

**STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA  
ITEM NO**

**24 OCTOBER 2019**

**6**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>LOCAL PLAN REVIEW – DRAFT LOCAL PLAN FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To agree a Draft Local Plan document for public consultation.
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<p><b>The Committee RESOLVES:-</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>To approve the content of the Draft Local Plan (Appendix A) for the purposes of public consultation commencing November 2019</b></li> <li><b>To delegate to the Head of Planning Strategy the authority to make minor map, textual and formatting changes to the draft document for public consultation.</b></li> </ol>
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	The Emerging Strategy was subject to public consultation in 2018. A consultation report is set out in Appendix B and shows how views have been taken into consideration. There has been further internal consultation with relevant departments, and discussions held at Planning Review Panel. The Draft Local Plan has been amended to take account of points raised.
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	<p>As the decision is to approve the content for the purposes of public consultation, then there are no direct financial implications to this report. Future financial implications may arise after consultation if there is a delay in the progress of the local plan review.</p> <p>Adele Rudkin, Accountant Tel: 01453 754109 Email: <a href="mailto:adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk">adele.rudkin@stroud.gov.uk</a></p> <p>There are risks associated with delaying the progress of the Local Plan Review or in not seeking to address the minimum level of housing need using the new national standard method. Both would be contrary to national policy and would result in potential speculative housing applications not in accordance with the current Local Plan. Continuing to progress this timely review will ensure that the Local Plan remains up-to-date and the planned for housing supply can be maintained.</p>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	<p>A review of the Local Plan must be completed every five years from the date of adoption and is required to keep the Local Plan considered up-to-date and sound. The general principles are set out in the report and this report requests authority to go out to consultation on the draft Local Plan.</p> <p>There is a legal duty on local planning authorities to engage constructively with the Local Plan. This Authority adopted a Statement of Community Involvement in March 2019. Any consultation must</p>

	<p>adhere to the Statement of Community Involvement and be adequate and fair.</p> <p>Legal advice on any updated or amended Local Plan resulting from the process will be provided as appropriate and required.</p> <p>Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email: <a href="mailto:patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk">patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Report Author</b>	<p>Mark Russell, Planning Strategy Manager Tel: 01453 754305 Email: <a href="mailto:mark.russell@stroud.gov.uk">mark.russell@stroud.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Options</b>	<p>Options are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. approve the Draft Local Plan for public consultation; or</li> <li>2. amend the Draft Local Plan for public consultation, or</li> <li>3. delay the Draft Local Plan for further internal discussion.</li> </ol> <p>A series of spatial options have been identified and assessed during the preparation of the Draft Local Plan.</p>
<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	<p>Key stages of the Local Plan review are subject to reports to both Planning Review Panel and Environment Committee. Council will approve the final Draft Local Plan at pre-submission and submission stages (scheduled for 2020).</p>
<b>Background Papers/ Appendices</b>	<p>Appendix A - Draft Local Plan Appendix B - Emerging Strategy public consultation report <a href="#">Background papers</a></p>

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Council adopted the Stroud District Local Plan in November 2015. The Plan continues to provide an up-to-date planning framework to assess planning applications and identifies sufficient housing and employment land to meet needs to 2031. The Plan included a commitment to undertake an early review.
- 1.2 The Government expects local planning authorities to review plans regularly to keep them up-to-date and to update them in whole or in part at least every five years.
- 1.3 In September 2017 Committee approved a timetable for the Local Plan Review and approved an Issues and Options paper for public consultation. In October 2018 Committee approved an Emerging Strategy for further public consultation. Consultation to date has included public exhibitions, meetings with parish councils and key stakeholders. A report of the latest public consultation is set out in Appendix B.

## 2. DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

- 2.1 In July 2018 Government published the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As expected, the NPPF included a number of proposals to boost significantly the supply of housing, including the introduction of a standard method for determining the minimum number of houses required which local authorities should follow in drafting their new plans. The method uses a formula based on projections of local household needs adjusted to take account of the relative cost of housing in each

area. Departing from these minimum figures can only be justified in exceptional circumstances. For Stroud, the Government requires the delivery of at least 638 homes per year. This is a 40% increase from the figure in our current Local Plan of 456 homes per year. Last year 564 homes were built in the district.

**2.2** A Draft Local Plan (Appendix A) has now been prepared to identify how this housing requirement could be distributed across the district, as well as addressing employment, retail and town centre, open space and community needs over the next twenty years.

