



Scan the code above or visit www.nwleics.gov.uk/meetings for a full copy of the agenda.

Meeting	LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE
Time/Day/Date	6.00 pm on Thursday, 26 September 2024
Location	Forest Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN
Officer to contact	Democratic Services 01530 454512

AGENDA

Item		Pages
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
	Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, registerable interest or other interest.	
3	PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION	
	To receive questions from members of the public under rule no.10 of the Council Procedure Rules.	
4	MINUTES	
	To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 August 2024	3 - 10
5	PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION	
	The report of the Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager	11 - 40
6	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH LOCAL PLAN (2020-41): REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION	
	The report of the Principal Planning Policy Officer	41 - 48

Circulation:

Councillor J G Simmons (Chair)
Councillor P Lees (Deputy Chair)
Councillor M Ball
Councillor D Bigby
Councillor S Lambeth
Councillor J Legrys
Councillor R L Morris
Councillor P Mout
Councillor C A Sewell
Councillor L Windram
Councillor M B Wyatt

MINUTES of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE held in the Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on WEDNESDAY, 14 AUGUST 2024

Present: Councillor J G Simmons (Chair)

Councillors P Lees, M Ball, A Barker (Substitute for Councillor S Lambeth), D Bigby, J Legrys, R L Morris, P Moulton, C A Sewell, L Windram and M B Wyatt

In attendance: Councillors R Johnson and S Sheahan

Officers: Ms J Althorpe, Mr S Ball, Mr C Elston, Ms S Lee and Mr I Nelson

7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor S Lambeth.

8 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor R Morris declared a registerable interest in item 6 – Breedon on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan Submission (Regulation 16) Consultation, as the Chair of Breedon on the Hill Parish Council. He would leave the room during the discussion or voting on the item.

9 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were four questions asked which are set out below together with the responses. Each member of the public who asked a question was invited by the Chair to ask one supplementary question which is also set out together with the response.

Question from Ms Baker

'I understand that NWLDC has exceeded their allocated quota of 357 new properties per year by building an average of 789 properties per year between 2020/21 and 2022/23. This additional building will have contributed to the Council now being allocated a new mandatory quota of 621 properties. After speaking to members of the Planning Committee, I am now aware that NWLDC agreed to take on a proportion of Leicester City Council's housing number responsibilities. I was particularly devastated to find that the draft plan includes a proposal to build 500 properties to the west of Whitwick, which will completely destroy that village community, be detrimental to the wildlife and the environment, destroy productive farmland and to place even more pressure on the road network and local resources.

Do the Council intend to continue to build a greater number than their fair share of housing into the future?'

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

'Whilst the standard method does result in annual requirement for 357 dwellings, to this has to be added any unmet need from elsewhere within Leicester and Leicestershire. Leicester City has demonstrated to the satisfaction of all of the Leicestershire authorities that it is not able to accommodate all its needs within its boundaries. Therefore, under the Duty to Cooperate that the Council is required to satisfy, all of the other Leicestershire authorities have to help meet this unmet

need. In addition, any housing requirement has to take account of any other local factors. In this instance, there is an imbalance between the number of future jobs and homes in the district. Therefore, the final housing requirement has been established as 686 dwellings each year. It is this factor which accounts for most of the increase in North West Leicestershire.

More details about this can be found at paragraphs 4.7 to 4.12 of the Proposed Policies document published in February and which can be viewed on the Council's website.

Whilst this number was exceeded in the first couple of years, it is likely that in some future years it will not be met. In effect there will be peaks and troughs which over time even each other out.

It is not the Council's intention to see more housing built than is required, but it does have to ensure that it meets whatever the identified need is.'

Supplementary question and response

Ms Baker asked if the Council had done everything it could to identify alternative sites that were more environmentally friendly and where development would be more in line with the community needs. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager advised that the plan was looking to strike a balance with where jobs and homes are located. The available space around the Bardon employment area had already been given planning permission for housing development and unfortunately there was no other available site in the area. Whitwick was the nearest settlement to Bardon and therefore the proposed site would strike the balance with jobs and homes.

Question from Mr Perry

'In view of the importance of the decisions that may be taken as regards the number of additional properties to be built in North West Leicestershire, and in particular approx. 800 new houses proposed in the West Whitwick plan, would it be advisable to delay/postpone any & all decisions to a later date? I ask this question following the recent change of Government & with reference to possible new legislation that has been trailed in the media. Any decisions taken now in haste without knowing the full scope of future legislation could be disastrous for local communities.'

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

'Officers are giving consideration to what these changes may mean for the preparation of the Local Plan. However, it is important that the Council gets a new Local Plan in place as soon as possible to ensure that it remains up to date. Without an up-to-date plan, the Council will be vulnerable to planning applications which may be submitted. Therefore, it will be important to maintain progress on a new Local Plan, whilst taking account of changes announced by the government.'

Supplementary question and response

Mr Perry asked if the Committee felt they had made enough effort to promote the proposed changes to the Local Plan as he believed many local people were not aware of the impact it would make on communities. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager listed the methods used to publicise the consultation including social media, the Council's website, publishing information in local newspapers and numerous drop-in sessions with officers across the district.

Question from Mr Brackenbury

'What is the justification for the proposed amendment to policy S1(2) setting out a requirement for employment land for the period 2024-2040 of at least 35,000 sq m for office uses and 146,000 sq m for industrial and small warehousing?'

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

'The justification for these requirement are derived from an update to the previous Need for Employment Land report as noted at paragraph 4.23 of the Local plan report (Item 5). As set out in Table 2 of item 5, the overall requirement is now less, but it is over a shorter period of time.'

Supplementary question and response

Mr Brackenbury asked for confirmation that, as the Council has the data available to compare rates received against rates due, the evidence referred to takes into account the vacant space both to occupied and unoccupied buildings. The Planning Policy and land Charges Team Manager agreed to provide a response outside of the meeting.

Question from Mrs Armston

'Regarding the West Whitwick proposal, the possible main developer has suggested one of the two access points would be off Talbot Street. Anyone who is familiar with the built-up street, in my opinion, would say that's virtually impossible. For a development of this scale to be considered for inclusion in the local plan, our planners must have considered access points for the committee to make an informed decision. If so, may I ask where?'

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

'The West of Whitwick proposal was identified in the draft plan as a Broad Location. In effect, this means it was an area for further exploration to determine how much, if any of it, might be suitable to be formally allocated for development. In coming to a view on whether allocation would be appropriate or not, a variety of factors need to be considered including how access might be achieved and also how the area might be developed in a comprehensive manner. Officers are assessing the various responses to the consultation which will be reported to a future meeting of this committee.'

Supplementary question and response

Mrs Armston asked if the broad plan for access to the site was likely to get even broader than what was proposed in the consultation. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager responded that there was currently nothing to suggest that would be the case and that there was still a lot of work required for the site which was why it was allocated as a broad location.

The Chair thanked the questioners for attending the meeting and putting forward their questions.

10 MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2024.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor M Ball and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11 LOCAL PLAN - STRATEGY POLICIES: CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager presented the report and along with the Principal Planning Policy Officers, summarised each of the policies for consideration.

For clarification prior to the discussion, the Legal Advisor explained the 'duty to co-operate' requirement in relation to the current consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Discussion from Members followed in which reference was made to the possibility of looking again at allocated sites for development. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager confirmed that this was still uncertain and would come back to Committee in due course.

During continued discussion on the 'duty to co-operate' requirement, comments were made by Members on the lower level of co-operation from some nearby authorities and it was suggested that an elected member attend the regional meetings where allocation of unmet need figures were discussed. It was also suggested that the Council ask other authorities to take some of North West Leicestershire's housing allocation. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager explained that North West Leicestershire had not declared any unmet housing need and therefore it could not be discussed with other authorities.

Each policy was then discussed in turn and several questions of clarity were sought and addressed by officers throughout the discussion.

Policy S1 – Future Housing and Economic Development Needs

Discussion was had on the possible extension of the local plan period, and it was explained that further work would be undertaken in due course on the employment requirements following the very recent national changes.

A suggestion was made to separate industrial development and warehousing. The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained the practicality of combining the two in planning terms due to the similar nature. It was also noted that combining them gave more flexibility, as separation could lead to the need to allocate more land to ensure numbers.

Following a discussion on the Freeport site it was confirmed that planning requirements still applied, and planning infrastructure would be needed if demonstrated it was required. It was noted that only if the Development Consent Order was granted would the site become part of the district supply numbers.

Policy S2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Officers corrected an error in the report at the appendix on page 74 of the agenda pack, the missing figure in relation to the two Kegworth sites was 251 dwellings.

Some concern was raised in the consultation that although there was the ability for settlements to move up categories if improvements were made in the area, there was not the ability to move down if the category disappeared. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager explained that in these circumstances the settlement would be classed as a local needs settlement and therefore development would be discouraged.

Policy S5 – Residential Development in the Countryside

Concerns were raised about self builds in rural areas and it was asked if it should be included in the policy. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager explained that the policy was for people who needed to be in a rural area rather than self builds, he also added that self builds would be subject to its own separate policy.

