

CABINET

Agenda Item: 7

Ward: All

Portfolio: Planning and Growth

Report Author(s): Principal Planning Officer

Meeting Date:
13 November 2017

SUBJECT: Executive Endorsement of the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part II

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	Seen by:	Name	Date
Report Sign off	Chief Executive/ Deputy Chief Executive(s)	Tracy Aarons	30.10.17
	Legal	Lesley Dolan	26.10.17
	Finance	Paul Deal/ Duncan Moss	01.11.17
	Group Manager	Ian Bowen	01.11.17
	Portfolio Holder	Nigel Woollcombe-Adams	30.10.17
	Ward Member(s)	n/a	
Summary:	<p>Cabinet is asked to endorse the draft Local Plan Part II written statement (known as a pre-submission version). This presented as a precursor to the draft plan being finalised together with supporting information for Full Council.</p> <p>Following consideration at Cabinet, a resolution will be sought from Full Council on 11th December 2017 for the Plan to be published for consultation and subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State for the purposes of public examination. The Public Examination is expected to take place by summer 2018.</p> <p>The draft Plan reflects a comprehensive issues and options consultation completed in January 2016, informal consultation with parish and town councils and review of policy issues through the Member Advisory Group (MAG).</p>		
Recommendation:	<p>Cabinet is asked to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • endorse the principal content of the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part II • authorise the Group Manager for Planning and Growth Services , in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth , to finalise the written statement and supporting parts of the Local Plan before it is presented to Full Council. • recommend to Full Council <p>(a) approval of the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan II for a statutory consultation from 15th December 2017, and</p>		

	<p>(b) agreement to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth in consultation with the Group Manager for Planning and Growth Services to undertake:</p> <p>(i) the formal Submission of the plan to the Secretary of State for Public Examination, provided there are no valid representations received during the consultation that raise fundamental issues on the soundness of the Strategy, and</p> <p>(ii) the making of any adjustments or necessary changes to the Draft Local Plan Part II in the interests of clarity and accuracy before it is submitted.</p>
Direct and/or indirect impact on service delivery to our customers and communities:	Plan proposals impact on place-shaping, economic growth and affordable housing delivery. They also provide a context for neighbourhood Planning.
Contribution to Corporate Priorities:	Progress on the draft Local Plan forms part of Corporate Strategy commitments and measures in the Economic Development Strategy Action Plan. It also contributes to joint plans such as the Somerset Growth Plan
Legal Implications:	The draft Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislative, regulatory, and policy framework set out by Government. This requires that Council resolves to submit parts of its statutory Development Plan to the Secretary of State and that public consultation must be undertaken at prescribed stages of its preparation.
Financial Implications:	The immediate costs associated with the consultation proposed are limited (as this will be largely online) and accounted for within existing service budgets. The costs involved in convening and resourcing the Public Examination are likely to fall within the next financial year and will call on the Local Plan Reserve held for this purpose. The planning framework may also provide direct and indirect benefits to realising the potential of council assets of the plan period
Impact on Service Plans:	Taking the draft Local Plan to the next consultation stage addresses Planning and Growth objectives and will help meet future national performance targets on housing delivery.
Value for Money:	An up to date Local Plan and forward supply of housing land provides gives clear direction to developers and communities and will reduce costs associated with planning appeals and speculative development. There are indirect benefits though New Homes Bonus.

Equalities Implications:	An equalities impact assessment which will be published alongside the Pre-Submission Draft plan for public consultation
Risk Assessment and Adverse Impact on Corporate Actions:	<p>Consulting on the Plan now and submission by March 2018 will mitigate the risk of the delays from planning appeals and the potential introduction a new round national planning reforms.</p> <p>Publication also allows pre-submission advice to be obtained from the planning inspectorate and the input of infrastructure providers</p>
Scrutiny Recommendation (if any)	Given that a Member Advisory Group has been involved in the Part II Plan throughout its development, it is not considered strictly necessary at this time to delay the plan to present to Scrutiny or take it through the policies and strategies group. The new arrangements will apply to future work on the single Local Plan.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Pre-Submission Draft of the Local Plan Part II has been prepared following detailed work on site assessments and consultation with communities and stakeholders. The Plan is complementary to Local Plan Part I and required to accord to its strategy and requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It covers the same period as the Local Plan Part 1 (2006-2029)
2. Subject to Council approval in December, the draft Part II Plan will be published for public consultation between December 2017 and February 2018. This is a formal consultation stage. Following this consultation period the Council may consider modifications to the Plan before submitting it to the Secretary of State by March 2018. Consultation responses are provided to the Planning Inspectorate who will use these to set the agenda for examination and testing its soundness. Following examination (expected in summer 2018) a Planning Inspector will issue a report either, approving the plan for adoption, with or without recommended changes, or, declaring it unsound.

Documents making up the Part II Plan

3. The draft written statement for Part II is presented at Appendix 1 to this report. Additional work will be undertaken on this draft before reporting to Full Council. This will take into account feedback from this meeting and responses from Infrastructure Providers where available before formal consultation
4. Appendices 2a and 2b contain draft site allocation policies for towns and villages. These appendices will be integrated in the final publication document. A colour copy of the site allocations maps is available in the Members room and online. At this stage, Maps and policies are identified by the same site reference numbers as those in the issues and options consultation.
5. The consultation plan is also supported by a number of monitoring and topic papers (available as background papers) covering housing supply, the method of designating of green spaces and the self-build policy. Additional documents to be published with the plan are listed in the written statement introduction section

BACKGROUND

Status of the Plan

6. Publication of Local Plan Part II forms part of the Council's development plan programme - the Local Development Scheme or LDS - which was agreed in January 2017. Beyond the Local Plan Part II, the LDS envisages the need for a broader review of Local Plan Part I. This is because housing requirements in adopted plans will need to be reviewed every five years and further changes to national policy are proposed in 2018.

