

Bradford Local Plan

Core Strategy Examination

Further Hearings Opening Statement

Date: 17 May 2016

Venue: Victoria Hall, Saltaire

Introduction

- 1.1 On behalf of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, I would like to welcome the Inspector and the all participants to Victoria Hall, Saltaire for these further hearings being held as part of the Independent Examination into the Core Strategy. I am very grateful to be given this opportunity to say a few words in order to briefly outline the work undertaken by the Council following the hearings in March last year to assist the District move towards an 'adoptable' core strategy.
- 1.2 As set out in the Council's opening statement to the first examination hearings, the Council recognises the importance of getting in place an up to date Local plan for the District. As you will also be aware this is also a major priority for national government. To this end the Council has sought to address the limited set of issues and concerns following the first set of hearings and is now content that the core strategy as proposed to be modified is sound and is looking to progress to adoption as soon as possible.
- 1.3 The Council is making significant progress with the other more detailed Local Plan documents including the recent submission to the Secretary of State for examination the two Area Action Plans (Bradford City Centre and Shipley and Canal Road Corridor) as well as the Waste management Development Plan Document. The Allocations DPD has just commenced issues and options consultation with a view to submitting for examination in 2017. Work is also progressing on several neighbourhood plans. In this context it is important that the District has the benefit of an up to date and robust strategic development strategy and policies as set out in the Core Strategy.
- 1.4 Following the Examination hearing sessions the Council:
 - considered selected soundness issues raised by the Inspector and participants at the sessions;
 - reviewed the implications of changes to national policy, with regard to Affordable Housing Guidance and the Definition of Gypsy and Travellers, and relevant High Court Judgements;
 - Completed and published the latest update to Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
 - completed and published an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment;
 - completed a Habitats Regulations Assessment Review, and;
 - Drafted a schedule of proposed main modifications.

Proposed main Modifications public consultation

- 1.5 The Council published its Proposed Main Modifications to the Core Strategy Publication Draft document for public consultation over an eight week period commencing Wednesday 25th November 2015 and ending Wednesday 20th January 2016. The Documentation was published online and made available for inspection at deposit locations.
- 1.6 A total of 2,370 stakeholders, organisations, partnerships, members, groups and individuals held on the Local Plan consultee database were invited to make representations on the Proposed Main Modifications. These included statutory and other specific / general consultation bodies including adjoining local planning authorities.

- 1.7 The consultation was also featured in the Councils Local plan electronic newspaper 'PLAN-IT' in its November 2015 edition. There was also coverage in the local press and media.

Consultation response

- 1.8 The Council received a total of 118 duly made written representations within the eight week consultation period. A further 11 written representations were received by the council following the consultation deadline and have been treated as 'not duly made'.
- 1.9 The duly made representations included a range of statutory bodies, neighbouring local authorities, Town and Parish Councils, amenity and interest groups, developers, infrastructure providers, as well as members of the general public. There was a range of comments both raising objection on grounds of soundness as well as comments in support.
- 1.10 The Council has fully considered all the representations and has set out a summary of the issues raised together with the Councils response in the Statement of Consultation (PS/G005) Appendix 6.
- 1.11 The Statement of Consultation in section 3 summarises the main issues raised together with the Councils response. These relate to the following matters:
1. Duty to cooperate
 2. Housing Requirement (approach to plan requirement)
 3. Settlement hierarchy (including changes to Menston & Burley in Wharfedale)
 4. Housing distribution (including changes to specific settlements and lack of changes to others)
 5. Green belt review (Including exceptional circumstances, nature of any review and impact of green belt change)
 6. Other housing Policies (Including Phasing, brownfield land, Affordable housing and housing standards)
 7. Flood risk (linked to most recent flooding events in the district)
 8. South Pennine Moors and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)
 9. Sustainability Appraisal (adequacy and approach to testing options)
- 1.11 The Council has provided further information in response to the MIQs prepared by the Inspector in advance of these further hearings. A further set of brief statements has also been prepared which responds to any new issues raised by the statements submitted in response to the MIQ by other participants.
- 1.12 The Council is of the opinion that no further main modifications are required in response to the representations or in light of the further statements. There are a limited number of additional modifications of a minor nature which the Council agreed to in its Statement of Consultation responses in Appendix 6.

Conclusion

- 1.13 In conclusion the Council has carefully considered the soundness issues highlighted in the original hearings and undertaken selective further work in particular with regards to the HRA which it now concludes to be robust and legally compliant. The limited set of proposed main modifications were subject to formal public consultation and all responses have been full considered. The Council believes the plan, as proposed to be modified, is 'sound' and meets all the statutory requirements in its preparation. It also believes that the Core

Strategy proposes the most appropriate strategy and actions for the District and will deliver what it sets out to achieve, consistent with the spatial vision and objectives and national guidance. Officers (and representatives of the Council) will provide any further assistance as required to assist the Inspector in his consideration of the Plan.

Andrew Marshall
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