

Allerdale Borough Council

Executive . 3 September 2018

Council- 19 September 2018

**Local Plan (part 2)
Presubmission Draft**

The Reason for the Decision

To seek approval to publish the pre-submission draft of the Local Plan (part 2) for a final six week period prior to submission to the Secretary of State for public examination.

Summary of options considered

A detailed options assessment has been carried out across all sites and policies before arriving at the pre-submission draft of the Local Plan (part 2). An options consultation was undertaken in 2017.

Recommendations

That the Presubmission draft of the Local Plan (part 2), including amendments to the affordable housing (3.1) and tourism (7.1) policies, as set out in appendix 1 of this report, are approved for publication.

That the Policies Maps, as set out in appendix 2 of this report, are approved for publication.

That following the completion of a six week period for representations the Local Plan (part 2) is submitted to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government for an Examination in Public.

Financial / Resource Implications

The Council has to fund the cost of holding the Examination in Public. This expenditure is accounted for within existing budget and dedicated reserves

Legal / Governance Implications

The preparation of the Local Plan has to comply with legal and regulation requirements set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as well as Examination in Public.

Community Safety Implications	N/A
Health and Safety and Risk Management Implications	N/A
Equality Duty considered / Impact Assessment completed	Yes
Wards Affected	All outside the National Park
The contribution this decision would make to the Council's priorities	<p>Tackling Inequality- affordable housing policy requires developers to provide affordable housing as part of the housing mix on sites.</p> <p>Strengthening our local economy- ensuring an adequate land supply for housing and businesses, supporting tourism development and identifying areas suitable for renewable energy development. The local plan is supported by an infrastructure delivery plan.</p> <p>Enhancing our towns- ensuring sufficient land is available for retail and town centre uses while safeguarding the town centres.</p> <p>Improving health and wellbeing- protection of green spaces and networks</p>
Is this a Key Decision	Yes
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Alan Smith
Lead Officer	Nik Hardy, Head of Strategy, Policy and Performance. Nik.hardy@allderdale.gov.uk 01900 702778

Report Implications

Community Safety	N	Employment (external to the Council)	Y
Financial	N	Employment (internal)	N
Legal	N	Partnership	Y
Social Inclusion	N	Asset Management	N
Equality Duty	N	Health and Safety	N

Background papers: Local Plan (part 2) Pre-submission draft, Policies Maps and Consultation summary and responses.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Allerdale Local Plan is the statutory development plan for the area of the Borough outside the National Park. One of its principal roles is to support the delivery of the Council Plan objectives and the housing and business growth strategies, while providing the policy framework to guide the determination of planning applications.
- 1.2 The Local Plan is in two parts. The Local Plan (part 1), which was adopted in July 2014 following an Examination in Public, sets out a housing target of at least 5471 dwellings and 54 hectares of employment land to be delivered by 2029. Part 1 of the Plan also sets out a spatial strategy which outlines in broad terms how the level of growth will be distributed across the plan area. The second part of the local plan is mainly focussed on identifying individual sites to deliver the strategy and level of growth set out in the Local Plan (part1).
- 1.3 Consultation was carried out last year on preferred sites options for housing, employment, gypsy and travellers and retail. Other proposals included an Area Suitable for Wind Energy Development, protection of important areas of open space and green infrastructure. Additional policies on affordable housing, self build housing, tourism development, housing standards and broadband provision have also been subject to consultation. Comments received during each stage of consultation have helped inform the final site and policy selection. A summary of the comments received and the response to them is included in the appendix of this report.
- 1.4 The next stage in the plan making process is to publish a pre-submission draft of the Local Plan (part 2) for six weeks to allow the community and stakeholders to comment on the soundness and legal compliance of the plan. Representations received during this time will then be submitted, along with the Local Plan, to the Secretary of State for consideration at a public examination.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The work on the Local Plan (part 2) started with a call for sites. This exercise was open to all and established a long list of sites which has formed the basis for the site allocation assessment. The range of sites submitted included land for housing, employment, retail, open space and wildlife areas. This long list of sites has been through several stages of assessment This included a site visit, constraint and infrastructure check, policy compliance check, viability assessment, habitat regulation assessment and sustainability appraisal to arrive at the proposed allocated sites. The assessments have been undertaken by officers and external experts in ecology, flooding, highways, viability and in consultation with statutory consultees such as the County Council, Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England.

