

1st March 2016

To the Chair and Members of Full Council

DONCATER LOCAL PLAN – HOUSING DISTRIBUTION AND VISION AIMS & OBJECTIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Doncaster Local Plan is being prepared in accord with the published Local Development Scheme (April 2015). This requires a period of on-going engagement prior to the publication of the document by Full Council and submission to the government by the end of this year. The Local Plan, on adoption, will replace the Unitary Development Plan and Core Strategy.
2. The Local Plan will allocate land for development in the period 2015 to 2032 including housing which generates much interest by the public, house building industry and parish councils especially those preparing Neighbourhood Plans or considering preparing them. The plan is required to provide sufficient land to accommodate the borough's objectively assessed housing need figure of 920 dwelling per annum set out in the Council's Housing Strategy. A strategy is needed within the Local Plan to direct where this housing growth should be located and which will then be used to select specific housing sites within the later stages of the local plan process using a site assessment methodology. Setting out and consulting on the approach to the distribution of housing would allow engagement with communities where growth is proposed as well as other stakeholders. The proposed draft consultation document is attached as appendix with a proposed draft policy to be included in the local plan. Publication of this policy/approach will enable and focus future discussion with stakeholders on which site allocations should be made.
3. This report seeks approval for publishing the draft approach to the distribution of housing sites for a 4 week consultation period together with the updated draft Vision Aims and Objectives of the local plan.
4. The Local Plan is required to include a vision with aims and objectives that set out what the plan will achieve and guides the emerging policies and proposals of the plan. A draft of these was published for consultation in July 2015 and these have now been updated to take account of comments received following consultation. This updated draft is set out in appendix B. It is proposed that having been updated they are made available as part of engagement although they will be formally approved in due course as part of the plan by Full Council. Appendix B also shows the changes made to them. One notable change is the addition of a specific aim on health and well-being (aim 8) following feedback from the Health and Well Being Board.

EXEMPT REPORT

5. No

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. 1). Approve the draft housing distribution strategy document (appendix A) for a 4 week period of consultation, and

2). Note the intention to publish the draft Vision, Aims and Objectives of the Local Plan (appendix B) and publish on the Local Plan website.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

7. The distribution of additional housing in Doncaster will ensure a supply of housing to meet the future needs of Doncaster's residents. The distribution of new housing is important to ensure access to services, reduce the need to travel and ensure new housing is deliverable. It will also ensure the borough's settlements grow in a sustainable way that supports the quality of life of all residents.
8. The Vision, Aims and Objectives sets out what the plan is seeking to achieve by the end of the plan period i.e.2032. These are based on the Borough Strategy and have been subject to consultation with stakeholders and influenced by national policy and emerging sub-regional programmes like the Northern Powerhouse. The plan's emerging policies and proposals will be guided by these objectives. The plan will have policies and allocate sufficient land to ensure that future development and growth needs are met in a sustainable manner that includes taking account of Doncaster's growth ambition, climate change including avoiding flood risk, protection of heritage assets, health and a wider range of employment opportunities.

BACKGROUND

Proposed Housing Distribution Approach.

9. The Local Plan is required to provide sufficient new development land to meet its objectively assessed housing need of 920 dwelling per year as set out in the Housing Strategy. An overall approach is required to plan how this growth should be distributed to which settlements in the borough. Appendix A is a draft consultation document setting out housing targets for settlements in the borough. Subject to responses, this strategy will be used in the next stage of the plan's preparation to identify specific new housing sites to meet the overall need.
10. Publishing this proposed way forward, will help communities to focus on areas where new housing sites need to be allocated. This will enable communities and other stakeholders, including those that are preparing Neighbourhood Plans or wish to consider preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, to know how much housing is planned for their settlement. Neighbourhood plans need to be in conformity with the strategic proposals in the Local Plan such as housing targets for individual settlements.
11. The approach to housing distribution is based on a hierarchy of settlements derived from the Settlement Audit prepared as part of the Local Plan evidence base. The audit takes account of levels of population and number of services available e.g. schools, shops, bus networks covering social, economic and environmental facilities and from this a hierarchy of places is identified:

Settlement type	Level of service	Places Included
Doncaster main urban area	The contiguous built up area of Doncaster comprising around twenty distinct but connected districts arranged around the town centre, a sub- regional centre providing a level of services that serve the whole borough and beyond.	Balby/ Woodfield, Belle Vue, Bentley, Bessacarr, Cantley, Clay Lane, Cusworth, Edenthorpe, Hexthorpe, Hyde Park, Intake, Kirk Sandall, Richmond Hill, Scawsby, Scawthorpe, Warmsworth and Wheatley
7 Main towns	Large urban coalfield or market towns that provide 10 key services.	Hatfield, Stainforth, Dunscroft, and Dunsville; Thorne and Moorends; Conisbrough and Denaby; Mexborough; Armthorpe; Rossington; and Adwick and Woodlands
10 Service towns and Larger Villages	Towns that provide 7 key services	Carcroft & Skellow; Sprotbrough, Edlington, Askern, Tickhill, Bawtry
	Larger villages that provide 4 services	Barnby Dun, Auckley & Hayfield Green, Barnburgh & Harlington, Finningley.
40 Defined villages	Places with a population up to 1000 and only 1 key service	40 villages
Villages “washed over” by Green Belt or Countryside Policy Area		Small villages and hamlets with no history of defined development boundaries

12. The objectively assessed housing need set out in the Housing Strategy identified an overall housing requirement of 920 dwellings per annum made up of local need (housing needed to accommodate the existing population) and that arising from economic growth (housing needed to accommodate a growing population required to meet the job targets set out in the Sheffield City Region Growth Plan) as set out below;

	Baseline/Local Need Housing	Housing arising from economic growth	Total
Per annum	582	338	920
Plan period	8,730	5,489	13,800
Percentage	63%	37%	100%

13. The draft housing distribution proposes locating the baseline/local need housing in the Main Urban Area, Main Towns and the Smaller Towns and Villages. This will mean directing housing to a greater range of settlements than is currently permitted in the Core Strategy to meet local need. The settlements for local growth are identified as locations that have 4 or more services, 2 of which should be primary services, as identified in Settlement Audit. This would be spread proportionate to the number of households in those places.

14. Housing need arising from economic growth, which is more “footloose” is directed to the more sustainable main urban area and main towns with more services and greater accessibility. This approach proposes that most of this growth (60 to 70%) is directed to the Main Urban Area with up to 10% in Main Towns depending on the availability of suitable sites in those towns.

15. Table 1 (next page) sets out the housing requirement for settlements.

16. It should be noted the economic led growth housing figure directed to Main Towns is an “up to” figure of 10% to create a range to ensure the most sustainable and deliverable sites will be brought forward. This may result in some places having houses provided at the bottom of the range or towards the top due to;

- Constraints arising from the need to avoid flood risk using the sequential test, such as at Thorne and Moorends will result in housing at the lower end of the range.
- In some settlements, there are already a large number of housing permissions such as Stainforth/Hatfield with the DN7/Unity Project, which means the upper range can be met through those existing permission which exceed the range. Table 1 identifies those settlements where currently there are more permissions in place than the proposed housing requirement. Where this is the case, there will not be a need to identify any further sites for housing, however it is important to note that these permissions, where not started, will still need to be assessed to ensure they are sustainable, meet plan objectives and are deliverable before they can count towards the requirement.
- Due to economic and transport infrastructure plans at Adwick/Woodland, there is an additional justification for locating more of the economic led housing so it is more likely to have a provision toward the top of the range.

In addition, at Armthorpe because of the advanced stage of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is proposed to set an overall housing figure of 800 which is the current housing target of the plan.

17. This approach to the proposed housing distribution is informed by:

- A. Feedback from the Issues and Options Consultation,
- B. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options,
- C. The Draft emerging Vision for the plan, and
- D. National policy including the National Planning Policy Framework.

More detail is provided in Appendix A as summarised in the following paragraphs 19 to 26 below;

TABLE 1: PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING BY SETTLEMENT				
Town/Village	Settlement Type	Proposed housing allocation to meet local housing need	Proposed housing allocation to meet economic growth led housing need	Proposed total housing allocation
Doncaster	Main Urban Area	3780	3356 – 3916	7136 – 7696
Dunscroft, Dunsville, Hatfield & Stainforth	Main Towns (large urban areas with 10 or more key services)	615	Up to 559 but existing permissions exceed this so likely to be 559	1174*
Thorne & Moorends		510	Up to 559 but sequential approach to flood risk will apply	510 - 1069
Mexborough		465	Up to 559	465 – 1024
Conisbrough & Denaby		450	Up to 559	450 – 1009
Armthorpe		420	380 proposed to reflect the current Neighbourhood Plan target	800
Rossington		375	Up to 559 but exiting permissions exceed this so likely to be 559	934*
Adwick & Woodlands		270	Up to 559	270 - 829
Carcroft & Skellow		Service Towns and Villages (with 7 or more key services).	255	n/a
Sprotbrough Village	90		90	
Edlington	226		226*	
Askern	165		165*	
Tickhill	165		165	
Bawtry	105		105	
Barnby Dun	Large Villages (with 4 or more key services)		105	
Auckley & Hayfield Green		105	105*	
Barnburgh & Harlington		60	60	
Finningley		45	45*	
Total			8206	5594
40 defined villages with settlement limits		Quality infill development only		
*Denotes that there are more permissions in place expected to be delivered in the plan period than the housing requirement.				