Following the conclusion of the discussion on the individual policies, Councillor M Wyatt stated that it was clear that residents were frustrated with housing allocations and villages felt like they were losing their identity. Therefore, he moved recommendations one to seven within the report with the addition of the following:

‘North West Leicestershire District Council condemns the government’s decision to increase the allocation of housing and request the Member of Parliament to make urgent representation to the housing minister expressing our grave concerns.’

It was seconded by Councillor P Lees and became the substantive motion.

Councillor D Bigby then moved an amendment to delete the wording added by Councillor M Wyatt as detailed above and to add in the following:

‘Taking full account of the duty to co-operate, North West Leicestershire should resist accepting any increase in its annual housing allocation for the new local plan period above that already agreed through the current statement of common ground – namely 686.’

It was seconded by Councillor J Legrys.

The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager advised against the amendment as there would be a risk of failing the duty to co-operate requirement.

Councillor D Bigby spoke to his amendment explaining that it was to give a steer to officers and the administration about what the committee wanted and to provide a negotiating tool. A thorough debate was had by Members both for and against the

proposed amendment which culminated in further advice from officers and the legal advisor on the risk of approving the amendment.

At this point procedural advice was sought in relation to voting on the motion and the substantive motion. Some concern was raised regarding the political nature of the substantive motion in front of Members should the amendment fall. Therefore, a Member suggested that the item be deferred to allow further information to become available on the housing allocation figures. Members were advised that as there was a motion currently tabled, that would need to be dealt with first before a deferral could be considered unless both the amendment and the substantive motion were withdrawn. There was not consent from all parties to withdraw, therefore the chair moved to the vote on the amendment as proposed by Councillor D Bigby.

A recorded vote being requested, the voting was as detailed below.

The amendment was LOST.

The Chair put the substantive motion as proposed by Councillor M Wyatt to the vote. A recorded vote being requested, the voting was as detailed below.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The comments received in respect of Strategy Policies S1 to S5 be noted.
- 2) The proposed changes to the plan objectives as set out in Section 3 of the report and Appendix A be agreed.
- 3) The proposed changes to Strategy Policy S1 as set out in Section 4 of this report and Appendix B be agreed.
- 4) The proposed changes to Strategy Policy S2 as set out in Section 5 of this report and Appendix C be agreed.
- 5) The proposed changes to Strategy Policy S3 as set out in Section 6 of this report and Appendix D be agreed.
- 6) The proposed changes to Strategy Policy S4 as set out in Section 7 of this report and Appendix E be agreed.
- 7) The proposed changes to Strategy Policy S5 as set out in Section 8 of this report and Appendix F be agreed.
- 8) North West Leicestershire District Council condemns the government's decision to increase the allocation of housing and request the Member of Parliament to make urgent representation to the housing minister expressing our grave concerns.

Substantive motion from Councillor M Wyatt (Motion)	
Councillor Jenny Simmons	For
Councillor Paul Lees	For
Councillor Mike Ball	For
Councillor Anthony Barker	Against
Councillor Dave Bigby	Against
Councillor John Legrys	Against
Councillor Ray Morris	For
Councillor Peter Mout	For
Councillor Carol Sewell	Against
Councillor Lee Windram	For
Councillor Michael Wyatt	For
Carried	
Amendment to motion from Councillor D Bigby (Amendment)	
Councillor Jenny Simmons	Against
Councillor Paul Lees	Against
Councillor Mike Ball	Against
Councillor Anthony Barker	For
Councillor Dave Bigby	For
Councillor John Legrys	For
Councillor Ray Morris	Against
Councillor Peter Mout	For
Councillor Carol Sewell	For
Councillor Lee Windram	Against
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Against
Rejected	

12 BREEDON ON THE HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUBMISSION (REGULATION 16) CONSULTATION

Having declared an interest, Councillor R Morris left the meeting at this point and did not take part in any discussion or voting on the item.

The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager presented the report.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor A Barker and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The proposed response to the submission draft of the Breedon on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan in Appendix A be agreed.
- 2) The consultation period for the Breedon on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan be noted.
- 3) It be noted that following receipt of the Independent Examiner's report, the Strategic Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure to determine whether the conditions have been met for the Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.
- 4) It be noted that following the referendum and if time does not allow for a report to this Committee, the Strategic Director of Place in Consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be 'made'.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.03 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE – THURSDAY 26 SEPTEMBER
2024

Title of Report	PROPOSED PLANNING REFORMS – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION	
Presented by	Ian Nelson Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	
Background Papers	Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	At this stage it is considered that the financial implications of the proposals set out in the consultation would be likely to be neutral. Some aspects have the potential to result in costs savings, for example by minimising discussion at any Local Plan Examination. However, other aspects may require additional expenditure, for example commissioning consultants.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is material consideration when preparing Local Plans and in determining planning applications and so any changes will influence future Council decisions.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None identified.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To outline proposals from government for further planning reforms and the Council's response to the current consultation.	
Recommendations	THAT THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE NOTES: (i) THE PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM AND THE COUNCIL'S	

	<p style="text-align: center;">(ii) RESPONSE AS SET OUT IN THIS REPORT; AND THE CONTENTS OF THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PLANNING INSPECTORATE AND THE POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEW LOCAL PLAN.</p>
--	---

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 30 July 2024, the new government published for consultation proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other reforms. The consultation can be viewed from the link above.
- 1.2 The following documents were published:
- Proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework
 - Proposed changes to standard method
 - Other proposed changes to the planning system.
- 1.3 The latter document provides more details about the various proposed changes outlined in the other two documents and also sets out some 106 questions upon which the government is seeking views. The structure of this report follows that of the latter document.
- 1.4 Many of the proposed changes will potentially impact upon the Council’s emerging Local Plan and so are of significance to the work of this Committee. Unfortunately, the consultation closes on 24 September 2024. Therefore, a response will have to be submitted in advance of the meeting under delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder. Therefore, the report is presented for information and noting in order to ensure that all members are aware of the potential changes.
- 1.5 Members attention is also drawn to correspondence between the government and the Planning Inspectorate which is of particular significance to the new Local Plan.

2 CHAPTER 1 (INTRODUCTION) AND CHAPTER 2 (POLICY OBJECTIVES)

- 2.1 Chapter 1 provides an overview of the consultation and the need for changes to the planning system to “achieve economic growth and build 1.5 million new homes”.
- 2.2 Chapter 2 outlines a number of policy objectives that the proposed reform seeks to achieve:
- a. **get Britain building again**, to build new homes, create jobs, and deliver new and improved infrastructure including building 1.5 million homes over the lifetime of parliament;
 - b. **take a brownfield first approach and then release low quality grey belt land**, while preserving the Green Belt;
 - c. **boost affordable housing**, to deliver the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation;
 - d. **bring home ownership into reach**, especially for young first-time buyers;

- e. **extract more public value from development**, including through infrastructure, amenity, and transport benefits and, where necessary, through use of strengthened compulsory purchase powers;
- f. **ensure communities continue to shape housebuilding in their areas**, demanding universal local plan coverage from all local planning authorities, while making full use of intervention powers to build the houses we need if this is not achieved;
- g. **promote a more strategic approach to planning**, by strengthening cross-boundary collaboration, ahead of legislation to introduce mandatory mechanisms for strategic planning;
- h. **support the development needed for a modern economy**, to prepare the way for our modern industrial strategy; and
- i. **unlock new sources of clean energy**, supporting our mission to deliver clean energy by 2030.

3 CHAPTER 3 – PLANNING FOR THE HOMES WE NEED

- 3.1 It is proposed to reverse changes made to the NPPF by the previous Government in December 2023. In particular, it is proposed that paragraph 61 be revised so that it is clear that the standard method is the means by which housing need should be identified and by removing reference to the exceptional circumstances in which the use of alternative approaches to assess housing need may be appropriate.
- 3.2 Local planning authorities will be expected to make all efforts to allocate land in line with their housing need as per the standard method. A lower housing requirement would need to be justified by local evidence that the need cannot be met due to local constraints such as protected habitats and flood risk areas.
- 3.3 All local planning authorities will need to demonstrate they have taken all possible steps, including optimising density, sharing need with neighbouring authorities, before a lower housing requirement will be considered.

Question 1: Do you agree that we should reverse the December 2023 changes made to paragraph 61?

Comments

Whilst recognising that the suggested change would provide absolute clarity as to what is expected from authorities in preparing their local plans, it may not always be possible to meet the identified needs. This might be because of infrastructure constraints which proposed development cannot address because of viability issues or because insufficient sites have been put forward by willing landowners. It is essential that a degree of flexibility is maintained for such circumstances.

Question 2: Do you agree that we should remove reference to the use of alternative approaches to assessing housing need in paragraph 61 and the glossary of the NPPF?

Comments

Having one single approach to identifying housing needs should ensure a consistent approach and avoid unnecessary time and expense at the examination stage. For this reason, the Council supports the proposed change.

Urban uplift

- 3.4 It is proposed to remove the urban uplift to applied to a number of large cities, including Leicester, which saw the housing need in such places increased by 35%. More details about this and the standard method for identifying housing requirements are set out in Chapter 4.

Question 3: Do you agree that we should reverse the December 2023 changes made on the urban uplift by deleting paragraph 62?