**2.3** In summary, the Draft Local Plan includes the following:

- 0) Introduction– what it is about and how people can get involved
- 1) Setting the scene – explains why we need a plan and identifies the key issues for the district building upon the previously identified 40 key issues grouped by Corporate Delivery Plan priority areas: economy; affordable housing; environment; health and wellbeing; delivery.
- 2) The development strategy – A vision, strategic objectives and core policies for the future of the district. An explanation of the preferred development strategy and what it will mean for delivering:
  - Housing
  - Employment and economic growth
  - Town centres and retailing
  - Local green spaces and community facilities
- 3) Making places – Mini-visions, key issues and top priorities for each of the eight parish cluster areas. Identification of sites for allocation.
- 4) Homes and communities – Policies to deliver and manage new housing
- 5) Economy and infrastructure - Policies to deliver and manage new employment development, retail and tourism facilities
- 6) Our environment and surroundings – Policies for the conservation and enhancement of the environment, including climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience.
- 7) Delivery and monitoring – How the plan policies and sites will be delivered
- 8) Policies map – Other proposed changes to the current policies map

### **3. CHANGES MADE SINCE THE EMERGING STRATEGY**

**3.1** A number of factors have resulted in the Draft Local Plan being different to the Emerging Strategy paper subject to public consultation in 2018/19. Firstly, the results of public consultation have been taken into account in deciding whether any changes needed to be made to the emerging strategy or particular sites for allocation. Secondly, a number of technical studies have informed the development of the strategy, sites and policies. Thirdly, the new NPPF and subsequent national planning guidance has informed the development of core and delivery policies. Fourthly, the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment reports of the Emerging Strategy paper have informed the contents of the Draft Local Plan.

**3.2** The main changes are:

- Refinement of the development strategy to include additional opportunities for small scale growth at Tier 3a settlements and to achieve social sustainability, at Tier 4 and 5 settlements, subject to local support

- Addition of sites with potential for employment
- Deletion of sites with likely impact on the AONB and its setting
- Deletion of sites where there is no evidence of deliverability

- 3.3** Officers have looked again at the merits of concentrated growth v dispersal in the light of public consultation results. However sustainability appraisal and transport assessment work has identified the clear benefits of concentrating most growth in terms of maximising the use of infrastructure and minimising the need to travel. Whilst some people may like the concept of organic growth at settlements, the actual scale of the growth required (i.e. 8000 additional dwellings) would mean that a pro-rata dispersal strategy would lead to significant growth even at the smallest settlement. Officers do not consider that the evidence or local views would support such an approach.
- 3.4** A major change since the publication of the Emerging Strategy in 2018 has been the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, the pledge to do everything within the Council's power to make the district carbon neutral by 2030 and a commitment to adequately reflect this in the development of all strategies and plans. Consequently, the Draft Local Plan includes a number of policies which seek to contribute to the achievement of a carbon neutral district by 2030, including supporting zero carbon construction and design standards, increasing renewable energy provision, prioritising sustainable transport options and seeking exemplar strategic developments.
- 3.5** The Local Housing Needs Assessment has now established Gloucester City Council's housing requirements to 2040/1 and as a result the City Council has informed Gloucestershire authorities that new homes will need to be accommodated in adjoining districts due to a lack of land within the Gloucester administrative area. The interim conclusions of assessment work are that land areas with most potential to meet needs close to where they arise in Gloucester include land within Stroud District. Under current agreements, the sites that can best accommodate Gloucester's unmet needs should be allocated in their respective local plans. Failure to do so would likely lead to the Council failing the Duty to Cooperate and/or the Plan being found unsound, as the new NPPF strengthens the tests of soundness to require authorities to accommodate unmet needs from neighbouring areas where it is practical to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development. Land at Whaddon has therefore been identified as having the potential to address Gloucester's housing needs and is safeguarded in the Draft Plan for such purposes, subject to it being required and provided it is consistent with the approved strategy of the Joint Core Strategy Review.
- 3.6** The Draft Local Plan sets out preferred sites at the main towns and larger villages, together with two new settlements, to meet Stroud's needs for future housing, employment and/or community uses. These sites have been subject to assessment, including through the Strategic Assessment of Land Availability (SALA) process and as part of Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan. However, the document makes clear that the identification of these sites does not indicate final Council approval for development at these locations at this stage. The purpose of the consultation is to seek local views on these preferred sites but to ask whether other site options may be better.

- 3.7** The Draft Local Plan is supported by a number of new studies and assessments which will be published alongside the Draft Plan for public consultation. These include: Local Housing Needs Assessment, Sustainable Transport Strategy, Open Space and Green Infrastructure Study, Renewable Energy Assessment, Assessment of Strategic Development Opportunities in Parts of Gloucestershire. A Sustainability Appraisal Report and Habitat Regulation Assessment Report of the Draft Local Plan are being prepared and will also accompany the Plan for public consultation.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1** The Draft Local Plan and supporting documents will be subject to public consultation for eight weeks commencing w/c 18 November and ending w/c 6 January 2020. The following activities are proposed during that time:
- Press release and newspaper advertisement
  - Emails to groups and individuals on Planning Strategy mailing list
  - Consultation paper and supporting documents on website
  - On-line questionnaire via website
  - Consultation paper at deposit points
  - Public exhibitions at locations throughout the district
  - Meetings with statutory consultees, key stakeholders, interest groups
- 4.2** The results of public consultation, together with the completion of other technical studies, including an Employment Land Assessment, Infrastructure and Delivery Plan and viability studies, will help inform the development of the final draft Plan during 2020.
- 4.3** The Council's timetable for progressing the Local Plan will require Council to approve the final Draft Plan in July 2020. After six weeks of statutory consultation in September-October 2020, the Draft Plan, supporting documents and representations received, will be submitted to the Government in November 2020. If the Plan submission is delayed, the housing requirement will increase, as the current Local Plan will be more than 5 years old.