2.2 The plan preparation stage is now complete and this report together with the local plan document in appendix 1 and the Policies Maps in appendix 2 set out the final recommended version of the Local Plan (part 2)

3.0 Housing

3.1 Affordable Housing Policy

Policy S 8 of the Local Plan (part 1) currently sets out the Council's requirements for on site provision of affordable housing as part of a housing development. Given changes in national planning guidance it is considered that a review of the current policy is required. The changes at national level relate to the size of development that will be expected to provide an element of affordable housing. The national policy is for developments of 10 or less dwellings not to be required to include affordable housing.

At present the Local Plan policy has a site threshold of 10 dwellings in the main towns and 5 dwellings every where else. It is proposed to amend the current local plan policy to be in line with national policy and therefore a single threshold of 11 dwellings across the plan area is suggested. In addition to reflect the evidence for the housing study (2016) and recent changes to national planning policy it is proposed to adjust the tenure split to 50% social rent 50% intermediate units, as opposed to the current position of 75% social rent and 25% intermediate units. Intermediate units can include discounted sale properties, shared ownership, starter homes.

3.2 Custom and Self Build Housing

A policy specifically for custom and self build development has been included. The Borough has a strong tradition of individuals building their own homes however its delivery is very different from a volume housebuilder. It is considered that a focussed policy is required to address the unique requirements associated with this form of development. The aim of the policy is to ensure supporting infrastructure is delivered in a coordinated way and that there is a consistent approach to design across multiple individual plots.

3.3 Housing Standards

Allerdale's population is ageing faster than the regional and national averages and is in the top 20% in the country for the increase in population aged 65 and over between 2004 and 2014. Government research has identified that older people are the main group requiring adaptations to their homes to allow them to live independently. Given that older people spend 70-90% of their time at home it is important to ensure dwellings can be satisfactorily adapted.

A policy is proposed to require all new dwellings to satisfy a higher level of Building Regulations M4 (2). This requires, where possible, a level access on approach to dwellings and internal space requirements that support easy adaptation. In addition the policy requires that development of over 30 dwellings will be required to provide 5% of the units to a higher building

regulation standard M4(3). This standard is to ensure the dwelling can be used for people using wheelchairs.

3.4 Housing Site allocations

The sites identified in the Local Plan document and on the Policies Map are considered to be the most appropriate sites for allocation. There are a number of settlements where no housing allocations are proposed due to the level of existing planning permissions and house completions since the start of the Local Plan in 2011. Each site has its own policy which addresses site specific issues that will need to be considered at the detailed design stage.

In addition to identifying sites the settlement boundaries in all the towns and villages have been reviewed and amended to reflect new development, existing planning permissions and allocations. Settlement boundaries in the Limited Growth Villages have been reviewed to allow small scale development during the plan period.

4.0 Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Travelling Showpeople

4.1 In line with national guidance local plans must set out a pitch target for gypsy and travellers and a plot target for travelling show people which address their likely permanent and transit accommodation needs. In addition the Local Plan has to identify a supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of sites against their locally set targets, developable sites or broad locations for growth for the medium term (6-10 years) and where possible the long term (11-15 years).

4.2 In 2013 a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was jointly commissioned with other Cumbrian authorities. A further assessment regarding the travelling showperson accommodation need was carried out in 2018 which indicated a drop in need from 21 to 8 plots. The table below sets out the need during the plan period:

	Permanent Pitches	Transit Pitches	Showperson Plots
Identified five year shortfall 2013/14 to 2017/18	10	10	
Medium term Shortfall (2018/19 to 2022/23)	0		5
Long term Shortfall (2023/24 to 2028/29)	0		3
Identified fitqto	10	10	8

Local Plan (2012/13 to 2028/29) 15 years			
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Following the Examination in Public (for part 1 of The Plan) the Planning Inspector concluded that this accommodation requirement should be the adopted targets for the Local Plan and that the Local Plan (part 2) will implement the target figures on the ground.

4.3 **Gypsy and Traveller Sites**

No sites were submitted for consideration for Gypsy and Traveller sites during the call for sites exercise. Notwithstanding this a total of six sites, predominately in Council ownership, were considered in the options analysis. In order to establish whether a site was suitable to deliver the accommodation need each site was assessed on its individual site characteristics such as access to the highway, utilities and services, relationship to existing settlement pattern, travelling patterns of the community, its availability and the policy framework outlined in policy S11 of the Local Plan (part 1). The preferred site for both the permanent and transit pitches is at Oldside Workington. This would accommodate both the permanent and transit need for the plan period.