Comments

The Council supports the proposed change as the change made in December 2023 was not based on any robust analysis of need.

Character and density

- 3.5 Paragraph 130 was added to the NPPF to explain that local character can be taken into account when local planning authorities consider their ability to meet their housing needs. The government believes that such an approach will hinder efforts to achieve sustainable patterns of development and meet future housing needs.
- 3.6 It is also proposed to no longer focus on district-wide design coding, but instead to focus local planning authority efforts on the preparation of localised design codes, masterplans and guides for areas of most change and most potential.

Question 4: Do you agree that we should reverse the December 2023 changes made on character and density and delete paragraph 130?

Comments

It is considered that the issues raised in paragraph 130 are already adequately addressed in the preceding paragraph and so paragraph 130 is unnecessary.

Question 5: Do you agree that the focus of design codes should move towards supporting spatial visions in local plans and areas that provide the greatest opportunities for change such as greater density, in particular the development of large new communities?

Comments

The District Council is a pathfinder authority and has spent a considerable amount of time and effort on producing a district-wide design code. The design code will reflect local circumstances in a way which a national code could not do. Whilst the Council supports

the use of area masterplans or site-specific design codes, they need to be set in, and be consistent with, the local context. For these reasons the Council does not support the proposed change in respect of the importance of local design codes which see them being reduced in significance.

Strengthening and reforming the presumption in favour of sustainable development ('the presumption')

- 3.7 It is proposed to amend paragraph 11 of the NPPF to make clear that where the policies relating to the supply of housing land are out-of-date, then planning permission should be granted unless other policies in the NPPF suggest otherwise or the adverse impact would demonstrably outweigh the benefits (both as per the current NPPF). The latter has been amended to include specific reference to the location and design development and for securing affordable housing. The accompanying consultation document makes clear that this is considered necessary to address concerns that some developers have used the presumption to promote low quality, unsustainable development. An accompanying footnote clarifies what constitutes a supply of land.

Question 6: Do you agree that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be amended as proposed?

Comments

It is important that the quality of new development is recognised as being an important consideration, so the specific reference to design is welcomed and will balance out the other proposed changes.

Restoring the Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS)

- 3.8 It is proposed to re-establish the requirement for all local planning authorities, regardless of local plan status, to continually demonstrate five years of specific, deliverable sites for housing. In addition, it is also proposed to remove the wording on past oversupply in paragraph 77, which was introduced to set out that previous oversupply could be set against upcoming supply. The government is of the view that given the chronic need for housing in all areas that "we should celebrate strong delivery records without diluting future ambitions".

Question 7: Do you agree that all local planning authorities should be required to continually demonstrate 5 years of specific, deliverable sites for decision making purposes, regardless of plan status?

Comments

Whilst it is recognised that requiring all authorities to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land should ensure consistency, it needs to be recognised that local authorities are not in sufficient control to ensure that the necessary delivery of housing occurs. Instead, this is in the control of landowners and developers. There needs to be a greater

recognition of this, but also more pressure put upon developers to ensure delivery and, if necessary, penalties for non-delivery.

Question 8: Do you agree with our proposal to remove wording on national planning guidance in paragraph 77 of the current NPPF?

Comments

Where housing delivery has exceeded past requirements, such as North West Leicestershire, then an authority should be able to take this in to account when assessing the five-year supply as otherwise such authorities are being punished for previously granting sufficient permissions. Making the change suggested will simply increase the amount of new housing required in the immediate and long term as the requirement is proposed to have as its starting point the housing stock. In effect, authorities will be punished twice.

Restoring the 5% buffer

- 3.9 It is proposed to reintroduce the requirement for authorities to apply a 5% buffer to their five-year housing land supply in order to account for fluctuations, which was removed as a requirement in changes made in December 2023. In addition, it is proposed to remove the option for local planning authorities to 'fix' their five-year housing land supply through Annual Position Statements as this option has been little used. Such statements are submitted to and assessed by the Planning Inspectorate

Question 9: Do you agree that all local planning authorities should be required to add a 5% buffer to their five-year housing land supply calculations?

Comments

It is recognised that housing supply calculation can never be precise and so requiring a 5% buffer is not objected to.

Question 10: If yes, do you agree that 5% is an appropriate buffer, or should it be a different figure?

Comments

5% is considered to be appropriate.

Question 11: Do you agree with the removal of policy on Annual Position Statements?

Comments

Producing an Annual Position Statement has resource implications for the Council. Therefore, removing this option would be welcomed by the Council.

Maintaining effective co-operation and the move to strategic planning

- 3.10 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 will revoke the Duty to Cooperate in relation to the reformed plan making system. However, the Duty remains a legal requirement under the current local plans system and will continue to apply to local plans progressed within the current system. However, the Government considers that it will be necessary to introduce effective new mechanisms for cross-boundary strategic planning to deliver sustainable growth and addressing key spatial issues – including meeting housing needs, delivering strategic infrastructure, growing the economy, and improving climate resilience. Therefore, the government proposes to take the steps necessary to enable universal coverage of strategic planning within this Parliament, via formal legislation. This will include exploring the most effective arrangements for developing Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) outside of mayoral areas such as Leicestershire. Amendments are also proposed to the NPPF to ensure that the right engagement is occurring on the sharing of unmet housing need and other strategic issues where plans are being progressed.
- 3.11 It is proposed to amend paragraph 28 of the NPPF to recognise that evidence and information come forward at different times and that it will be for strategic policy-making authorities and Inspectors to come to an informed decision on the basis of available information, rather than waiting for a full set of evidence from other authorities.

Question 12: Do you agree that the NPPF should be amended to further support effective co-operation on cross boundary and strategic planning matters?

Comments

The Council has a strong record of partnership working with other authorities across Leicester and Leicestershire and so has no objection to the proposed changes. There needs to be clarity as to what issues need to be addressed at a strategic level as opposed to the local level.

In respect of the proposed changes to paragraph 28 of the NPPF the Council welcomes the clarification provided in respect of evidence, but it does risk introducing a degree of uncertainty to the process. This could be addressed by providing further guidance.

- 3.12 The government wants the planning system to enable long term and ambitious planning of strategic scale proposals (for example new settlements), while recognising that such plans need to be grounded and realistic. There is no firm proposal to address this point at this stage, so instead an open question is asked.

Question 13: Should the tests of soundness be amended to better assess the soundness of strategic scale plans or proposals?

Comments

The suggestion that the test of soundness be amended to better assess the soundness of strategic scale proposals is a potential concern. It is likely that such developments will require investment by various government agencies, such as National Highways. This has

proven difficult to obtain in recent years due to uncertainty about long-term funding and also resourcing generally. Any test of soundness would need to recognise these issues. For example, it would need to consider and recognise what level of engagement there has been with infrastructure providers throughout the development of proposals and not just focus upon the likelihood of funding being available. There would also need to be greater commitment from government agencies, which will require a much longer-term view being taken by government. Furthermore, there will need to be a firm commitment from agencies to ensure that they engage in the plan making process, which is partly dependent upon their available resources.

Question 14: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

No comments

4 CHAPTER 4 – A NEW STANDARD METHOD FOR ASSESSING HOUSING NEEDS.

4.1 A revised standard method is proposed which replaces the current four-step model with a new two-step approach. This is outlined below followed by officers' consideration of the proposed changes.

- First step - set a baseline using housing stock rather than household projections as at present. This is set at 0.8% of the housing stock.
- Second step - add in an affordability multiplier whereby the baseline stock figure is adjusted upwards in areas where house prices are more than four times higher than earnings. In order to increase the importance of affordability considerations the affordability multiplier would be 0.6% compared to the current multiplier of 0.25%. It will also be based on an average over three years, rather than a single year as at present.

4.2 The last steps of the existing method - capping the figure (at 40% above either the previous local plan figure or the projection-derived baseline) and adding the urban uplift of 35% (including Leicester City) - are proposed to be removed.

4.3 The effect of these changes is that the housing need figure for North West Leicestershire increases from 357 dwellings every year to 621 dwellings every year.

Considerations

4.4 Household projections have traditionally provided the basis for determining housing requirements in local plans. It is the case that in recent years projections published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have been problematic as they have shown so much fluctuation from year to year. It is also accepted that they do generate significant debate at local plan examinations and so lengthen examinations to some degree. Notwithstanding this, they are concerned with looking ahead to estimate what future needs are likely to be whereas the proposed approach does not attempt to project what a future need might be. Instead, it is simply a notional figure of what could be considered to be an acceptable growth rate. The result is that the starting point for North West Leicestershire increases significantly from 357 dwellings each year to 621 dwellings each year.

