emergency. As set out within this report, the new Local Plan will include a policy on climate change, which will implement this action. The Climate Emergency Action Plan also contains an action on carrying out a study on sustainable construction to inform the Local Plan, which has been carried out. In addition, the council's Sustainability Service has been consulted on development of the new policy as part of the development of the Plan.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, 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.

This on-going duty. Where a disproportionate negative impact on a particular protected characteristic/s is identified, steps should be taken to mitigate (reduce or remove) that impact.

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

One of the three overarching objectives in achieving sustainable development is a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

The purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement is to ensure that all members of the public, stakeholders and industry professionals can become involved in the plan making process, and comment on planning applications. It aims to ensure that the views of a wide range of stakeholders from across a range of protected characteristics, backgrounds and communities are considered, supporting the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Meaningful consultation on the local plan is 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.

An equality impact assessment has been produced for the plan; the assessment is an iterative document and should be revisited and updated throughout the process and should take into account the consultation findings. It is important that the consultation is accessible.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

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

Not applicable

6. Background information and other papers:

Appendix 1 - Previous Scrutiny Comments
Appendix 2 - Strategic Site Allocations
Appendix 3 – Non Strategic Site Allocations