Purpose of the Part II Plan

7. The purpose of Mendip District Local Plan Part II (Sites and policies) is to
 - Identify and allocate additional sites for housing to meet the requirements for affordable and market housing set out in Local Plan Part I ;

- To ensure there are sufficient sites to enable a rolling five year supply of housing land in the District
 - To meet the introduction of a housing delivery test against nationally set targets;
 - To review and allocate additional employment land to support economic development;
 - To update development limits around towns and villages;
 - To review and update the open and community space designations;
 - To set out additional development management policies to meet objectives in Local Plan Part I and the National Planning Policy Framework.
8. The Pre-submission Plan proposes to allocate a number of housing and employment sites as well as designating Local Green Spaces. It also contains additional policies on:
- Single-Plot Exception Sites (Draft Policy DP24) - A policy to enable small scale affordable homes in a way which benefits local communities and provides a route for limited development in non-primary and secondary villages;
 - Employment Land (Draft Policy DP25) - A policy to recognise the need to retain established employment sites and identify future employment areas
 - Green Belt (Draft Policy DP26) - this policy will incorporate the 'saved' Green Belt policy from the Structure Plan into the Mendip Development Plan. No changes to Green Belt are proposed.

Housing Requirements

9. Following publication of the Somerset Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in late 2016, Cabinet agreed that sustainable options to deliver an uplift in the minimum housing targets should be tested through Local Plan Part II. This Plan has therefore considered delivery from available sites above the adopted requirement of 420 homes per year. Cabinet also agreed that a full review of the current adopted plan target should be part of the single Local Plan review.
10. This consultation comes against the background of significant changes to the NPPF and planning. Local authorities in areas of pressure or where affordable homes are 'out of reach' will be expected to plan for more. No specific proposals are finalised but future local development plans may need to explore growth well above the current need in the SHMA of 411 – 490 homes per year. This scale of development will require a review of the overall development strategy for the district. Timely consultation and submission of this Part II plan is recommended to reduce the challenge of having a wholesale review imposed on the Council.

Approach to Site Allocations.

11. The Part I plan establishes a settlement hierarchy (towns, primary, secondary villages) and principles for identifying sites in Local Plan Part II (See Para 4.36 of the adopted Plan). Officers have followed these as far practicable, focusing on the sites in the Mendip towns and villages where there is a residual housing requirement. The capacity of these sites combined with existing housing supply with permission is capable of meeting higher growth indicated by the SHMA.

12. Overall, the plan identifies sites which have a capacity to deliver 1,460 dwellings over the remaining plan period. In general, allocated sites would provide at least five dwellings.
13. The draft plan rejects other options which are considered less sustainable such as allocating sites in villages that have already experienced substantial development, changing the adopted settlement hierarchy at this time or relying on established employment sites for housing delivery.
14. Frome would see the greatest uplift in housing when compared with minimums in the Part I Plan. A sustainability appraisal has been prepared which has assessed all the land promoted at issues and options stage and considered whether higher levels of growth are reasonable environmental options.
15. The draft Plan includes a policy to allow for limited growth in smaller settlements through a single-site exception policy. This approach – which is consistent with the spatial strategy - has proved effective in other rural districts to provide opportunities for local affordable housing. However, beyond Part II, the settlement hierarchy will be reviewed as a priority in developing the single Local Plan review.

Employment Land

16. The plan identifies a number of mixed use and employment allocations in Street, Shepton Mallet and Frome. It also seeks to clarify planning objectives and the approach to employment land - taking into account the current economic development strategy. There includes more explicit recognition of the value of established employment and commercial sites in the District. There is also scope to identify additional land for Future Employment Growth through the consultation process. Overall, the intention of this draft plan is to act a 'stepping stone' to a broader review of employment development opportunities in the single Local Plan.
17. No allocations or new policies are included in town centres as the council's approach and planning considerations are already established in adopted town policies (CP6 – 10). A policy for Saxonvale is included to add clarity to the Part I plan but does not change the policy approach.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

18. Publication of the Part II plan contributes to corporate objectives and delivery expectations set out in the NPPF. Delaying the plan to await further government reform increases the risk of unplanned and speculative development. Site options have been tested within plan preparation. There is little point in planning to meet minimum housing levels as this would not be assessed by the planning inspectorate as a sound plan or deliver certainty through a five year supply.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to

- endorse the principal content of the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Part II
 - authorise the Group Manager for Planning and Growth Services , in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth , to finalise the written statement and supporting parts of the Local Plan before it is presented to Full Council.
 - recommend to Full Council
- (c) approval of the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan II for a statutory consultation from 15th December 2017, and
- (d) agreement to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth in consultation with the Group Manager for Planning and Growth Services to undertake:
- (i) the formal Submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for Public Examination, provided there are no valid representations received during the consultation that raise fundamental issues on the soundness of the Strategy, and
 - (ii) the making of any adjustments or necessary changes to the Draft Local Plan Part II in the interests of clarity and accuracy before it is submitted.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that progress continues to be made on the delivery of an up-to-date Development Plan for Mendip and to provide certainty for developers and local communities.

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List of background Papers:

Report to Cabinet 5th December 2016 Item 10 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment
Report to Cabinet -9th January 2017 – Local Development Scheme

Local Plan Part II – Topic paper 1: Housing Supply
Local Plan Part II - Topic paper 2: Self Build
Local Plan Part II – Topic paper 3 : Local Green Spaces

Planning for Homes in the right places (DCLG consultation – 14th September 2017)