- 4.5 In terms of the baseline figure of 0.8% this is slightly less than the national growth rate of 0.89 % per year over the last 10 years. Locally the rate is much higher at 1.8% per annum.
- 4.6 Affordability is a key issue for many people looking to buy their own house. The latest figure for North West Leicestershire shows that the affordability ratio is 7.76, below the figure for England (8.26) but above that for the East Midlands (7.59). Using a three-year average will help to smooth out any changes in affordability and hence provide stability during the plan making process.
- 4.7 The proposal to remove the 35% uplift that was applied to a number of large urban areas, including Leicester City, but which was not statistically based is welcomed. This means that the level of unmet need which is addressed in the current Statement of Common Ground and which informs the local plan housing requirement of 686 dwellings each year will be reduced. However, this is offset by the other changes to the standard method which result an increase from 357 dwellings each year to 621 dwellings each year. Compared to the current standard method, this represents an increase of 74% but is 9% less than the figure from the Statement of Common Ground (686 dwellings). Most other authorities across Leicester and Leicestershire see significant increases compared to the current standard method, but as noted the requirement for Leicester City has decreased significantly. It is likely that there will still be unmet need from Leicester City, albeit a lesser amount. It is also possible that there may be unmet need from other authorities in view of the increases proposed.
- 4.8 For the above reasons the Council should support the proposed changes.

Question 15: Do you agree that Planning Practice Guidance should be amended to specify that the appropriate baseline for the standard method is housing stock rather than the latest household projections?

Question 16: Do you agree that using the workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio, averaged over the most recent three year period for which data is available to adjust the standard method's baseline, is appropriate?

Question 17: Do you agree that affordability is given an appropriate weighting within the proposed standard method?

Question 18: Do you consider the standard method should factor in evidence on rental affordability? If so, do you have any suggestions for how this could be incorporated into the model?

Question 19: Do you have any additional comments on the proposed method for assessing housing needs?

Comments

Overall, the Council considers that the proposed approach to use housing stock is inappropriate as it has no basis in what an areas future needs are likely to be, but instead assumes a notional growth across all areas. The effect of this for areas such as North West Leicestershire is to significantly increase the housing requirement but without knowing if this is what will actually be required. The Council considers that the proposed

approach to be flawed for the above reasons. The use of housing stock data averaged over three years is considered to be appropriate and weighted accordingly.

5 CHAPTER 5 – BROWNFIELD, GREY BELT AND GREEN BELT

- 5.1 This chapter largely concentrates upon the issue of development in the Green Belt, of which there is none in North West Leicestershire and Leicestershire as a whole, therefore, this issue is not considered nor comments made in response to the various questions.
- 5.2 In respect of brownfield (or previously developed land) development, it is proposed to amend paragraph 124c of the NPPF to reinforce the expectation that development proposals on previously developed land are viewed positively. This makes clear that the default answer to brownfield development should be yes.

Question 20: Do you agree that we should make the proposed change set out in paragraph 124c, as a first step towards brownfield passports?

Comments

The Council supports the emphasis upon the reuse of brownfield sites, although it does need to be recognised that the supply of such sites, particularly on a large scale, is not finite and that such sites often take time to bring forward. This is important when considering deliverability issues as part of the preparation of Local Plans.

6 CHAPTER 6 – DELIVERING AFFORDABLE, WELL-DESIGNED HOMES AND PLACES

- 6.1 The government wants to increase the supply of social and affordable housing. To help ensure this occurs, it is proposed to amend the NPPF to include an expectation that any housing needs assessments explicitly consider the needs of those requiring Social Rent and that authorities specify their expectations on Social Rent delivery as part of broader affordable housing policies. Whilst the government supports local authorities in giving priority to Social Rent in the affordable housing mix they seek, this is seen as a local matter and so the government will not be prescriptive.
- 6.2 Consistent with this, it is proposed to remove the prescriptive requirements relating to affordable home ownership products in the current NPPF. This includes a requirement to deliver at least 10% of the total number of homes on major sites as affordable home ownership and the requirement that a minimum of 25% of affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes.

Question 47: Do you agree with setting the expectation that local planning authorities should consider the particular needs of those who require Social Rent when undertaking needs assessments and setting policies on affordable housing requirements?

Question 48: Do you agree with removing the requirement to deliver 10% of housing on major sites as affordable home ownership?

Question 49: Do you agree with removing the minimum 25% First Homes requirement?

Question 50: Do you have any other comments on retaining the option to deliver First Homes, including through exception sites?

Comments

The suggested changes would be less prescriptive than the current NPPF and other guidance. It is important that the differing needs of local communities are met as far as possible and so having the greater flexibility than is currently the case is welcomed. However, it should be appreciated that the delivery of social rented properties is predicated upon the capacity of Registered Providers to deliver new homes. This is a matter outside the scope of the planning system but needs to be considered by government as part of the wider housing provision agenda.

Promoting mixed tenure development

- 6.3 To promote the delivery of mixed tenure housing developments, and the realisation of these benefits, it is proposed to introduce a new policy that expects local planning authorities to take a positive approach to mixed tenure schemes through both plans and decisions.

Question 51: Do you agree with introducing a policy to promote developments that have a mix of tenures and types?

Comments

The Council's adopted Local Plan already seeks to ensure a mix of house types, size and tenures. A strengthening of policy is to be welcomed.

Supporting majority affordable housing developments

- 6.4 The government acknowledges that there will be circumstances where developments that are predominately (or exclusively) single tenure will be appropriate and should be supported, particularly schemes that deliver a high percentage of Social Rent (or other affordable housing tenures). However, it is acknowledged that that predominately or exclusively affordable housing developments can raise concerns, given evidence around the benefits of mixed communities. Views are therefore, sought on how to best promote sites of this type, while ensuring that adequate safeguards are in place that avoid unintended consequences. Views are also sought on the best approach for supporting affordable housing developments within rural areas.

Question 52: What would be the most appropriate way to promote high percentage Social Rent/affordable housing developments?

Question 53: What safeguards would be required to ensure that there are not unintended consequences? For example, is there a maximum site size where development of this nature is appropriate?

Question 54: What measures should we consider to better support and increase rural affordable housing?

Comments

It is important that affordable housing is treated in the same way as private market housing and that the mix should be a reflection of local circumstances, including need but also viability. It would not be appropriate for national policy to be too prescriptive.

Meeting the needs of looked after children

- 6.5 It is proposed to include a specific reference in the NPPF that when assessing the housing needs of different groups in the community and preparing planning policies, that the needs of looked-after children are taken into account. This would support a previous written ministerial statement from May 2023.

Question 55: Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraph 63 of the existing NPPF?

No comments

Delivering a diverse range of homes and high-quality places

- 6.6 In order to provide more support for community-led approaches to provide housing, it is proposed to amend the NPPF by expanding the definition of community led housing to include a group originally set up for a purpose other than housebuilding; and removing the size limit for community-led exception sites, where an alternative limit is established through the development plan.
- 6.7 Views are also sought on whether changes are needed to the definition of 'affordable housing for rent' in the Framework glossary to make it easier for organisations that are not Registered Providers, for example community-led developers and almshouses, to develop new affordable homes.

Question 56: Do you agree with these changes?

Comments

No comments

Question 57: Do you have views on whether the definition of ‘affordable housing for rent’ in the Framework glossary should be amended? If so, what changes would you recommend?

Comments

Providing the other aspects of the definition (i.e. the rent is Social or Affordable Rent or 20% below local market rents and is to remain affordable) are satisfied it would seem reasonable to allow for somebody other than a Registered Provider to be eligible to provide affordable housing, subject to their being adequate protection for tenants. This would be consistent with the current definition whereby landlords that are not a registered provider are included where the provision is a Build to Rent scheme.

Making the small site allocation mandatory

- 6.8 The Government is concerned that small and medium (SME) sized housebuilders are not able to access the small sites that they need. As a result, most authorities preparing plans have been unable to identify enough small sites to reach the current 10% NPPF local plan allocation expectation. This is hindering local SMEs ability to identify sites to bring forward, build out, and for their businesses to grow. Therefore, views are sought on why authorities are unable to identify 10% small sites and views on measures to strengthen small site policy through the NPPF, including the possibility of requiring a 10% allocation in all cases by removing the current caveat that there may be some places where strong reasons exist which mean this cannot be achieved.

Question 58: Do you have views on why insufficient small sites are being allocated, and on ways in which the small site policy in the NPPF should be strengthened?

Comments

Whilst small sites have been put forward as part of the Council’s Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), for various planning reasons most of these are not considered suitable for allocation on planning grounds or because there are questions about their deliverability as no developer is involved. There is a risk that requiring a specific percentage of sites to be suitable for small and medium sized builders will result in the allocation of sub-standard sites or sites which cannot be delivered. The latter could be addressed to some degree by ensuring the over allocation of sites compared to the housing requirement, but this is likely to be unpopular politically and amongst local communities particularly as housing targets are already challenging.

It should also be appreciated that the more sites that are specifically proposed as part of local plans would be likely to generate more comments and hence extend the plan preparation timetable contrary to the intentions to speed up the preparation of local plans.

Requiring “well designed” development

- 6.9 The NPPF was updated in September and December 2023 to include references to the term ‘beauty’ and ‘beautiful’ when relating to well-designed development. It is proposed to reverse these changes as such references may result in inconsistency in how it is applied in decision-making, as many find the term subjective and difficult to define.

Question 59: Do you agree with the proposals to retain references to well-designed buildings and places, but remove references to ‘beauty’ and ‘beautiful’ and to amend paragraph 138 of the existing Framework?

Comments

The Council supports retention of references to well-designed buildings and places and agrees beauty and beautiful may be subjective and difficult to define. However, planning authorities need some comfort that where poorly designed developments are refused planning permission, they will be supported by inspectors at appeal.