4.4 **Travelling Showpeople**

There are existing yards in Silloth and Wigton with capacity to accommodate future need. It is proposed to safeguard the existing yards in the local plan and support future provision on these sites in line with policy S11 of the Local Plan (part 1)

5.0 **Employment**

5.1 As mentioned previously the Local Plan (part 1) sets a requirement of 54 hectares of employment land for the plan period. Not only does that land supply have to be sufficient to cater for existing and future business need it has to be of the right quality and diversity to cater for a range of business needs. At present the plan area has an over supply of employment land, a significant proportion of which requires further investment to ensure it is attractive to businesses. In selecting the allocated employment sites a number of factors have guided the assessment:

- recognition that Lillyhall and the Port of Workington are key locations for employment in the plan area,
- rationalise the current land supply where possible,
- need to maintain a reasonable spatial distribution to cater for local business need and
- individual site assessment.

5.2 The proposed employment site allocations reinforces the importance of the Port of Workington and Lillyhall and ensures that there is employment sites in the main towns of Workington, Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton, Aspatria and Silloth. No employment allocations are proposed outside these towns but there is sufficient policy support in the Local Plan (part 1) to enable proposals for rural businesses start ups or expansion, farm diversifications, live work units etc to be supported on a case by case basis.

5.3 **Safeguarding Employment Sites**

In addition to identifying a future land supply it is proposed to safeguard important existing employment sites. These sites have been selected on the basis of their contribution to the local economy and or their location. The aim of safeguarding is to protect them from alternative uses such as housing or retail.

5.4 **Broadband**

High speed and good quality broadband is becoming an increasingly important aspect of modern, everyday life for both residents and businesses. Access to fast and reliable broadband will: facilitate the growth of the local economy, improve access to services and education especially in rural areas and support social interaction. This policy ensures that the provision of broadband is considered at the early design stage along with other utilities such as water, gas and electricity and the necessary infrastructure put in place.

6.0 **Retail and Town Centre Uses**

6.1 The Local Plan (part 1) sets out the policy context for the site allocations. Policy S16 establishes the hierarchy of centres and the policy framework for assessing proposals for main town centre uses. The town centre boundaries and the primary shopping areas, including the primary and secondary frontages, for the Principal and Key Service Centres are also defined in the Local Plan (part 1). The principal role of the Local Plan (part 2) is to identify suitable sites, where there is a need for town centre development.

6.2 The Allerdale Retail Study 2015 examined the future trends, patterns and demands for retail and main town centre uses during the plan period. The finding of this study, in terms of floor space requirements, provides the evidence base for the site allocations. The study identified levels of capacity for additional retail floor space in the Principal and Key Service Centres as follows:

Workington	Capacity for additional convenience goods floor space . i.e. a medium-sized supermarket or discount food store. Capacity for additional comparison goods floor space. Focus for major new leisure development/main town centre use proposals.
Maryport	Very limited capacity for convenience goods floor space following the recent approval of a new food store. Very limited capacity for comparison goods.
Cockermouth	Very limited capacity for convenience goods floor space following the recent approval of a new food store. Moderate capacity for additional comparison floor space.
Wigton	Limited additional floor space capacity for both convenience and comparison goods.
Silloth and Aspatria	No future demand for additional convenience or comparison goods floor space.
Convenience goods are referring to supermarkets. Comparison goods are clothes, furniture, white goods etc	

Based on the demand evidence set out in the retail study, together with existing planning permissions, the Local Plan (part 2) will only allocate land for retail/main town centre uses in Workington. A range of sites have been assessed, sourced from the call for sites exercise, saved allocations and other potential town centre sites. The assessment methodology was based on national planning guidance and the policy framework set out in the Local Plan (part 1). As a result of the assessment Central car park and the British Legion site have been identified as allocated sites for retail and main town centre uses. Both are town centre sites and will help support and expand the current town centre offer. It is also intended to produce a Workington Town Centre Action Plan to establish a planning framework to help deliver the Council's town centre strategy.

6.3 Lower Derwent Valley

In addition to the sites that have been identified for retail development in Workington a specific policy for the Lower Derwent Valley area is proposed. As a number of sites were submitted during the call for sites exercise, coupled with the evolving role of this area of the Workington, it is considered an area based policy is required to guide future development. The Lower Derwent Valley has the potential to build on the recent town centre and edge of centre developments. The policy supports sport, leisure and ancillary retail

development, and proposals to enhance the value of the river corridor for informal recreation.

