

Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee

Extraordinary Meeting held 3 November 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillors Julie Grocutt (Co-Chair), Christine Gilligan Kubo (Deputy Chair), Andrew Sangar (Group Spokesperson), Ian Auckland, Craig Gamble Pugh, Dianne Hurst, Ruth Mersereau, Richard Shaw and Bryan Lodge (Substitute Member)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mazher Iqbal. Councillor Bryan Lodge attended as a substitute member.

**2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 There were no interest declared at the meeting.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS RELATING TO THE ISSUE TO BE DISCUSSED**

4.1 Question from: Anthony Clitheroe

Dear Sir / Madam,

Further to the publicised opportunity to submit questions to the Special Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee due to sit on Thursday 3 November 2022 we have a particular interest in the employment land allocations set out in the Draft Local Plan and would be grateful for responses to the following questions:

- Are Members of the Committee satisfied that the draft Local Plan makes sufficient provision for employment land?
- The National Planning Policy Framework states that “planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt” and that “planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors”, including “storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations”. This is particularly pertinent given the significant need for storage and distribution facilities along the M1 corridor. Please can Members of the Committee identify where the suitably located storage and distribution sites are in the draft Local Plan?
- It is evident from the draft Local Plan that there is a shortfall in employment

provision and that this will be addressed through windfall and recycling of sites. Are Members of the Committee satisfied that this will create a strong and prosperous Sheffield economy?

- Is the Sheffield Logistics Study referred to in the Endorsement of the Publication Draft Sheffield Local Plan ('The Draft Sheffield Plan') document publicly available?
- Please can Members of the Committee explain how sites have been identified and allocated and the process going forward?

We look forward either to your responses, or the protocol for raising questions in person.

Kind Regards,

Anthony

The Chair stated that the draft Plan identifies an employment land requirement for the plan period of 195.5 hectares (across 17 years), representing 11.5 hectares per year. The Draft Plan identifies a supply that represents **13.4 years'**, only **3.6 years'** short of the plan period. Given that the plan will be reviewed within 5 years and new sites are likely to come forward (either through 'windfall' permissions or by identifying new sites, many through 'churn'), we consider that the level of supply will be sufficient to meet needs over the plan period.

Any of the site allocations listed that are identified as potentially available for B8 development will be potentially suitable for storage and distribution. However, we recognise that some locations are more suited to logistics use than others.

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This document will be available at the formal public consultation stage.

Sites have been identified through a variety of sources – planning permissions, surveys, call for sites. The starting point is to assess whether the sites comply with the overall spatial strategy agreed by the Cooperative Executive in February 2022. We also take account of the finding in documents such as the Employment Land Review in terms of the suitability of the site for different employment uses.

## **5. ENDORSEMENT OF THE PUBLICATION DRAFT SHEFFIELD LOCAL PLAN ('THE DRAFT SHEFFIELD PLAN')**

- 5.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – City Futures. The content of the report was intended to go through the committee process and finally to full Council to seek approval to consult on Sheffield's Publication Draft Local Plan ('The Sheffield Plan'). It summarised the benefits of the Local Plan and outlined the process that should enable the Plan to be adopted by the end of

2024. The Committee was also asked to endorse the public consultation strategy on the Publication Draft Plan.

The Service Manager Strategic Planning Simon Vincent advised members that he wished to talk about the main elements of the Sheffield Plan and covered:

- Background
- Comments on the Sheffield Plan Issues & Options
- Draft Sheffield Plan documents
- Overall Vision, Aims and Objectives
- Overall Growth Plan – housing and employment
- Spatial Strategy – Accommodating the Future Growth
- Development management policies
  - Policies Map and the Policy Zones
  - Development viability – balancing competing priorities: affordable housing; carbon emissions; accessible & adaptable housing
- Public consultation strategy
- Next steps after public consultation – the route to adoption

5.2 **RESOLVED:** That the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee:-

- (a) Endorses the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan for the purposes of public consultation;
- (b) Endorses the consultation programme for seeking the public's view on the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan;
- (c) Endorses the list of 'submission documents' as defined in paragraph 4.3.3 and listed in paragraph 4.3.4 that will form part of the public consultation.
- (d) Refers this report to the Strategy and Resources Committee for their consideration in advance of seeking full Council's approval of the Publication Draft Plan, the consultation programme and the list of 'submission documents'.
- (e) Requests that any 'schedule of suggested amendments' (referred to at paragraph 1.11.2) compiled after the consultation of the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan be approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee and full Council prior to submitting the relevant documents to the Government.
- (f) Recommends that, in due course, full Council delegates authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Chair, deputy chair and spokesperson of this committee, to approve any non-material amendments to the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan and consultation programme prior to public consultation and any adjustments to the list of submission documents set out in paragraph 4.3.4.

The above recommendations were voted on in turn and were as follows:

Recommendation a) 7 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention.

Recommendations b), c), d), e) and f), all members were in favour therefore all were carried unanimously.