Supporting upward extensions

- 6.10 It is proposed to amend the reference to mansard roofs as a specific example of upwards extensions that would be supported as it places a disproportionate emphasis on one type of upwards extension.

Question 60: Do you agree with proposed changes to policy for upwards extensions?

Question 61: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

No comments

7 CHAPTER 7 – BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE TO GROW THE ECONOMY

Changes to the NPPF to support modern economies

- 7.1 It is proposed to provide specific support in the NPPF to support the following key industries:
- Laboratories
 - Gigafactories
 - Digital infrastructure
 - Freight and logistics
- 7.2 Paragraph 86b is proposed to be changed so as require plans to include criteria and the allocation of strategic sites for the uses listed above.
- 7.3 Of specific interest to North West Leicestershire, paragraph 87b is proposed to be amended to ensure supply chains, transport innovation and decarbonisation are

considered, in terms of the locational requirements of the storage and distribution sectors. These proposals aim to support the growth of the freight and logistics sector by encouraging decarbonisation, adaptation to changing patterns of global trade, and adoption of new and emerging technologies across its transport, distribution and storage operations.

Question 62: Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraphs 86 b) and 87 of the existing NPPF?

Comments

These statements regarding the importance of the freight and logistics sector will add to the already significant pressure for logistics development that the Council is experiencing. Whilst recognising the need for and benefit of such uses, it is considered that this needs to be balanced out by there being a much greater recognition of the potential impact of such uses in terms of local communities who are impacted by the both the buildings, but also the traffic associated with such uses.

Question 63: Are there other sectors you think need particular support via these changes? What are they and why?

Comments

It would assist if the NPPF also recognised the need to create balanced economies that are not too dependent upon specific sectors.

Directing data centres, gigafactories, and laboratories into the NSIP consenting regime process

- 7.4 In addition to the change of wording outlined above, the government wants to test whether digital infrastructure projects should be able to opt into the National Strategic Infrastructure Project (NSIP) regime by including data centres, gigafactories and laboratories to be prescribed as a type of business and commercial NSIP and be directed into the NSIP consenting regime through section 35 direction, on request and subject to certain conditions.

Question 64: Would you support the prescription of data centres, gigafactories, and/or laboratories as types of business and commercial development which could be capable (on request) of being directed into the NSIP consenting regime?

Question 65: If the direction power is extended to these developments, should it be limited by scale, and what would be an appropriate scale if so?

Question 66: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

No comments

8 CHAPTER 8 – DELIVERING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Public infrastructure

- 8.1 In view of the pressing need to improve the provision and modernisation of key public services infrastructure such as hospitals and criminal justice facilities it is proposed to add wording in NPPF paragraph 100 to make clear that significant weight should be placed on the importance of facilitating new, expanded, or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development.

Question 67: Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraph 100 of the existing NPPF?

Comments

The proposed change is supported

- 8.2 In order to ensure that there is sufficient choice of post-16 education places available it is proposed to incorporate reference to post-16 places to paragraph 99 of the existing NPPF to support the delivery of this type of education provision.
- 8.3 It is also proposed to include reference to early years places, not just schools, to support the provision of additional nurseries so as to support people looking to rejoin the workforce.

Question 68: Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraph 99 of the existing NPPF?

Comments

Whilst not objecting to the proposed changes, it is important to recognise that on their own they will not ensure that the government's goal is achieved. There will need to be investment by government and private sector partners.

A 'vision-led' approach to transport planning

- 8.4 It is proposed to amend existing paragraphs 114 and 115 to include references to having a "vision led approach" to promote sustainable transport solutions as part of new development instead of the more traditional 'predict and provide' approach which the government argues is too simplistic and pays "insufficient regard for the quality of places being created or whether the transport infrastructure which is planned is fully justified". A vision led approach would mean "working with residents, local planning authorities and developers to set a vision for how places should be and designing the transport and behavioural interventions to help achieve this vision".

Question 69: Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraphs 114 and 115 of the existing NPPF?

Comments

Seeking to create quality places is a key role for planning and is something that this Council fully supports. A “vision led approach” has the potential to assist in this by designing in a greater range of travel options including walking and cycling from the outset. This, in theory, should help to create more sustainable development and also has the potential to be more cost effective. However, it is important to recognise that this does not necessarily negate the need for road improvements as part of a wider package when planning new development, particularly large-scale development. It should also be appreciated that needing to work with a wide range of stakeholders could potentially delay bring forward development, contrary to the government’s wishes.

Promoting healthy communities

- 8.5 Views are sought on possible ways that the planning system can do more to support the creation of healthy communities. This includes tackling obesity, encouraging active travel and supporting a healthy childhood, such as through more consistent approaches to controlling hot food takeaways near schools.

Question 70: How could national planning policy better support local authorities in (a) promoting healthy communities and (b) tackling childhood obesity?

Question 71: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

Comments

In order to promote healthy communities, it is important that local authorities work with key stakeholders across a range of initiatives to ensure a joined-up approach, including better design and a better understanding of existing issues.

9 CHAPTER 9 – SUPPORTING GREEN ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Supporting onshore wind

- 9.1 On 8 July, the Chancellor announced that footnotes 57 and 58 to paragraph 163 of the existing NPPF, which placed additional tests on onshore wind schemes, including demonstrating proven community support, would no longer apply to decisions. The government is of the view that in effect, this created a very high bar for consent to be granted and led to very significant under-delivery of onshore wind schemes.
- 9.2 The Chancellor’s also included a commitment to consult on bringing onshore wind back into the NSIP regime.

Question 72: Do you agree that large onshore wind projects should be reintegrated into the s NSIP regime?

Comments

The Council supports the proposal, subject to ensuring adequate measures are put in place to ensure that the concerns of communities are properly addressed through the process.

Supporting renewable deployment

- 9.3 It is proposed to amend existing paragraph 163 of the NPPF to direct decision makers to give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation, and proposals' contribution to meeting a net zero future. In addition, paragraph 160 would seek to set a stronger expectation that authorities proactively identify sites for renewable and low carbon development when producing plans, where it is likely that in allocating a site, it would help secure development.

Question 73: Do you agree with the proposed changes to the NPPF to give greater support to renewable and low carbon energy?

Comments

Notwithstanding the retention of the former wording about securing development, the reference to requiring authorities to identify sites for renewable energy generation as part of plans will be onerous and require significant resources and time to assess potential sites. This potentially will delay the preparation of plans at a time when the government is seeking to speed up plan production. Furthermore, there is a concern as to how Inspectors might interpret this change which could result in additional work or, a worst-case scenario, potentially result in a plan being considered unsound. The Council considers that the existing wording is appropriate and should not be changed.

Question 74: Some habitats, such as those containing peat soils, might be considered unsuitable for renewable energy development due to their role in carbon sequestration. Should there be additional protections for such habitats and/or compensatory mechanisms put in place?

No comments

Setting the NSIP threshold for solar generating stations and onshore wind

- 9.4 The Planning Act 2008 requires that decisions in respect of solar and onshore wind projects with a generating capacity of more than 50 megawatts (MW) would be determined by the Secretary of State under the NSIP regime. However, changes in technology that have taken place since, mean that many small or medium-sized projects now exceed the existing 'nationally significant' threshold which can be a barrier to the accelerated and streamlined deployment. Therefore, it is proposed to increase the threshold above which proposals are considered to be national

significant to 100MW for onshore wind projects and re determined as Nationally Significant at 100MW and 150ME for solar projects.

Question 75: Do you agree that the threshold at which onshore wind projects are deemed to be Nationally Significant and therefore consented under the NSIP regime should be changed from 50 megawatts (MW) to 100MW?

Question 76: Do you agree that the threshold at which solar projects are deemed to be Nationally Significant and therefore consented under the NSIP regime should be changed from 50MW to 150MW?

Comments

The proposed change will result in more applications falling to local authorities to determine which will have resource implications, notwithstanding the fact that such applications will involve a planning application fee.

Question 77: If you think that alternative thresholds should apply to onshore wind and/or solar, what would these be?

No comments

Tackling climate change

- 9.5 Views are sought on what stronger action can be taken to ensure that the planning system plays a powerful role in helping to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. The issue of the potential problems of using carbon assessments when assessing proposed development is noted. Views are also sought on how the current planning policy for flood risk could be clearer or more proportionate.

Question 78: In what specific, deliverable ways could national planning policy do more to address climate change mitigation and adaptation?

No comments

Question 79: What is your view of the current state of technological readiness and availability of tools for accurate carbon accounting in plan-making and planning decisions, and what are the challenges to increasing its use?

Comments

Any tools need to be simple to use whether for local authorities or applicants' site promoters to avoid costs and delays in preparing plans and determining planning applications.

Question 80: Are any changes needed to policy for managing flood risk to improve its effectiveness?

Question 81: Do you have any other comments on actions that can be taken through planning to address climate change?

Comments

Addressing climate change requires initiatives across a broad range of policy areas. In particular, the Council would question whether planning is the correct tool. In particular, could more be achieved through the Building Regulation process rather than through planning.

Availability of agricultural land for food production

- 9.6 In December 2023, a footnote was added to the NPPF that made the availability of agricultural land for food production an explicit consideration in determining if sites are appropriate for development. It is proposed to remove this as it provided no additional benefit to additional policy and it gives no indication of how authorities are to assess and weigh the availability of agricultural land when making planning decisions.

