

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel

At 5.00 pm on Tuesday 28th June, 2022

Held in the Council Chamber, Swanspool House, Doddington Road, Wellingborough,
NN8 1BP

Present:-

Members

Councillor David Brackenbury (Chair)

Councillor Mark Dearing

Councillor Anne Lee

Councillor Barbara Jenney

Councillor Steven North

Councillor David Jenney

Officers

George Candler – Executive Director for Place and Economy

Rob Harbour – Assistant Director for Growth and Regeneration

Simon Richardson – Interim Planning Policy Lead Manager

Richard Marlow – Development Team Leader

Simon James – Policy Manager

Louise Tyers – Senior Democratic Services Officer

Also Present

Councillor Mike Tebbutt – Assistant Executive Member

1 Welcome

The Chair advised that there had been a change in membership of the EAP at Annual Council. He welcomed Councillor Anne Lee as a member of the EAP in place of Councillor Valerie Anslow.

2 Apologies for non-attendance

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor Kevin Thurland.

3 Members' Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 May 2022

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed.

5 Kettering General Hospital - Local Development Order

The Panel considered a report of the Interim Planning Policy Lead Manager, which informed the Panel of the results of the Kettering General Hospital – Draft Local Development Order (LDO) consultation.

The proposed LDO would provide permitted development rights for specified types of development in specified zones within the site to support its redevelopment. The LDO would be a mechanism through which less contentious development could be managed effectively, without the need for the submission of planning applications and their determination, reducing the risk of scheme delay and providing a degree of flexibility. Development outside of the zones, or not fulfilling the conditions specified, would still require the submission of planning applications.

The draft LDO was consulted upon with stakeholders, statutory agencies and neighbours immediately abutting the site. Five responses were submitted to the Council and as a result of these responses, several amendments had been made to the final LDO for consideration.

During discussion, the following principal points were noted:

- i. The Chair thanked everybody, including North Northamptonshire Council, Kettering General Hospital, stakeholders and the public who had had an input to the consultation.
- ii. The redevelopment of the hospital would be a massive undertaking. Members questioned that during construction development, how would the Council ensure that KGH would work to the LDO and how it would be enforced.
- iii. The aim of the LDO was for the smallest amount of disruption whilst keeping services going and KGH were mindful of the impacts on neighbours. The initial programme of works would become clear with the Phase 1 planning application. If anyone had concerns, the Council did have enforcement powers. There was a good relationship with the Trust.
- iv. It was confirmed that there would also be an opportunity to add any additional conditions to the LDO when it was considered by the Strategic Planning Committee.
- v. It was noted that there were not conditions around areas where Members expected there should be, including noise and vibration, asbestos and burning on site. Officers responded by saying that the extent of the LDO was reduced so it did not fall into major development.
- vi. It was confirmed that Phases 1 and 2 were outside the LDO. The LDO would remove the need for planning applications for some works and there were other regimes for compliance. The hospital received some flexibilities during Covid and the LDO, would in part, extend those.
- vii. The LDO did not seek to replicate issues which were covered by other regulations, and it was suggested that officers further considered any possible conditions, prior to the LDO's consideration at Strategic Planning Committee.

- viii. KGH would be trying to keep as many aspects of its services on site during the works. Off-site parking sites were being considered for staff, with visitors still on the site. It was accepted that it was a challenging site.
- ix. It was not yet clear which of the site's accesses would be used by construction traffic. A transport assessment would be submitted as part of the planning application. Members stated that it was essential to keep Kettering town centre moving and there was a need to understand what impact the LDO would have on traffic and traffic management.
- x. Members were concerned that Highways had made no significant comments on the transport issues. The LDO would involve more construction traffic and would require traffic plans to manage the road.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To note the responses to the Draft Local Development Order consultation, and officer comments to those responses.
- (ii) That any amendments to the draft LDO, prior to its consideration by the Strategic Planning Committee, be made by the Assistant Director of Growth and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Executive Advisory Panel.

6 North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan Scope and Issues Consultation Headlines - Verbal Update

The Panel considered a verbal report of the Policy Manager, which updated the Panel on the headlines of the Scope and Issues consultation which had taken place between March and May 2022.

The consultation had used a variety of methods, consistent with the Statement of Community Involvement and was more extensive than required by regulations. This included:

- Town and parish council virtual workshops
- Drop-in sessions at main council offices
- Member workshop
- Consultation material being made available at main council offices and libraries
- Notifying people on the Strategic Plan database, North Northamptonshire Consultation Register and Residents Panel
- Press release and use of Council social media channels.

Around 370 respondents to the consultation had submitted thousands of individual responses. Key issues from initial review included:

- **Oxford-Cambridge Arc:** Developers recognised the uncertainty with the ASF but considered that the Strategic Plan should still capitalise on the opportunities of the Arc.
- **Plan-period:** Number of developers were seeking the plan-period to be extended beyond 2041.
- **Spatial Strategy:** There was recognition of the benefits of an urban-focused strategy, but several respondents sought a more flexible spatial strategy with

more growth at Market Towns and in Rural Areas/a dispersed spatial strategy. The over-reliance on delivery from Garden Communities was highlighted/challenged, although promoters of some of the Garden Communities were seeking extensions to these.

- **Local Housing Need:** Number of developers considered the Strategic Plan should set out a provision above Local Housing Need.
- **Logistics:** The approach to logistics would be a key issue for the Strategic Plan. Several strategic sites had been promoted through the Scope and Issues/Call for Sites and there was strong developer pressure citing incredibly strong demand/need and a shortage of suitable sites, also highlighting opportunities provided by the sector. Several other respondents, including members of the public, some parish councils, CPRE and some Members had expressed concerns/opposite view.
- **Standards:** Number of developers considered the Strategic Plan should not introduce new standards beyond Building Regulations/10% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- **Kettering North:** Several respondents said that Kettering North should be de-allocated, and the present use of this site should be retained and/or used as a country park.
- **Special Protection Area:** Natural England set out that any growth needs to consider the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and the Mitigation Strategy – growth above that planned for within the strategy may require it to be updated and revised so it continued to protect the site from increased recreational pressures and loss of Functionally Linked Land.
- **Place-making principles:** Broad support for the Place-making principles in the consultation document.
- **Duty to Cooperate:** Positive responses from adjoining authorities.

There were around 50 respondents to the SA Scoping Report and a significant amount of technical work is also progressing.

During discussion, the following principal points were noted:

- i. With regards to the plan period, members felt that it would be useful to have some indication of surrounding areas plan periods. It was noted that West Northamptonshire had recommended the plan period of its Strategic Plan be changed to 2041.
- ii. Responses to the consultation would be published in due course. Summaries for each question would be produced and the Council's response would be reported to the EAP.
- iii. With reference to the logistics comments, it was noted that North Northamptonshire was an accessible area for companies. It was acknowledged that there was a need for logistics, but the Council wanted a balanced/mixed economy. Any logistics development needed to be sustainable and the cumulative impact needed to be looked at. It was noted that SEMLEP were currently undertaking a review of logistics.

It was anticipated that the feedback and its implications would be reported to the EAP in early Autumn, along with the next steps. There also needed to be consideration of the implications of planning reforms and the measures set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

RESOLVED:

To note the verbal update.

7 Executive Forward Plan

The Executive Forward Plan for July to October 2022 was noted.

8 Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked Members, officers and the public for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Chair

Date