

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**BUSINESS, INNOVATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
CABINET MEMBER**

**NEW NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL PLAN
REGULATION 18 STATEMENT: INITIAL CONSULTATION**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to publish for public consultation the 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' as the first formal stage of the preparation of the new North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to publish for public consultation the 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' as the first formal stage of the preparation of the new North Lincolnshire Local Plan, together with the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 2.2 The current North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework (LDF) covers the period from 2006 to 2026 and comprises the Core Strategy, Housing and Employment Land Allocation Development Plan Document and the Lincolnshire Lakes Area Action Plan. These were all adopted during 2011 and 2016. Alongside the saved policies of the 2003 Local Plan they form the Development Plan for North Lincolnshire. It is widely acknowledged that they have been instrumental in driving forward the planned growth of the area, in conjunction with other public sector bodies and private sector interests.
- 2.3 There has been a great deal of community support for the strategy and proposals of the LDF. However, the Government requires local authorities to put in place Local Plans which provide certainty for the supply of housing land for a period up to 10 years ahead and ideally for up to 15 years, together with proposals for economic growth, infrastructure development and other specific requirements. It is therefore now considered necessary to prepare the next Local Plan for North Lincolnshire which will cover the period up to 2036.
- 2.4 The process for preparing statutory Local Plans is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Regulation 18 represents the first (statutory) stage in the process of preparing the plan. This in essence represents the "scoping" stage of the Local Plan preparation process, where the council is asking key stakeholders, including local communities, what they think the plan should contain prior to any initial drafting. The council will consider the contents of the new Housing White Paper which is proposing simplifying the local plan process, so that the plan can progress at pace.

- 2.5 Local Plans must be consistent with National planning policies – these are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012 and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance published in March 2014. They must be prepared with due regard to the duty to cooperate which requires Local Planning Authorities and certain other public bodies to cooperate with each other on cross-boundary strategic issues when preparing a Local Plan. The duty also requires co-operation where there are matters that would have a significant impact on two or more Local Authority areas.
- 2.6 The new plan must be informed and accompanied by an SA. This allows potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the plans, policies and proposals to be systematically assessed. The SA plays an important part in demonstrating that the Local Plan reflects sustainability objectives and has considered all reasonable alternatives. The SA should also incorporate the SEA requirements. A SA Scoping Report will need to be prepared to accompany the preparation of the Plan.
- 2.7 The Local Plan will also need to be assessed in accordance with the Habitats Directive to consider whether the policies or proposals are likely to have a significant effect on European habitats or species located in the area or its vicinity. Therefore a Habitats Regulations Assessment will be prepared.
- 2.8 A robust evidence base is required to inform and support the preparation and examination of the new Local Plan. A large amount of evidence has already been prepared as part of the Local Development Framework and as part of the evidence gathering exercise for the new local plan, however some of this evidence will need to be reviewed and updated, and some additional evidence may be required on issues such as viability. The following evidence base documents are seen as being crucial:-
- North Lincolnshire Transport Plan 2011-2026
 - Strategic Food Risk Assessment (SFRA)
 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2016
 - Employment Land Review
 - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
 - Annual Monitoring Report
 - North Lincolnshire Settlement Survey 2016
 - Retail Study (2016)
- 2.9 The Local Plan will not only identify the amount of new development needed to 2036 but it will also identify where it should be located. The options for locating new development must be realistic, deliverable and support the achievement of sustainable development. A strategic approach needs to be taken to identify where new development can take place with options reflecting the different roles and functions of places, acknowledging and working with their strengths and constraints.
- 2.10 The prepared 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' document is deliberately informal in nature and sets out a number of questions that would assist the council in achieving an understanding of what has changed since the adoption of the Core Strategy and the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD. Questions have been grouped around the evidence base, the appropriateness of the Core Strategy's current strategic approach, possible development options, housing and economic growth and other key chapter issues such as the built and natural environment, creating sustainable

communities, providing infrastructure and managing and delivering development.

- 2.11 As part of the consultation process it is proposed that a call for sites exercise is undertaken at the same time. This would seek to identify sites, including changes to development limits, to accommodate future growth and development in North Lincolnshire such as housing, employment, recreation, mixed use, retail, sport/leisure, open space, energy generation, waste management, minerals extraction and Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople. To assist in gathering as much site data as possible that there would be no general restriction to the size or floor space of suggested uses that could be put forward.
- 2.12 With regard to the Plan's preparation the following draft timetable is proposed. The final timetable will depend on the scale of consultation responses received and could be subject to further change. It is therefore proposed that a further cabinet report that examines the Local Plan's timetabling in detail is submitted once the scale of consultation responses are known.

2017 Developing the Plan

- Developing the evidence base
- Issues and options consultation
- Preferred options /draft plan consultation

2018 Proposed Plan & Testing the Plan

- Submission Local Plan consultation
- Formal submission
- Examination in public

2019 Adoption

- Formal adoption

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option 1 - Approve the 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' document for public consultation as the first formal stage of the preparation of the new North Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- 3.2 Option 2 - Do nothing and rely on the existing Development Plan, as the main material consideration for determining planning applications, comprised of the Core Strategy, Housing and Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document and the Lincolnshire Lakes Area Action Plan which were adopted during 2011 and 2016. Alongside the saved policies of the 2003 Local Plan.

4 ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 is the preferred option. This will allow the council to review and update the Core Strategy to take account of national planning policy changes and to cover the absence of up to date policies and to re-assess allocations across the area.

- 4.2 Option 2 would result in the continued use of the existing Development Plan documents to determine planning applications in North Lincolnshire. Without a New Local Plan the council will have to rely on existing national policy and outdated local planning policy.
- 4.3 The importance of having an up to date Local Plan for the future development and growth of a local authority's area has never been greater. It is a major element of current Government policy that local authorities put in place Local Plans which address their future housing and economic growth requirements as speedily as possible.
- 4.4 The Local Plan remains one of the most important functions of the council. Whilst there have been extensive changes to the planning system in recent years, this has only pushed further towards a plan-led development approach in the UK and has increased the necessity of having an up-to-date Local Plan.
- 4.5 Government have made clear, both in the NPPF as well as in legislation, that significantly boosting the supply of housing is a key national priority. Such is the importance which Government now places on producing Local Plans that if councils fail to produce a Local Plan, Government have pledged to step in and produce a plan for them. As such, it is essential that the council continues to positively plan for the future of North Lincolnshire within this reality, achieving sustainable development and creating successful places for future generations.
- 4.6 Equally without an up-to-date Local Plan in place, under the NPPF, existing policies on housing supply would cease to apply and only the general policies in the NPPF could be used.
- 4.7 Together, bringing in these provisions would have significant implications both in the short and longer term. The loss of the large number of policies which address housing supply would lead to a substantial reduction in the level of influence which the council and local communities would have over future development decisions.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 There are no direct resource implications to highlight. Existing resources are available to support the work required to develop the new Local Plan.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6. An IIA for the 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' document was completed and no issues of concern were apparent.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED

- 7.1 No consultation has taken place as yet. The initial Local Plan consultation will be subject to consultation in conformity with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Cabinet Member:

- a) Approves for public consultation the 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' as the first formal stage of the preparation of the new North Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- b) That the 'Regulation 18 Statement: Initial Consultation' be consulted upon as soon as practicable for a period no shorter than 6 weeks in length.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report

- National Planning Policy Framework
- LDF Core Strategy