
DARLINGTON BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2016 – 2036
DRAFT LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Chris McEwan,
Economy and Regeneration Portfolio Councillor

Responsible Director - Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks Members' approval to the consultation of the draft version of the Local Plan.
2. It further seeks delegated powers for the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Economy and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to allow minor editorial amendments to the Draft Plan prior to publication and to agree detailed consultation arrangements.

Summary

3. This report follows a previous report on 9 January 2018 which agreed the Local Plan housing target of 9,840 and the Local Plan timetable.
4. Included within the Local Development Scheme (the Local Plan timetable) is provision for the publication of a Draft Local Plan for consultation. This report seeks Cabinet approval to carry out a consultation exercise on the Draft Local Plan (**Appendix 1**). The written document will be accompanied by a Policies Map which shows the boundaries of the allocations and designations set by the planning policies. All of the evidence base that has been used to produce the plan will also be available for comment. This includes the Objective Assessment of Need, The Sustainability Assessment and the outcome of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).
5. The consultation will involve writing to all parties on the Local Plan consultation database, Parish Councils and Statutory Consultees. There will also be a series of drop in sessions where officers will be available to discuss the Plan.
6. The Local Plan provides a vision and a guide for the delivery of sustainable development over the next 20 years. It's about planning for our residents' future

needs in terms of housing and about how we protect and nurture our local environment whilst we provide these homes, the workplaces of the future, and our leisure.

7. The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services will make arrangements for consultations on the plan in line with Statement of Community Involvement. This is likely to commence end of June 2018.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
 - (a) Agree to consult on the draft Local Plan 2016 – 2036.
 - (b) Agree a six week period of consultation.
 - (c) Delegate authority to the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Economy and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, to make any minor changes to the documents referred to above before they are finally published.

Reasons

9. Local Planning Authorities must prepare a Local Plan that sets out the local planning policies for their local planning authority area. Government guidance requires that Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and be consistent with national policy, in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Background Papers

- (i) National Planning Policy Framework, CLG March 2012
- (ii) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- (iii) Localism Act 2011

David Hand: Extension 6294

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| S17 Crime and Disorder | The Local Plan has a role in reducing crime through the design and location of development. |
| Health and Well Being | A key objective of Local Plan policies will be to improve people's health and wellbeing by protecting and improving the economic, social and environmental conditions in the Borough. |
| Carbon Impact | A Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out on the strategic issues and options. Achieving sustainable development will be a fundamental objective of the Local Plan. |
| Diversity | An Equalities Impact Assessment will be part of the local plan preparation process. |
| Wards Affected | All. |
| Groups Affected | All |
| Budget and Policy Framework | The Local Plan will be prepared using existing budgets and will ultimately form part of the Council's Planning Policy Framework. |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Urgent Decision | No |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | The Local Plan will represent the spatial implications of the overarching aims of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed. |
| Efficiency | The consultation stage of the Local Plan represents the most efficient way to produce the Local Plan having regard to the legislative and engagement requirements. |
| Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers | This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers |

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

10. Local Planning Authorities must prepare a Local Plan that sets out the local planning policies for their local planning authority area. These policies are very important material considerations when deciding planning applications, as all decisions must be made in accordance with the policies unless there are very strong reasons not to do so. Government guidance requires that Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and be consistent with national policy, in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF states that every local planning authority in England should seek to have in place a clear, up to date Local Plan that conforms to the Framework, meets local development needs and reflects local people's views about how they wish their community to develop. The plan preparation process should fully involve everyone with an interest in the document or area, and they should have had the chance to comment.