Question 82: Do you agree with removal of this text from the footnote?

Comments

The Council supports the proposed removal of this text which would be likely to be an important issue as part of the examination of plans, but without any clear indication as to how the Council as the local planning authority would be expected to come to a balanced view.

Question 83: Are there other ways in which we can ensure that development supports and does not compromise food production?

No comments

Improving the current thresholds for water resources developments in the NSIP regime

- 9.7 In order to provide water undertakers with greater certainty on the planning route for their new strategic water infrastructure and to support faster delivery to address the increasingly frequent issues with water scarcity and quality, a number of potential changes to the Planning Act 2008 are suggested by bringing various aspects into the NSIP regime including infrastructure which transfers treated drinking water.

Question 84: Do you agree that we should improve the current water infrastructure provisions in the Planning Act 2008, and do you have specific suggestions for how best to do this?

Question 85: Are there other areas of the water infrastructure provisions that could be improved? If so, can you explain what those are, including your proposed changes?

Question 86: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

No comments

10 CHAPTER 10 – CHANGES TO LOCAL PLAN INTERVENTION CRITERIA

10.1 This chapter seeks views on whether to update the local plan intervention policy criteria or to remove the criteria. Currently, decisions on intervention are made in line with relevant legal provisions and on the basis of intervention policy criteria set out in 2017 Housing White Paper and include where policies have not been kept up-to-date and progress on plan making has not progressed. These criteria have been used on several occasions over the past seven years.

10.2 The government is suggesting two possible approaches:

- Removal of local plan intervention policy criteria whereby Ministers would approach any future decisions on intervention with substance, rigour, and an open mind, and in the context of relevant legal tests.
- Revision of the local plan intervention policy criteria that could include a failure to do what is required to get their plan in place or keep it up to date, with possible measures including the issuing of plan-making directions through to the removal of plan-making powers. It is suggested that that decisions on intervention should have regard to local development needs; sub-regional, regional and national development needs; or plan progress.

10.3 In both cases local planning authorities would also be given the opportunity to set out any exceptional circumstances that might be relevant.

Question 87: Do you agree that we should we replace the existing intervention policy criteria with the revised criteria set out in this consultation?

Question 88: Alternatively, would you support us withdrawing the criteria and relying on the existing legal tests to underpin future use of intervention powers?

Comments

Intervention in plan making by the Secretary of State should be a last resort and only where it can be demonstrated that a local planning authority is deliberately avoiding its responsibilities. It is important that any intervention criteria are published and then adhered to in order to ensure for transparency and confidence in the plan making system. The opportunity for an authority to identify any exceptional circumstances, for example a delay in crucial evidence gathering, is important and welcomed.

11 CHAPTER 11 – CHANGES TO PLANNING APPLICATION FEES AND COST RECOVERY FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES RELATED TO NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

11.1 It is proposed to increase the planning application fees for householder applications to better reflect the cost of processing them. A fee of £528 is suggested, an increase from the current £258. Views are sought on whether a smaller increase of say 50% would be more appropriate. It is not proposed to increase the fees for major applications as these were increased by 35% in December 2023 and government estimates that the fees from major applications “broadly meet cost recovery levels”.

Question 89: Do you agree with the proposal to increase householder application fees to meet cost recovery?

Comments

Yes

Question 90: If no, do you support increasing the fee by a smaller amount (at a level less than full cost recovery) and if so, what should the fee increase be? For example, a 50% increase to the householder fee would increase the application fee from £258 to £387.

If Yes, please explain in the text box what you consider an appropriate fee increase would be.

Question 91: If we proceed to increase householder fees to meet cost recovery, we have estimated that to meet cost-recovery, the householder application fee should be increased to £528. Do you agree with this estimate?

Yes

If No, please explain in the text box below and provide evidence to demonstrate what you consider the correct fee should be.

Proposed fee increase for other planning applications

11.2 Views are sought in respect of whether other application types (excluding section 73 and section 73B applications) where the current fee does not cover the cost to the local planning authority of processing and determining these applications, should be charged a fee and if so what it should be.

Question 92: Are there any applications for which the current fee is inadequate? Please explain your reasons and provide evidence on what you consider the correct fee should be.

Comments

The fee for prior approvals is considered to be inadequate as they often involve the same level of officer time as a planning application.

Where applications are cross boundary, the local planning authority with the smallest site area should receive a proportion of the application fee to cover their costs. At present a significant amount of time and resource can be provided on cross boundary applications with one authority receiving no application fee.

Fees for applications where there is currently no charge

- 11.3 Views are sought as to whether a number of applications, such as such as listed building consents and works to trees that are protected because they are located in a conservation area or by a Tree Preservation Order, should be subject to a fee. Such a fee could be to cover the full cost or a small flat administration fee only to cover the administration, consultation and publicity costs of applications.

Question 93: Are there any application types for which fees are not currently charged but which should require a fee? Please explain your reasons and provide evidence on what you consider the correct fee should be.

Comments

Fees are not charged for these applications, principally for the reason that owners cannot opt out of these designations and such designations confer burdens with regard to preservation and maintenance that are in the public interest.

Not all applications for listed building consent relate to just preservation and maintenance and there is a significant cost to the Council for applications, including the need to employ specialist conservation officers.

The fees also need to cover the full cost, including publicity required for these types of application.

Localisation of planning application fees

- 11.4 The consultation is seeking views on whether local authorities should be able to set their own fees and puts forward two possible options:
- Full localisation – whereby all local planning authorities would have to set their own planning fees to achieve, but not exceed, cost recovery.
 - Local variation – whereby the nationally set default fee would be maintained but local planning authorities would have the option to vary the fees within prescribed limits where they consider the nationally set fee does not meet their actual costs. Local authorities would not be under a mandatory requirement to set their own fees.

Question 94: Do you consider that each local planning authority should be able to set its own (non-profit making) planning application fee?
Please give your reasons in the text box below.

Comments

No, the process is far too complex and from experience the last time this matter was considered it led to considerable differences between local authorities which were not clear to understand for applicants, agents and developers.

Question 95: What would be your preferred model for localisation of planning fees?

Full Localisation – Placing a mandatory duty on all local planning authorities to set their own fee.

Local Variation – Maintain a nationally-set default fee and giving local planning authorities the option to set all or some fees locally.

Neither

Don't Know

Comments

Neither, but consideration should be given as to whether an additional nationally set fee could be charged where an area is covered by a special designation, such as a special area of conservation, where a significant amount of additional officer time and specialist officers is required.

Increasing fees to fund wider planning services

- 11.5 The consultation is seeking views on whether fees should be increased so as to cover other aspects of a local planning service, such as enforcement and plan making. It notes that fees would need to increase by 157% to cover the cost of all services and would require primary legislation. In addition, the consultation noted that it could be argued that “wider planning services represent a public service that should be paid for by other council budgets, funded by the taxpayer, not by individual applicants”.

Question 96: Do you consider that planning fees should be increased, beyond cost recovery, for planning applications services, to fund wider planning services?

If yes, please explain what you consider an appropriate increase would be and whether this should apply to all applications or, for example, just applications for major development?

Comments

No

Question 97: What wider planning services, if any, other than planning applications (development management) services, do you consider could be paid for by planning fees?

Comments

It is considered that charging fees for other services such as those referred to in the consultation would not be appropriate. However, any fee income that is received over and above that budgeted for should be reinvested in the planning service

Cost recovery for local authorities related to NSIP

- 11.6 Views are sought on whether to make provision to allow host upper and lower tier (or unitary) local authorities to be able to recover costs for relevant services provided in relation to applications under the National Significant Infrastructure Projects, although it notes that many authorities negotiate planning performance agreements with applicants, which can provide funding for an agreed level of service.

Question 98: Do you consider that cost recovery for relevant services provided by local authorities in relation to applications for development consent orders under the Planning Act 2008, payable by applicants, should be introduced?

Comments

Yes

Question 99: If yes, please explain any particular issues that the Government may want to consider, in particular which local planning authorities should be able to recover costs and the relevant services which they should be able to recover costs for, and whether host authorities should be able to waive fees where planning performance agreements are made.

Comments

All local authorities should be able to charge a fee to recover their costs as there is a significant amount of officer time which would normally be covered by a planning fee.

If there is a planning performance agreement (PPA) in place the fee could be waived providing the local planning authority costs are covered by that PPA.

Question 100: What limitations, if any, should be set in regulations or through guidance in relation to local authorities' ability to recover costs?

Question 101: Please provide any further information on the impacts of full or partial cost recovery are likely to be for local planning authorities and applicants. We would particularly welcome evidence of the costs associated with work undertaken by local authorities in relation to applications for development consent.

