

<b>28 November 2012</b>		<b>ITEM: 13</b>
<b>Council</b>		
<b>TO APPROVE FOR CONSULTATION THE “FURTHER ISSUES AND OPTIONS” SITE ALLOCATIONS AND POLICIES LOCAL PLAN</b>		
<b>Report of:</b> Councillor Andy Smith – Regeneration, Highways & Transportation		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Andy Millard – Planning and Transportation		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull – Planning and Transportation		
<b>This report is a public report</b>		
<i>If the report, or a part of this, has been classified as being either confidential or exempt by reference to the descriptions in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, it is hereby marked as being not for publication. The press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any confidential or exempt items of business to which the report relates.</i>		
<b>Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report:</b> Not applicable		
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> To seek Council's approval of the Further Issues and Options Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and formal public consultation.		

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Council undertook consultation earlier in the year on an Issues and Options of the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (SA LP). Following representations received, the identification of additional sites and further options for Lakeside Regional Town Centre it is necessary to undertake another Issues and Options consultation prior to the preparation of the final draft for submission to Examination in Public.

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 That Council agree the draft Further Issues and Options for Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan.**

- 1.2 That any minor drafting and formatting amendments as may be required be delegated to the Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways & Transportation.
- 1.3 That the Further Issues and Options Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan be published for public consultation.

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 The Council adopted the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development in December 2011. The Core Strategy is the key strategic planning document for the Council. It sets out the key planning policies and broad locations for development in the Borough for the plan period to 2026.
- 2.2 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy consolidation of Government planning guidance and statements into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has involved changes to planning policy in a number of areas (the NPPF was published in March 2012). A separate focused review of the Core Strategy for Compliance with the NPPF was agreed for publication in a previous report to Cabinet in October 2012.
- 2.3 Notably within the NPPF, the Government have made changes to housing supply policy including a requirement for those authorities not meeting the five year supply to identify a 20% additional buffer supply.

### Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (SAP LP)

- 2.4 The LDS identifies the preparation of a Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (SA LP) as one of the key Local Plans that form part of the Local Development Framework. The Council has previously consulted on the SA LP, including the recent Issues and Options stage in March 2012.
- 2.5 The extensive work currently being undertaken with regard to Lakeside Regional Town Centre is also incorporated into the SA LP. More detailed delivery and implementation matters will be set out in a future Complimentary Supplementary Planning Document.

## 3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The Council undertook an extensive period of consultation on the previous stage Issues and Options SA LP, including meetings with community forums and public displays. The consultation period ended in June 2012 and 159 representations were received. The majority of representations received were from landowners and developers. A large proportion suggest proposals for developments for housing in the Green Belt or make responses to the Council's options for transforming Lakeside into a regional town centre.

- 3.2 In summary, it is considered necessary to undertake further issues and options consultation prior to the publication of the final draft SA LP for the following reasons and to ensure that the plan is “sound”:
- To include additional housing sites for consultation and remove sites no longer coming forward;
  - To include a revised “preferred Option” for Lakeside;
  - To revise and include more detail on the regeneration hubs such as Grays, and Purfleet;
  - A revised list of primary schools to be expanded and locations;
  - A revised location for the hospice and enabling housing development to be at Little Malgraves Farm, Lower Dunton Road.
  - Include additional and revised evidence and technical work to support sites and options in the document.
- 3.3 The Consultation Draft Issues and Options SA LP contains an introduction and context chapters that set out the relationship to the Core Strategy and other key corporate objectives and strategies. The document also includes more revised detail on key economic hubs such as Lakeside and London Gateway and key regenerations areas (including Purfleet, Grays and Tilbury).
- 3.4 The document also contains a range of policies and site allocations structured under various sections including:
- i) Spatial polices such as on retail frontages, tall buildings and Green Infrastructure Improvement Zones;
  - ii) Site allocations; for example housing, employment, transport and education.
- 3.5 Unlike the previous Issues and Options Consultation, the current document sets out a “preferred” option for Lakeside rather than various alternatives and takes into account representations received and further ongoing technical work and discussions with landowners and developers.
- 3.6 The SA LP is subject to Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and Appropriate Assessment as a statutory requirement at each stage of the plan process. The SA/SEA includes Equality and Health Impact Assessments and will be available for public Inspection together with the plan for a period of public consultation.
- 3.7 In addition to the technical studies that were previously published, the Council has commissioned an update of several technical studies to provide supporting evidence for the development and policy options. These include updates to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) transport modelling and a update to the Lakeside Infrastructure Study. The site development options will also be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment
- 3.8 The majority of sites have been previously considered by Members as part of the LDF process. However the Consultation Draft SA LP now includes

additional sites as a result of recent Issues and Options consultation on various topic matters such as housing, and employment. The SA LP includes the preferred sites that conform to the Core Strategy, together with sites that are reasonable alternatives. Sites that do not conform to the Core Strategy have been rejected.

3.9 There are a number of sites in the Green Belt that are proposed for consultation the following reasons;

- To ensure an adequate 20% buffer of housing supply sites to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- Provide community infrastructure and sports facilities;
- Promote a sustainable residential led mixed use development on the Arena Essex Site.

Sites that are being considered in relation to the above do not conform to the Core Strategy and therefore need to be subject to a parallel focused review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites in the Core Strategy (see following report).

3.10 The Council will consult a wide range of stakeholders including public agencies, business groups, landowners and developers as well as community groups and the public. It is intended to carry out public consultation for a six week period to enable adequate time for stakeholders, the public and community groups to respond.

3.11 Following a six week period of consultation (which will commence in January 2013) the representations received will be reported to Members prior to the completion of the next stage (which will be the publication of a pre-submission document) that will be published for representations late in 2013, prior to submission for an Examination by a Government Inspector.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 Council is recommended to agree and publish the Further Issues and Options of the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan in order to ensure that the Council progresses its programme of planning policy documents in alignment with corporate priorities.

#### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 The report has not been considered by the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.2 The draft changes have been subject of informal discussions with the Portfolio Holder and Senior Members Group (comprising the Leader, Portfolio Holder, Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Portfolio Holder).

**6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

6.1 The consultation Further Issues and Options Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan sets out the full range of site allocations for the relevant policies in the Core Strategy, which is in line with the Council's Corporate objectives.

**7. IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**  
 Telephone and email: **01375 652**  
**mjones@thurrock.gov.uk**

The preparation of the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan, including this Consultation Draft Further Issues and Options, will see the majority of associated costs likely to be incurred within the next three financial years. Provision has been made within the 2012/13 base budget in respect of this, with the longer term cost implications addressed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**  
 Telephone and email: **01375 652087**  
**david.lawson@bdtlegal.org.uk**

The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan consultation is being prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Local Plans Regulations 2012.

The consultation referred to in this report is being carried out under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012.

**7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
 Telephone and email: **01375 652472**  
**sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

The Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in the provisions of services and employment.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been conducted on this draft local Plan as an integral part of the Interim Sustainability Appraisal. This ensured that any negative impact is identified and revised as appropriate. This is a statutory requirement and obligation placed on the Council. The Representations on the Published Local Plan will be carried out according to the LDF Statement of Community Involvement Adopted Document. This means the Representations process is designed to work in partnership with all communities in Thurrock to ensure they are fully involved in the decision making process about the soundness of the Spatial Development Strategy, including harder to reach groups.

**7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- National Planning Policy Framework – Strategic Planning, Civic Office [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)
- Adopted Thurrock Core Strategy.

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- None.

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