11. The initial Draft Local Plan now before Members brings together the Borough's policies and land use allocations for the future. It reflects several years of work and is underpinned by many specialist studies, but is not the final version. There is scope for further changes to be made in response to comments submitted through this consultation by the public, stakeholders and statutory consultees, and also in light of further changes that the Government are proposing in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework.
12. Local Plan discussions often focus on housing allocations but the Local Plan is about much more than that. It provides a vision and a guide for the delivery of sustainable development over the next 20 years, which is to 2036. It is about how we protect and nurture our environment whilst providing for the homes, workplaces and leisure opportunities that we need.
13. Darlington cannot stand still. It has to support its communities to thrive and compete with neighbouring Boroughs, and further afield, to attract investment. It needs a strong, clear Local Plan if it to grow in a sustainable way, and to preserve both its prosperity, and its unique quality of life.
14. The figure overleaf shows the various evidence bases which have informed the Plan to date and the future process:

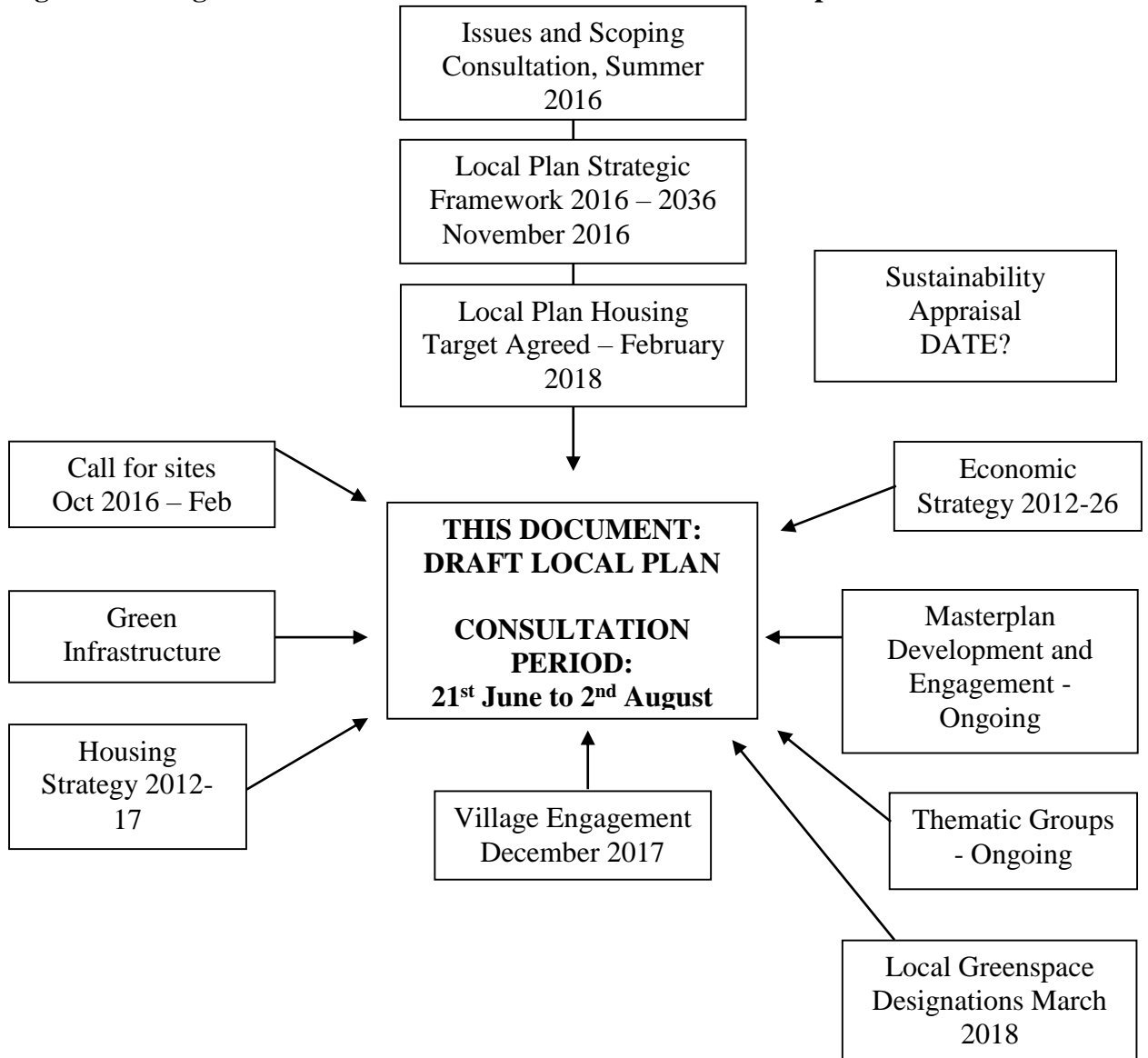
Consultation

15. The Local Plan Regulation 18 requires that the local planning authority invite comments from the "statutory bodies" such as Historic England, the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency and Natural England, together with residents and other persons carrying out business in the area about the Local Plan.
16. There are no fixed rules regarding the form and content of Regulation 18 consultations, however the Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2016 which sets out who we will consult and how we will consult.
17. Members should be aware that as part of the development of the Draft Local Plan there has already been significant consultations as agreed with Cabinet including Members Local Plan Reference Group, Local Plan Steering Group, Subject Theme Groups and some Parish Councils. These consultations involved Statutory Consultees.
18. This proposed consultation will provide the opportunity for stakeholders and local residents to comment further on the policy framework which will guide development over the next 20 years, together with the sites, that have been assessed in detail, and could be used to accommodate the growth that is necessary to meet the Objectively Assessed Needs of the Borough.