### 5.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 5.3.1 Once adopted, the new Sheffield Plan will make a major contribution to the future development of the city and will guide development over the next 15-20 years. The content of the Draft Plan and the public consultation programme take account of the risks and alternative options set out in section 5.4.
- 5.3.2 The documents that are the subject of this report (Part 1: Strategy, Sub-Area Policies and Site Allocations, Part 2: Development Management Policies, Annex A: Site Allocation Schedule, Annex B: Parking Guidelines, Policies Map and Glossary) comprise the draft development plan documents for Sheffield. It is published under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The submission documents will include such documents as fall within the definition at Regulation 17 (as quoted in paragraph 4.3.3) and which are listed at paragraph 4.3.4.
- 5.3.3 The documents represented the Council's firm proposals for the development of the city over the period to 2039. Public consultation, seeking views on the 'soundness' of the Plan would take place before it was submitted to the Government for public examination.
- 5.3.4 Several important factors had determined the growth plan and overall spatial strategy proposed in the Draft Sheffield Plan:
- a) Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), strategic policies in the local plan do not have to meet the objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses if expansion of the urban areas is constrained by Green Belt. The Green Belt Review shows that almost all the land designated as Green Belt continues to perform at least one of the purposes of Green Belt.
  - b) Releasing greenfield land in the Green Belt for development *now* has a high risk of undermining efforts to reuse the substantial supply of brownfield sites in the City Centre and other parts of the urban area. It would also cause significant harm to the city's biodiversity and would undermine the city's reputation as the 'Outdoor City'. The adverse impacts of meeting the full need therefore significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of meeting the need for housing and other development when all factors are considered.
  - c) Employment land needs can be met within the existing urban areas. Allocated sites and sites with planning permission provide almost 14 years supply of employment land. Additional supply required to meet needs to 2039 will be met through 'churn' of land ('windfalls') within existing employment areas.
  - d) Demographic analysis by Icen Projects (see paragraph 1.6.5-1.6.7 above) shows that the city's economic growth plans require an annual housing requirement within the range 1,994-2,323 homes per year and that this can

be achieved by developing land within the existing urban areas. No harm would therefore be caused by setting the housing requirement at the level (2,100 homes per year) proposed in the Draft Plan.

- e) Proposed allocated Housing Sites and sites with planning permission provide capacity for 27,805 homes (equivalent to over 13 years supply based on the proposed housing requirement in the Draft Plan). Windfalls and developable land (particularly within identified 'Broad Locations for Growth') will provide sufficient supply to last to 2039.
- f) There are clear benefits in terms of reducing carbon emissions by focussing a large proportion of the housing growth in higher density developments in the Central Sub-Area – where there are greater opportunities to walk, cycle or use public transport to access, jobs, shops and services. Developing sites on the edge of the built-up areas leads to a greater need to travel and potentially requires new transport infrastructure.
- g) Adopted local plans elsewhere in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire currently provide 'headroom' in terms of meeting the Government's annual housing need figure across the wider city region.

5.3.5 The development management policies in the Draft Plan take into account the viability of development and strike an appropriate balance between different plan objectives – in particular, reducing carbon dioxide emissions, delivery of affordable housing and provision of wheelchair adaptable and accessible dwellings.

#### 5.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

5.4.1 All local planning authorities are expected produce a local plan for their area. The Government has stated its intention to intervene in plan-making where a local planning authority fails to produce a plan and keep it up to date. In effect, this would mean the Government would take over planning for the area if the Sheffield Plan is not produced.

5.4.2 Under the latest Government statements, local planning authorities will be required, as a minimum, to ensure that there is a plan in place which addresses the *strategic priorities* for their area (e.g. housing need). The strategic plan can be produced by local planning authorities working together or independently, in the form of a joint or individual local plan. They may also be produced by an elected Mayor or combined authority in the form of a spatial development framework (where plan-making powers have been conferred). Currently, although some discussion has taken place, none of these alternative arrangements have been agreed between the authorities in the Sheffield City Region as part of the duty to cooperate. They could, however, provide an alternative way of planning for the city and the wider city region in the future.

5.4.3 The Draft Sheffield Plan includes strategic priorities but also includes local policies which allocate sites and deal with more detailed development management issues. Local policies are also produced in neighbourhood plans prepared by a neighbourhood planning group (a parish or town council, or a neighbourhood forum). Two neighbourhood plans have already been adopted but, currently, only a handful of neighbourhood plans are being prepared in Sheffield. The number

could, however, rise in the future. But it's unlikely that full coverage will be achieved across the city, meaning there will continue to be a need for local policies prepared by the City Council.

- 5.4.4 The various alternative options regarding the scale and location of future development have already been described in section 1 above. Public consultation on the Issues and Options has enabled all the key strategic options to be fully considered. We have highlighted the key choice about whether Sheffield should seek to meet all its own housing needs within the district or seek to accommodate some of it elsewhere in the city region. It is worth noting that Rotherham, Barnsley and North East Derbyshire Councils have already deleted land from the Green Belt in order to meet their own housing needs. The Draft Sheffield Plan proposes to provide sufficient new homes to support the city's jobs growth economic aspirations. Providing more homes in line with the Government's objectively assessed need figure would mean either providing more land for employment uses or lead to outward commuting from Sheffield as people take up jobs in neighbouring districts. The option of providing more land is restricted by the Green Belt.
- 5.4.5 The main alternative to consider with many of the development management policies and site allocations is whether to have them or not. However, for a number of the policies, economic viability considerations have meant that choices have had to be made between the achievement of better design standards and delivery of higher numbers of affordable homes.