6.4 Town Centre Boundary Reviews

The current town centre boundaries for the Principal and Key Service Centres were adopted in 2014 as part of the Local Plan (Part 1). These were designated following substantial survey and health checkwork. The town centre boundaries reflected the geographical areas where the main town centre uses (retail, leisure, offices etc) were present and ensured a sufficient supply of suitable sites. However in the period following the adoption of Part 1 of the Local Plan there has been town centre use developments and planning consents on edge of centre sites in Workington, and Cockermouth. The town centres boundaries of those towns have been amended to reflect this.

7.0 Tourism

7.1 A strategic priority of the Local Plan is to promote sustainable tourism through the provision of high quality accommodation and attractions. Tourism is a major contributor to the local economy and provides an important source of income to the towns and communities of Allerdale in the form of visitor spending on accommodation, food and drink and recreational activities. Currently, Policy S17 in the Local Plan (part 1) provides the policy framework to assess proposals for tourist attractions and accommodation. The wording of the current policy has been amended to provide sufficient flexibility to support tourism initiatives and reflect changing requirements in the tourism sector.

8.0 Area Suitable for Wind Energy Development

8.1 Policy S19 in the Local Plan (part 1) sets out the policy for assessing proposals for renewable energy. In June 2015 a Ministerial Statement, now incorporated into the Planning Practice Guidance, introduced two further tests when considering proposals for wind energy. Firstly, a planning application for wind turbines should only be granted if the development is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local plan and secondly it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed.

8.2 The Local Plan (part 2) identifies an Area Suitable for Wind Energy Development. It covers the whole district (excluding the National Park). The exception to this is the areas within the Solway Coast AONB, Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and a buffer zone running along the boundary with the Lake District National Park boundary. In these areas only small scale wind turbine schemes will be supported.

8.3 The tests set in the Ministerial Statement and Policy S19 of the Local Plan (part 1) remain in place, for all schemes located in the area, and would have to be satisfied in order for a proposal to gain planning permission.

9.0 Amenity Green Space, Green Infrastructure and Green Gaps

- 9.1 The Local Plan (part 2) has identified Amenity Green Spaces in the Local Service Centres and Rural Villages. The Amenity Green Space designation is proposed on sites that make the most significant contribution to village character and appearance or play an important community role. Development will be ruled out on such amenity space unless special circumstances can be justified.
- 9.2 In the main towns of Workington, Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria a network of green infrastructure has been identified. This is composed of open space, parks, wildlife and river corridors. The purpose of identifying the network is to safeguard and enhance it, especially areas of wildlife value, and to ensure development takes account of the network in their layout and design.
- 9.3 Two Green Gaps are proposed; one between Kirkbampton and Thurstonfield and another between Prospect and Oughterside. The purpose of the Green Gaps is to ensure that these villages remain separate entities by resisting development in those areas.

10.0 Customer Satisfaction and Service

- 10.1 Local communities and businesses have been consulted at each stage of the Local Plan (part 2) preparation.

11.0 Services Delivered as Locally as Possible

- 11.1 The Local Plan recognises how distinct each town and village is and this is reflected in the proposals.

12.0 Finance/Resource Implications

- 12.1 The Council has to fund the cost of holding the Examination in Public. This expenditure is accounted for within existing budget and dedicated reserves.

13.0 Legal Implications and Risks

- 13.1 The preparation of the Local Plan has to comply with legal and regulation requirements set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as well as Examination in Public.

14.0 Recommendations

- 14.1 That the Presubmission draft of the Local Plan (part 2), including amendments to the affordable housing (3.1) and tourism (7.1) policies, as set out in appendix 1 of this report, are approved for publication.

- 14.2 That the Policies Maps, as set out in appendix 2 of this report, are approved for publication.
- 14.3 That following the completion of a six week period for representations the Local Plan (part 2) is submitted to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government for an Examination in Public.

15.0 Conclusion

- 15.1 The Presubmission draft of the Local Plan represents an important stage in the development of the Local Plan (part 2). With the plan preparation stage now complete it is considered that the proposed allocated sites and policies are the most suitable to deliver the identified level of growth sustainably and underpin the delivery of the Council Plan, Business Growth Strategy and the Housing Strategy.

Nik Hardy
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