19. In the context of this proposed consultation, aspects relating to plan preparation including the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment – SEA) will also be released for comment.

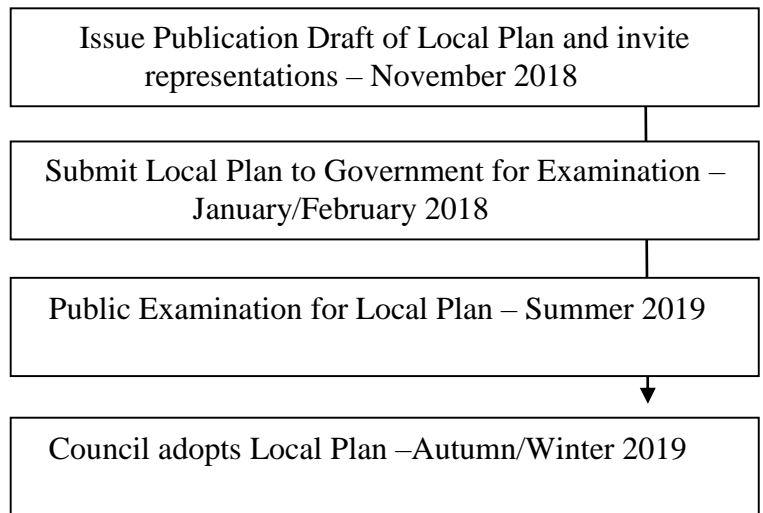
20. This will not be the final opportunity for stakeholders and local people to comment on the Local Plan. An invitation to provide representations under Regulations 19 and 20 on the Council's final version of the Plan, will be issued later in 2018.

Figure 1.1: Stages of

Preparation of the Local Plan



FUTURE STAGES



21. The final (Publication) version of the Local Plan to be released later in 2018 following its approval by Council under Regulation 19 will be that, which the Council considers to be the “sound” and is prepared to submit to the Secretary of State for Public Examination. The publication version will require endorsement of Full Council before it can be published for representations.
22. All of the evidence base that has been used to produce the plan will also be available for comment. This includes the Objective Assessment of Need, the Sustainability Assessment and the outcome of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).

Financial Implications

23. Consultation is an integral part of Local Plan preparation and allowances are made within the existing Local Plan Budget to facilitate consultation.
24. Going forward the Local Plan will be key to delivering housing, employment and infrastructure development and is an important determinant of the future economy of Darlington.

Legal Implications

25. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However it is important the consultation under Regulation 18 is effective and allows stakeholders and local people opportunities to engage in plan preparation.

Consultation

26. As indicated in Figure 1.1 above the Council has consulted a number of times during the preparation of the local Plan. This Consultation under Regulation 18 will further allow stakeholder and local people to make comments which the Council will be able to consider in more depth as the Publication Version of the Local Plan is prepared.

Outcome of Consultation

27. The responses received during the consultation period will be carefully considered and reported to Members with amendments recommended to members where required prior to the publication version being released for representation.

Equalities considerations

28. The Local Plan itself will have regard to equalities considerations.