Question 102: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

No comments

12 CHAPTER 12 – THE FUTURE OF PLANNING POLICY AND PLAN MAKING

Transitional arrangements for emerging plans in preparation

- 12.1 The consultation sets out a series of transitional arrangements for the preparation of emerging local plans. The consultation says that “All plans at earlier stages of preparation - (i.e. plans that have not yet reached Regulation 19 stage one month after the revised NPPF is published) - should be prepared against the revised version of the NPPF and progressed as quickly as possible”.
- 12.2 The government intends to implement the new plan-making system as set out in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act from summer or autumn 2025. For plans under preparation in accordance with the current regulations they will need to be submitted by no later than December 2026 (compared to the end of July 2025 as previously proposed).
- 12.3 It is considered that the transitional arrangements are sensible whilst still maintaining pressure to bring forward new plans. In particular, it recognises the practical issues that would arise with a new system coming into place in summer 2025, but with no regulations presented for consultation, never mind agreed.
- 12.4 The Council’s current Local Development Scheme envisaged agreement by the Council of a Regulation 19 plan in December 2024 with submission in May 2025. In view of the volume of responses received to the consultation on the draft Local Plan, together with the issues these and other work has raised, including the need to undertake and complete detailed transport modelling work, it is not going to be possible to meet these dates. However, the transitional arrangements set out in the consultation will enable preparation of the plan to continue under the current Regulations. Officers are currently considering a revised timetable.

Question 103: Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements? Are there any alternatives you think we should consider?

Question 104: Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements?

Comments

The Council welcomes the proposed change to allow plans such as that being developed for North West Leicestershire to be submitted by December 2026 as striking balance between the need to ensure that the necessary evidence can be put in place and the need to get up-to-date plans in place as quickly as possible. Furthermore, it also avoids the potential loss of work previously undertaken and an additional financial burden to the public purse.

Future changes to the NPPF

- 12.5 It is proposed to explore the creation of a more accessible and interactive, web-based set of national policies (both in the form of National Development Management Policies and national policies for plan-making). Consideration will also be given to how other policies such as the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites should be set out in future, including which aspects need to form part of the suite of proposals for National Development Management Policies.

Question 105: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

No comments

13 CHAPTER 13 – PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 13.1. The government is seeking views about any potential impacts arising from its proposals on businesses, or of any differential impact on persons with a relevant protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 compared to persons without that protected characteristic, together with any appropriate mitigation measures, which may assist in deciding final policy approaches in due course.

Question 106: Do you have any views on the impacts of the above proposals for you, or the group or business you represent and on anyone with a relevant protected characteristic? If so, please explain who, which groups, including those with protected characteristics, or which businesses may be impacted and how. Is there anything that could be done to mitigate any impact identified?

No comments

14 GOVERNMENT LETTER TO PLANNING INSPECTORATE

- 14.1 In addition to the documents referred to above, on 30 July 2024 the Minister for State wrote to the Planning Inspectorate (PINs) setting out the government's concerns about the length of time that plan examinations were taking (Appendix A of this report).
- 14.2 The letter notes that in the government's view Inspectors have gone too far in adopting a pragmatic approach which has led to delays. The letter specifically states that "*Pragmatism should be used only where it is likely a plan is capable of being found sound with limited additional work to address soundness issues. Any pauses to undertake additional work should usually take no more than six months overall*". It goes on to note that "*Any extensions to the six-month pause should only be allowed at Inspectors' discretion to deliver adopted local plans under the current system. In agreeing extensions, the Inspector should be confident that the local authority can complete any outstanding work in the agreed timeframe*". This new approach is to apply with immediate effect.

- 14.3 PINs responded to this on 1 August 2024 (Appendix B). This welcomed the government's intentions and advised that Inspectors are aware. It also notes that the procedural guidance for examination would be updated, which has already happened. This states that "*LPAs must also play their part [to ensure plans are taken through examination as quickly and efficiently as possible] by ensuring that when they submit their plan it is ready for examination, the evidence base is complete [emphasis added], representations are properly ordered and collated...*".
- 14.4 It has always been the case that plans should only be submitted when an authority considers that it has a sound plan. However, there are circumstances in which new evidence becomes available which is of fundamental importance to the plan. This happened with the current plan when it was at examination in early 2017 when new evidence about housing requirements became available. As a result it was necessary to pause the examination and reconvene shortly afterwards.
- 14.5 It remains to be seen how strict Inspectors will be in enforcing these instructions and what latitude they allow authorities. This may become clearer over the coming months. However, it is important that they are borne in mind when seeking to balance the desire to get a new plan in place as quickly as possible with the need for robust evidence.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing - Clean, green and Zero Carbon
Policy Considerations:	The proposals outlined in the consultation have the potential to have a fundamental impact upon the Council's Local Plan, which is currently being reviewed.
Safeguarding:	None discernible.
Equalities/Diversity:	No issues identified
Customer Impact:	No issues identified
Economic and Social Impact:	No issues identified
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	No issues identified
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	None.
Risks:	<p>Whilst the contents in this report are for noting only, the proposals set out in the consultation have potential resource implications for the Council.</p> <p>Depending upon the timing of any changes, there could be an impact upon the Local Plan review in terms of its scope, content and look. If transition arrangements are not put in place or</p>

	are not robust, there is a risk that current work on the review could be jeopardised or lost. This matter will need to be kept under review.
Officer Contact	Ian Nelson Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager 01530 454677 ian.nelson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE – THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2024



Title of Report	HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH LOCAL PLAN (2020-41): REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION	
Presented by	Sarah Lee Principal Planning Policy Officer sarah.lee@nwleicestershire.gov.uk	
Background Papers	Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation 2024 NWL Local Plan Committee 23 March 2022 - Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	None identified	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The Council is a consultee and any comments it makes will need to be taken in to account by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council as part of the process for preparing a further iteration of the Local Plan.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None identified	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	The purpose of this report is to advise Committee Members of recommended responses to the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation and to seek formal approval for these to be submitted.	
Recommendations	THAT THE COMMITTEE AGREES THE REPRESENTATIONS IN APPENDIX A AS THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION 2024	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) is currently consulting on a Regulation 18 version of its new Local Plan.

- 1.2 HBBC previously undertook a Regulation 18 stage consultation in July 2021 and a Regulation 19 consultation in February 2022. This council's comments at each of these stages are summarised below.

July 2021: Regulation 18 consultation

- Welcomes HBBC's intention to meet its Local Housing Need figure + 10%.
- Consideration should be given to any cross-boundary impacts, particularly on the highway network in North West Leicestershire and potentially on the River Mease catchment.
- Note the potential for a new settlement at Norton Juxta, Twycross. North West Leicestershire District Council would welcome detailed discussions to ensure any impacts on the district, including cumulative impacts, are fully considered and addressed.
- Welcomes the commitment in the plan to work with the other Leicester and Leicestershire authorities to address unmet employment land need emanating from Leicester City.
- Welcomes HBBC's intention to include a specific Local Plan policy dealing with strategic distribution.

February 2022: Regulation 19 consultation

- Policy HO07 – Gypsies and Travellers. Object to the absence of provision for Gypsies and Travellers and lack of evidence to support the assertion that HBBC cannot accommodate its needs within the borough.
- Object to the lack of provision for strategic warehousing.
- Object to the lack of clarity in the wording of the proposed trigger policy in respect of employment requirements.
- Consider that there is insufficient transport evidence to understand the impacts of the development proposals on North West Leicestershire.

2.0 CURRENT CONSULTATION

- 2.1 HBBC has decided to go back a stage from the previous Regulation 19 consultation. HBBC considers this is necessary because a) emerging evidence suggests that the previous proposed spatial strategy may not be deliverable; b) changes to national planning policy need to be taken into account¹; and c) the position on Leicester City Council's un-met housing and employment need has been finalised.
- 2.2 The consultation plan contains proposals for:
- Strategic-scale development sites (over 500 dwellings or 1 Hectare (Ha) of employment land);
 - Major residential development sites (101 to 499 dwellings); and
 - draft strategic policies to support them.
- 2.3 Non-strategic development allocations (residential sites below 100 dwellings and employment sites below one hectare) and non-strategic planning policies will follow in the Regulation 19 version of the plan.
- 2.4 There are no specific consultation questions, rather respondents are invited to provide feedback to relevant policies/sections of the consultation document. Suggested

¹ This is **not** referring to the proposed NPPF changes announced on 30 July 2024, the day before the consultation on this Reg 18 plan started

responses are outlined in the paragraphs below and set out in full on the Consultation Form in Appendix A.

Plan Period

- 2.5 The new Local Plan will cover the period 2020-41. For the finalised plan to have a 15-year time horizon (NPPF paragraph 22), it will need to be adopted by April 2026.

Housing numbers

- 2.6 In the [Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground](#) (June 2022), HBBC agreed to an annual housing requirement of 574 dwellings/year, comprising 472 from the standard method together with 102 dwellings as a contribution to Leicester City's unmet need. HBBC did **not** agree to an additional 85 dwellings/year of the unmet need being apportioned to HBBC. This would have brought the requirement to 659 dwellings/year.
- 2.7 Notwithstanding its stance in the SoCG, the current consultation plans for the housing requirement in full. Draft Policy SP02 makes provision for 13,862 dwellings (2020-41), equating to 660 dwellings/year. Once completed and committed sites and a small sites allowance are taken into account, the plan needs to allocate land for some 8,398 homes as follows:
- Strategic mixed-use sites (500+ homes) = 6,631
 - Non-strategic housing sites (101-499 homes) = 1,253
 - Sites of 11-100 homes (in the Regulation 19 Plan) = 514
- 2.8 HBBC's intention to plan on the basis of the current SoCG housing requirement in full is welcomed. That said, the position is likely to change as a result of the Government's recent announcements in respect of reforms to the planning system and revisions to the SoCG are expected to result.

