

Meeting	Local Plan Working Group
Date	27 June 2016
Present	Councillors Ayre (Chair), Steward (Vice-Chair), N Barnes, Carr, D'Agorne, Derbyshire, Levene, Lisle, Mercer, Orrell, Reid, and Warters
In attendance	Councillor Kramm
Apologies	Councillor Williams

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### **1. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

### **2. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2015 be approved as a correct record and then signed by the Chair.

### **3. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been six registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme and that one Member of Council had also registered to speak.

Mr Kit Bennett, member of Frack Free York, spoke in respect of the unconventional gas industry and the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan. He stated that Frack Free York was opposed to shale gas wells and urged Members to put in place conditions to protect residents from the worst effects of such developments, including the potential use of buffer zones. He drew attention to issues in respect of traffic congestion and ground water pollution

and stated that he was in support of the petition that would be presented by Councillor Kramm.

Mr Allan Charlesworth spoke on behalf of York Action Group Alliance. He stated that the Local Plan – Preferred Sites 2016 document addressed many of the concerns that the Action Group had expressed about the previous plan, particularly in respect of the safeguarding of green belt and the need to protect the historic character and setting of York and retaining prime agricultural land. The Group was pleased with the plan's realism and the scaling back of the housing figures. They believed that the plan provided an acceptable framework which now required public legitimacy. It was hoped that this could be achieved through consensus rather than challenge.

Ms Helen Kettlebora spoke in respect of the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan. She sought assurances from Members that they would take seriously the issue of shale gas extraction.

Mr Richard Barton, How Planning Consultants, spoke on behalf of Barwood Developments. He stated that the Council was taking a high risk approach in reducing the housing requirement and was concerned about the approach in respect of safeguarded land and the robustness of the Council's evidence base. Mr Barton drew attention to information he had tabled regarding Moor Lane, Woodthorpe and stated why he believed that this was a suitable site for residential development.

Mr Eamonn Keogh spoke on behalf of York Property Forum – Chamber of Commerce. He welcomed the publication of the next steps for the York Local Plan and stated that businesses needed the certainty that could be provided through a Local Plan. He stated that the Plan needed to ensure permanent green belt boundaries and have sufficient flexibility to reduce the risk of the Plan failing at examination. He drew particular attention to the York Central site and ensuring that there was a match between employment demand and supply over the plan period. He also drew attention to the potential opportunities presented by projects such as HS2 and HS3. He expressed concern about the absence of a strategy detailing how the city could take advantage of these opportunities.

Mr Brian Watson commented on the following matters:

- He stated that he did not believe that residents should be encouraged to downsize unless this was for health reasons or because it was their personal choice.
- The relocation of staff to York through their employment was an issue that needed to be considered.
- The universities in the city were growing and must be encouraged to increase their on-campus accommodation and play their part in the future of the city.
- The issue of shops in the city centre being replaced by restaurants and drinking establishments also needed to be addressed.

Councillor Lars Kramm handed in a petition in respect of gas drilling sites which called on the Council to include the provision of buffer zones within in the Joint Waste and Mineral Plan for North Yorkshire. Councillor Kramm also detailed issues in respect of waste water treatment which needed to be considered further in the development of the relevant policies in the Joint Waste and Minerals Plan.

#### **4. City of York Local Plan - Preferred Sites Consultation**

Referring to issues that had been raised under the Public Participation item, officers confirmed that City of York Council was working with North Yorkshire County Council and North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority to prepare a Joint Waste and Mineral Plan for North Yorkshire. This would be presented to Members for consideration in October 2016.

Members considered a report that asked them to recommend that the Executive approve the publication of a document entitled “Local Plan – Preferred Sites 2016” for consultation. The document drew on the previous stages of consultation and technical work undertaken to support the plan. Its purpose was to allow the public and other interested parties to comment on additional work relating to housing and employment land need and supply. The document was attached as Annex A to the report.

It was noted that, subject to Member approval, the intention was to commence consultation on the “Local Plan – Preferred Sites 2016” document in July. Consultation would be in accordance with the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2007) and would be for an eight week period.

Representations made would then be taken into consideration in drafting the next stage of the plan, the publication draft.

Officers offered an update in respect of Site H6 – Land to the rear of The Square on Tadcaster Road. Use of this site would be restricted to use class C3B – six people living together as a single household receiving an element of care and would be in association with the Wilberforce Trust.

