

## COPELAND LOCAL PLAN TIMESCALES AND WORK PROGRAMME

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Councillor Lena Hogg

**LEAD OFFICER:** Chris Hoban

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Chris Hoban

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the work programme for Local Plan documents over the next two years, the resources required and available to do this, and how this will be presented in the updated Local Development Scheme 2017.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Members consider the changes to the work programme that are presented at the meeting and approve the timescales and resources to be included in the Local Development Scheme as the Council's work programme for producing the Copeland Local Plan between 2017 and 2019.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme sets out the work programme for producing Local Plan documents. It describes all the documents that will comprise the Local Plan, what they will contain, and how and when they will be produced.
- 1.2 The most recent version was published in September 2016 and primarily focused on the production of the *Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028: Site Allocations and Policies Plan* together with two Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 1.3 As described in the previous report the Council commissioned a piece of work to understand the house building sector in Copeland, part of which considered the deliverability of sites identified in the *Site Allocations and Policies Plan Preferred Options* (2015).
- 1.4 The findings of the Study have questioned the deliverability of a number of these sites, and suggests that greater flexibility and a wider range of sites will be needed to attract new developers and enable existing developers to expand to meet the growth ambitions of the borough.
- 1.5 These findings, together with the Government's recently published Housing White Paper which requires Local Plans to be reviewed every five years, mean that now is an appropriate time to pause and review the policies in the Core Strategy before completing the site allocations for the Local Plan.

## **2.0 CHANGES TO THE WORK PROGRAMME**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the work to produce the Site Allocations and Policies Plan will be paused while the Core Strategy policies are reviewed. This will also enable the evidence base that underpins the Local Plan to be updated in order to make sure any decisions made as part of the review are sound and use the most robust and up to date evidence. The evidence base that will be updated includes:
- Objectively Assessed Need for Housing (OAN)
  - Economic Development Needs Assessment
  - Employment Land Review
  - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
  - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
  - Viability Assessment
  - Village Services Survey
  - Open Space Assessment
- 2.2 The review of the Core Strategy policies will include an Issues and Options public consultation in the Autumn to review matters such as the settlement hierarchy and amount of development proposed in different locations. Once responses to the Issues and Options consultation have been considered any proposed changes to the Core Strategy will be included alongside the Site Allocations as a combined Local Plan. This document will be produced as a Preferred Options document for public consultation early next year.
- 2.3 The document will be modified following the Preferred Options consultation to produce a final Pre-Submission Draft of the Local Plan, which will be subject to public consultation before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.
- 2.4 This process means that the Local Plan will be completed approximately one year later than originally planned. The benefit of this pause means that once it is adopted the Local Plan will be up to date and not require an immediate review, as would have been the case if the Council continued with the Site Allocations and Policies Plan (as the Core Strategy would be five years old and have to be reviewed).
- 2.5 It is proposed to continue with the production of the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) identified in the Local Development Scheme (September 2016), together with an additional SPD that will be a Design Guide.
- 2.6 It should be noted that the Shopfront Design SPD that was identified in the September 2016 Local Development Scheme will now be a Conservation Area Design Guide and look at wider issues in conservation areas than just shopfronts.

### **3.0 KEY MILESTONES FOR THE LOCAL PLAN**

3.1 Subject to approval by Members the proposed key milestones are as follows:

- Evidence base updates – **Spring and Summer 2017**
- Consultation on Issues and Options (Core Strategy) – **Autumn 2017**
- Consultation on Preferred Options (Local Plan) – **Spring 2018**
- Pre-Submission consultation (Local Plan) – **Autumn 2018**
- Submission to the Secretary of State – **Winter 2018**
- Public Examination Hearing Sessions – **Spring/Summer 2019**
- Adoption – **Autumn 2019**

3.2 The full details of the work involved, timescales and resources will be discussed in the meeting. This will then enable the updated Local Development Scheme to be finalised to be presented to Full Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May.