A. Feedback from the Issues and Options Consultation

18. Consultation on the Local Plan overall approach took place in summer last year and, amongst other things, sought views on three options for the distribution of growth;

- Option 1: Core Strategy (current approach) with a focus of growth on main urban area but with dispersal to several towns with an emphasis on use of brownfield land.
- Option 2: Doncaster and Main Town with a greater focus on urban concentration on Doncaster and a smaller number of growth settlements.
- Option 3: Greater Dispersal Strategy with emphasis on growth in more market attractive places.

19. In response, two clear messages resulted from the consultation:

- a) The larger and more sustainable urban areas ought to be the main locations for housing growth (and this should include making good use of brownfield sites including sites in flood zones provided these were, or could be made, safe), and
- b) Local housing needs should be met locally and this should extend to the smaller settlements provided they had a service function; there was recognition that this larger spread of locations should provide for a better mix of sites, increasing choice, and would include sites in parts of the borough that would likely prove more attractive to the housing market and so improve delivery.

The housing distribution takes account of these responses to propose this approach.

B. Sustainability Appraisal report of the Issues and Options.

20. The appraisal of the growth options against the sustainability objectives found that, overall, option 2 was the most sustainable in terms of distributing growth and ensuring transformational projects were supported. Option 1 also performed well. All options will help reduce social exclusion, poverty and disadvantage because growth will be directed to areas that require regeneration and investment and have good access to services and jobs. However, a more dispersed pattern of growth could also dilute benefits associated with achieving a larger critical mass of development, and not maximise opportunities for high quality inward investment and lead to more car use and longer journeys.

21. The appraisal therefore supports a focus on the main urban area and the main towns. The proposed strategy minimises the distribution of housing to smaller towns/larger villages by limiting this to housing need only and not distributing to smaller settlements.

C. Draft Emerging Vision, Aims and Objectives of the Local Plan.

22. The emerging vision sets out that Doncaster will be a place that provides a range of housing to meet local need and a place that is adapting to climate change in well connected places. There is a specific aim on housing (aim 7) to increase provision of homes to meet current and future need and create mixed and balanced communities,

particularly in areas with access to existing and/or proposed services.

D. National Policy - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

23. This framework sets out core principles for the planning system, in particular, supporting economic development to deliver homes and thriving local places, promoting the vitality of main urban areas, taking full account of flood risk, the re-use of previously developed land, managing growth and focusing significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.
24. It also emphasises the need to boost significantly the supply of housing and requires local plans to meet the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing and ensure a 5 years' supply of deliverable housing is identified and maintained. Local plans should plan for a wide choice of high quality homes and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities and promote sustainable development in rural areas. Development allocations should be seen to be developable in the plan period.
25. Exceptional circumstances are required to justify taking land out of the Green Belt and a sequential approach to flood risk should be applied to the location of new development with low risk areas being sequentially preferable to higher risk areas but taking into account wider sustainability issues.

Local Plan Vision, Aims and Objectives.

26. The plan covers the period 2015 to 2032 and will be the statutory development plan for the whole borough of Doncaster. Planning applications need to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are other material considerations. National policy requires local plans to have a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. In order to produce the Vision, Aims and Objectives, workshops were held with Team Doncaster and strategies affecting Doncaster such as the Sheffield City Region Growth Plan and the Borough Strategy were considered. Consultation on the Vision, Aims and Objectives took place in summer 2015 and comments received were taken into account to provide an updated version. Appendix Bi identifies the current updated Vision, Aims and Objectives with the rest of the appendix showing comments made and how they have been used to update them. It is proposed that these should be published on the local plan website to inform engagement on other local plan documents and will be approved in due course as part of the Local Plan.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

27. The Council consulted in summer 2015 on three possible options for how growth might be distributed across the borough (set out in paragraph 18 above). Following discussion with a range of stakeholders and taking account of a national policy and guidance. The comments on these were assessed alongside the Sustainability Appraisal and the draft housing distribution proposed as set out in table 1 and in more detail with in Appendix A.