Members commented on the following issues:

- Some Members were very concerned that the level of affordable housing was not sufficient. Examples given included the high infrastructure costs for York Central which would present a challenge in securing affordable housing.
- In response to some concerns raised regarding windfalls, and the percentage of these that would be affordable, officers confirmed that figures had been calculated by projecting forward a mean average over the last ten years therefore this reflected the characteristics of sites during that time. There was a need for this to be given further consideration in respect of affordable housing provision.
- The outcome of the recent referendum may impact on aspects of the plan, although it was acknowledged that this could not yet be ascertained. Officers commented that it was not possible to know the potential impacts of the referendum on Plan making at this time and that it was important for the Council to demonstrate good progress with the Local Plan in light of the Government deadlines and to allow the public and other interested parties to have their say.
- A view was put forward that the plan should make reference to the mechanism by which a brownfield first policy would be achieved. Officers acknowledged that further work on trajectories and delivery rates would need to be carried out but that the Plan would seek to phase brownfield sites first where possible.
- Some concerns were expressed as to whether appropriate risk assessments had been undertaken, including those surrounding the plan's submission to the Government Inspector. Officers confirmed that that a further risk assessment and legal advice would be sought when developing the Publication Draft of the Plan and its subsequent submission to the Government for examination.
- A request was put forward for a report to be presented to the Working Group regarding HMO thresholds. It was, however, agreed that this was not an appropriate time to do so, as the

current focus should be on delivering a Local Plan. It was noted that the student population was part of the overall housing need and work had been undertaken on this as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which was being made available as a supporting document to the consultation.

- There was general support for the proposed reduction in greenbelt developments although Members commented on the need to ensure that members of the public were made aware that some such developments were still planned.
- Members expressed their support for the removal of safeguarded land. Some Members were, however, very concerned that when the plan had previously been considered by the LPWG they had been told that this option was not available to them.
- Members commented on the pressures on the transport systems, including the ring road, and that further development would only exacerbate the problems.
- Referring to the issue of garden villages, Members commented that this would also have transport implications and the need for appropriate facilities to be in place.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the issue of flooding.
- A Member requested that an Environmental Capacity Study be carried out to consider how much growth the city could sustain in the future and stated that further work needed to be carried out to reassess the housing needs in York. This proposal did not receive support from other Members of the working group.

Members also commented on specific sites in their wards, including a request for consideration to be given to designating and enforcing a potential green wedge on land around Osbaldwick and concerns regarding the inclusion of SP1 – The Stables, Elvington. The Chair requested that ward specific issues be raised and considered as part of the consultation process.

Members' attention was drawn to a prospectus that had been published by the DCLG entitled "Locally Led Garden Villages, Town and Cities". Officers gave details of this initiative and explained that within the Council's administrative area, the only potential strategic site that met the criteria would be ST15: Land to the West of Elvington Lane. Members' views were sought on whether the Council should express an interest at this time. Members paid tribute to the work that officers had carried out.

Members considered the following options:

Option 1: That the Local Plan Working Group (LPWG) request that the Executive, subject to any recommended changes, approve the “Local Plan – Preferred Sites 2016” document, along with supporting evidence and information, for public consultation.

Option 2: That the LPWG request that the Executive instruct officers to make changes to the “Local Plan – Preferred Sites 2016” document and produce a further report and draft for consideration.

Recommended: (i) That the Executive approve the document attached as Annex A to the report, along with supporting evidence and information for public consultation.

(ii) That the Director of City and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Leader, be delegated the making of any changes to the draft document attached as Annex A to the report, that are necessary as a result of the recommendations of Executive or any minor non substantial amendments that are identified prior to the issue of the consultation.

(iii) That the Director of City and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Leader, be delegated the approval of a Consultation Strategy and associated documents.

(iv) That the Director of City and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Leader, be delegated the approval of supporting evidence, information and documentation to be published during public consultation.

- (v) That the draft LDS (Annex F of the report), be approved as the Council's project plan for progressing the Local Plan and other development plans and related documents.
- (vi) That, in respect of site sT15: Land to the West of Elvington Lane, an expression of interest be made in the context of the DCLG Prospectus – Locally-led garden villages towns and cities on the basis of the current site as defined in the Preferred Sites Document (Annex A to the report).

- Reasons:
- (i) So that a National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) compliant Local Plan can be progressed.
  - (ii) So that changes recommended as a result of discussions at the LPWG and the Executive can be made and any presentational errors can be addressed.
  - (iii) and (iv) To ensure that the proposed methods of consultation are satisfactory to Members and accord with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
  - (v) So that an NPPF compliant Local Plan can be progressed and to provide information to interested parties about the next stages of the development for the documents listed.
  - (vi) To ascertain whether support from the Government would be forthcoming in respect of funding and expertise which would help progress development of the site.

Councillor N Ayre, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.50 pm].