Housing sites

- 2.9 The consultation plan includes proposed strategic-scale housing sites in the following locations:
- Earl Shilton Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) - 1,581 homes. This site lies between Earl Shilton and A47.
 - Barwell SUE - 1,420 homes in the plan period (2,500 in total)
 - Earl Shilton – 900 homes (2,000 in total). This site lies between A47 and M69.
 - Hinckley North – 1,200 homes
 - Hinckley West - 530 homes
 - Proposed new settlement at Lindley Meadows (between MIRA and Fenny Drayton) – 1,000 homes (3,000 in total)
- 2.10 The consultation plan does not include a new settlement close to the North West Leicestershire boundary in the vicinity of Twycross/Norton Juxta which had previously been promoted by landowners, most recently to this Council's Regulation 18 consultation in January-March 2024 (Representation 133).
- 2.11 Also of note is that 170 dwellings are planned on land south of Markfield (site ref LPR94A) and 128 dwellings are planned to the west of Barlestone (ref AS455).
- 2.12 It is recommended that this Council's response notes and welcomes the absence of a new settlement proposal in the vicinity of Twycross. In addition, highways modelling

and other infrastructure capacity work undertaken by HBBC should take into account the emerging proposals in the emerging North West Leicestershire Local Plan to enable a proper, effective assessment of cumulative impacts to be achieved.

Employment needs

- 2.13 The consultation plan reports that there is an adequate supply of employment land overall (excluding strategic warehousing) but that economic forecasting reveals that an additional 33-55Ha is merited for some sectors. The proposed allocations in Policy SP02 total 109.25Ha, 43.25Ha above the evidenced general employment requirements.
- 2.14 With respect to strategic warehousing, the consultation document reports that the requirements for Leicester and Leicestershire are still emerging and are also dependent on the outcome of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order process. This matter will be addressed in the Regulation 19 plan in due course.
- 2.15 In response, the current uncertainty with respect to strategic warehousing requirements is recognised and HBBC is requested to address this issue in full at the next stage. For clarity, it would also be helpful for strategic warehousing requirements and sites to be set out in a separate section of Policy SP02.

Employment sites (selected)

- 2.16 The proposed employment sites include the following:
- Wiggs Farm, Wood Lane/Station Road, Bagworth (11Ha). This site adjoins the district boundary at Wood Road (B585), to the south of Ellistown. The site is proposed for general needs employment but the plan identifies that it also has the potential to contribute to strategic warehousing requirements.
 - Land at Cliff Hall Farm, immediately to the north east of J22M1 (28.3Ha) This land is proposed for general needs employment but the plan identifies that it also has the potential to contribute to strategic warehousing requirements.
- 2.17 The land at Wood Road immediately abuts the borough-district boundary and it is important that impacts on North West Leicestershire be fully explored, in particular in respect of transport movements.
- 2.18 In addition, land on the North West Leicestershire side of the boundary is also being promoted for employment development, namely site EMP91 – Land north of Wood Road (10.3Ha) and site EMP96 – Land west of Ellistown Road (6Ha). The latter site was promoted in a representation to our Regulation 18 plan (representation 186). Most recently, agents acting on behalf of the landowners have suggested the sites could be combined into a single site (EMP98).
- 2.19 Without prejudice to this Council's consideration of these sites, if land is proposed on both sides of the boundary, the respective local plans should aim to take a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development in this area.
- 2.20 With respect to the site at J22M1, it is important that potential highways impacts within North West Leicestershire are assessed and addressed. In addition, any landscape impacts will need to be fully considered bearing in mind that the site is located within the Charnwood Forest.

Gypsies & Travellers

- 2.21 An updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for HBBC is currently being prepared. Any further pitch requirements will be detailed in the forthcoming Regulation 19 plan, once the GTAA has been completed.
- 2.22 The draft plan reports that there is a sufficient supply of pitches for the period 2024 – 29 and that any additional needs arising from the updated GTAA will be met on windfall sites by applying the draft criteria-based Policy SP13. A call for sites will be carried out as part of the monitoring of the land supply if required.
- 2.23 In response, HBBC is recommended to allocate specific sites for Gypsies and Travellers where possible.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The consultation period closes on Friday 27 September 2024. Subject to Members' views, the response in Appendix A will be submitted to meet this deadline.
- 3.2 The consultation document states that HBBC will consult on a Regulation 19 submission draft Local Plan in Winter 2024/2025 and will submit the plan to the Secretary of State in 2025. As noted, this was written before the most recent Government announcements and may be subject to change.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	The content of this report relates to the following of the Council's priorities: - Planning and Regeneration
Policy Considerations:	None
Safeguarding:	No issues identified
Equalities/Diversity:	No issues identified
Customer Impact:	No issues identified
Economic and Social Impact:	No issues identified
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The potential impact of proposed development upon parts of the district are highlighted in the report
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Planning and Infrastructure Portfolio Holders
Risks:	The District Council is a consultee for the emerging Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Local Plan. It is important that the District Council engage in the process to ensure that any concerns are raised to protect the Council's interests.
Officer Contact	Sarah Lee Principal Planning Policy Officer sarah.lee@nwleicestershire.gov.uk



Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan: Response from North West Leicestershire District Council

Policy/Paragraph/ Section	Comments, Modification Suggestion(s) and/or things for the Council to consider
Policy SP02 (Housing requirement)	<p>North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) welcomes HBBC's intention to plan on the basis of the current SoCG housing requirement in full.</p> <p>It is also recognised that discussions are on-going with respect to the implications of the proposed revised standard method announced by the Government, that requirements are liable to change and that revisions to the SoCG are expected to be necessary.</p>
Policy SP02 (Strategic site allocations)	<p>NWL notes and welcomes the absence of a new settlement proposal in the vicinity of Twycross. If this position changes, NWL would welcome detailed discussions to ensure any impacts on the district, including cumulative impacts, are fully considered and addressed.</p> <p>Also of note is that 170 dwellings are planned on land south of Markfield (site ref LPR94A) and 128 dwellings are planned to the west of Barlestone (ref AS455). Highways modelling and other infrastructure capacity work undertaken by HBBC should a) take into account the emerging proposals in the emerging North West Leicestershire Local Plan to enable a proper, effective assessment of cumulative impacts; and b) assess and address any resulting impacts within North West Leicestershire.</p>
Policy SP02 (Strategic warehousing)	<p>The current uncertainty with respect to strategic warehousing requirements is recognised and HBBC is requested to address this issue in full at the next stage.</p> <p>For clarity, it would also be helpful for strategic warehousing requirements and sites to be set out in a separate section of Policy SP02 (even if some sites could contribute towards both requirements)</p>
Policy SP02 (Employment sites) & Appendix 3	<p>The proposed employment sites include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiggs Farm, Wood Lane/Station Road, Bagworth (11Ha). This site adjoins the district boundary at Wood Road (B585), to the south of Ellistown. The site is proposed for general needs employment but the plan identifies that it also has the potential to contribute to strategic warehousing requirements.

Policy/Paragraph/Section	Comments, Modification Suggestion(s) and/or things for the Council to consider
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land at Cliff Hall Farm, immediately to the north east of J22M1 (28.3Ha) This land is proposed for general needs employment but the plan identifies that it also has the potential to contribute to strategic warehousing requirements. <p>The Wiggs Farm site immediately abuts the borough-district boundary and it is important that impacts on North West Leicestershire be fully explored, in particular in respect of transport movements.</p> <p>In addition, land on the North West Leicestershire side of the boundary is also being promoted for employment development, namely SHELAA site EMP91 – Land north of Wood Road (10.3Ha) and SHELAA site EMP96 – Land west of Ellistown Road (6 Ha). The latter site was promoted in a representation to our Regulation 18 plan (representation 186). Most recently, agents acting on behalf of the landowners have suggested the sites could be combined into a single site (EMP98).</p> <p>NWL will need to find additional general needs employment land following a recent update to its evidence base (see paragraphs 4.42-4.48 of the 14 August 2024 NWL Local Plan Committee report NEW LOCAL PLAN – STRATEGY POLICIES: CONSULTATION RESPONSES). Without prejudice to this Council’s further consideration of sites, if land is proposed on both sides of the boundary, the respective local plans should aim to take a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development in this area.</p> <p>With respect to the site at J22M1, it is important that potential highways impacts within North West Leicestershire and impacts on the capacity of J22 are assessed and addressed. The site is within the Charnwood Forest so possible landscape issues could arise.</p>
Policy SP13 – Gypsies, Travellers & Traveling Showpeople	<p>With respect to Gypsies and Travellers, the draft plan reports that there is a sufficient supply of pitches for the period 2024 – 29 and that any additional needs arising from the updated GTAA will be met on windfall sites by applying the draft criteria-based Policy SP13. A call for sites will be carried out as part of the monitoring of the land supply if required.</p> <p>This approach is noted and HBBC is encouraged to allocate specific sites for Gypsies and Travellers where possible.</p>