28. The consultation responses supported strongly supported options 1 and 2 but there was significant support for providing housing close to where services are available to meet local need. The proposed approach is hybrid approach which benefits from a balance between larger more sustainable areas (supporting regeneration) whilst supporting more rural communities by locating economic housing led growth is concentrated in larger more sustainable urban areas and local housing need distributed to a wider range of serviced towns and villages reflecting the emerging local plan aims and objectives.
29. The report asks Council to note the publication of the emerging The Vision Aims and Objectives which contribute to on-going engagement on the plan.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

30. The proposed housing distribution as set out in table 1 and appendix A takes account of the responses to the consultation, national policy and the emerging vision for the plan and is informed by the Sustainability Appraisal as set out in paragraphs 19 to 26.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>The draft vision sets out how the borough will look by 2032. This vision includes growth in the economy, Doncaster as an important hub in the north of England and performance better than other comparative places. It identifies that Doncaster will be a leading centre for sectors that are growing in Doncaster. The first aim is to attract investment and jobs that will support growth and diversity in the economy.</p> <p>Housing growth is located in places that have good accessibility such as to known employment opportunities.</p>
	<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>Sustainability is at the heart of the planning process seeking to provide places that are safe and healthy. The draft aims includes creating safe and vibrant places and housing is distributed in accord with the sustainability appraisal conclusions.</p>
	<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>These are specifically included in the Vision and Aims.</p>
	<p>All families thrive.</p>	<p>The objectives include providing housing for</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	families. The aims of the plan are to support a vibrant place that will attract and enable people to thrive with a range of accessible services to support communities.
	Council services are modern and value for money.	The format of the consultation is maximising the use of electronic media and targeting engagement with established groups. Growth in the economy will improve returns to the council.
	Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.	The Vision, Aims and Objectives have been prepared in partnership with Team Doncaster.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

31. The proposed document setting out the proposed housing distribution is part of the wider Local Plan and the overall strategy. It may be preferable to publish a larger part of the overall approach but in view of the time table set out in the Local Development Scheme to submit a plan to government by the end of 2016 and interest of stakeholders in the allocation of housing sites and progress neighborhood plans, there is a need to inform such communities with the emerging strategy for housing distribution. This will inform any consideration they have and assist their engagement within the site selection process.
32. The work of the Local Plan preparation continues to be dependent on input from partners and stakeholders to develop the evidence base for robust proposals. A summary of these risks were set out in the Local Development Scheme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Local Plan will be the statutory development plan required to provide for the future development needs of the borough. Planning applications need to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are other material considerations. The process for the preparation and adoption of a local plan is governed by planning legislation and regulations and in due course once the Submission Draft Local Plan (of which Appendix B will form part) has been approved, it will be published for comment. Representations received will then be submitted with the Plan and supporting documents to the Secretary of State for public examination by a Planning Inspector. The Inspector will consider whether the plan is legally compliant and whether it has met the relevant statutory tests including an assessment against the tests of 'soundness' set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (i.e. that the plan should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

33. There are no direct Financial Implications related to this report. Any costs associated with the consultation, e.g. community events, engagement with Parish Councils etc. will need to be contained within the existing Planning budget as no further funding is available.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

34. There are not considered to be any implications

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

35. There are not considered to be any implications

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

36. At this stage, the Local Plan is at the preparation stage a due regard statement, will be prepared as the Local Plan develops. The consultation will be in line with the Statement of Community Involvement which seeks to give all sections of the community the opportunity to take part in the planning process at the earliest opportunity so that decisions can take account of the range of community views and reflects, as far as possible, the concerns and aspirations of the people affected by them.

37. The Local Plan consultation database already includes a wide cross section of groups and individuals but advice will sought to maximise the contact and response of “hard to reach” and protected characteristic groups.

38. The objectives drafted in the report recognise the diversity of the Doncaster population and also the overall need to improve skills levels and improve the quality of life. The Local Plan as it is prepared will consider how this can be achieved and include monitoring to demonstrate this.

CONSULTATION

39. Extensive consultation took place on the Local Plan’s Issues and Options and the Vision, Aims and Objectives for a 6 week period last summer in accord with the Statement of Community Involvement. Summaries of these responses will be published on the local plan website. Two member workshops have taken place on the proposed housing distribution on 18 and 19 January 2016.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

40. Local Development Scheme 2015
Doncaster Local Plan Issues and Option Consultation July 2015
Doncaster Local Plan Vision, Aims and Objectives Consultation July 2015
Sustainability Appraisal of Doncaster’s Growth Options July 2015,
Housing Strategy 2015
Settlement Audit Dec 2015
Responses to the Issues and Options Consultation Feb 2016.

These documents can be accessed on the Council’s Local Plan’s website;

www.doncaster.gov.uk/ldf

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