

Minutes of a meeting of the **Place Shaping Panel** held by video link on **Monday 4 January 2021** at **5pm** when there were present:

Cllr P E Bulman – Chairman

Cllr N J Brennan
Cllr S M Clancy
Cllr L H Hemsall

Cllr S Lawn
Cllr G K Nurden
Cllr L A Starling

Cllr D M Thomas
Cllr J M Ward

Cllr S Beadle, Cllr K Kelly, Cllr S Prutton and Cllr D Roper also attended the meeting.

Also in attendance were the Director of Place, Assistant Director Planning, Greater Norwich Planning Policy Manager, Place Shaping Manager and Democratic Services Officers (JH and JO).

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

Member	Minute No & Heading	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Clancy	27 - Greater Norwich Local Plan – Regulation 19, Pre-Submission Publication	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, owner of development land within the Greater Norwich Local Plan area.

25 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr N J Harpley.

26 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2020 were confirmed as a correct record, save for the following amendment:

Minute No: 21 – Apologies for Absence

Cllr Lawn was added to the list of those sending apologies for absence.

27 GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN – REGULATION 19, PRE-SUBMISSION PUBLICATION

The Chairman noted that the report related to the process and procedure for taking the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) through a formal stage that would seek comment on its legal compliance and soundness before it was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

The Greater Norwich Planning Policy Manager explained that the Regulation 19 Stage was not a consultation per se, but would allow stakeholders to submit representations in respect of whether the plan was legally and procedurally compliant and 'sound' (positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy). It would not be necessary to show compliance with the Duty to Cooperate, as there was no unmet need amongst neighbouring authorities. 'Stakeholders' could include anyone with an interest in the plan, but their comments would only be taken into account by the independent examiner if they related to the above criteria.

The period of publication when representations could be received was from 1 February to 15 March 2021.

It was emphasised that Regulation 19 was not a stage to object to proposed sites on development management grounds. Objectors to the allocation of a site would have to provide evidence that the allocation of a site had been procedurally wrong or unsound and out of line with national policy.

Changes to the plan had been made as a result of the Regulation 18 consultation, as well as changes to national policy. This included an overall increase in the number of homes to address a shortage of affordable housing, as had been made clear in the Government consultation paper 'Planning for the Future'. However, it should also be noted that 75 percent of housing had already been allocated in the existing plan and that 5,000 homes had been delivered.

For the Regulation 19 stage the Economic and Retail Study had been updated to take account of the pandemic. The Study had indicated that the approach being taken was sound and matched that being taken nationally. It was also considered that Greater Norwich was in a better position than many areas to bounce back from the economic crisis being caused by the pandemic.

Members noted the importance of the Economic and Retail Study, as both the retail and the office accommodation landscape was changing significantly and that this could have an impact on the housing numbers required, as shops/offices were converted to dwellings. It was requested that the Economic and Retail Study be included as an addendum to the published plan.

In response the Director of Place emphasised that the Economic and Retail Study was only one of a whole range of documents that were used as an evidence base for officers to compile the Plan and as such that they would not normally be published or circulated any wider. However, he recognised the exceptional circumstances and the importance of the economy and confirmed that the Study would be circulated to Members on Friday following an informal GNLP meeting. If Members had any comments arising from this they should contact the Portfolio Holder for Planning, who would report them to the meeting of Cabinet on 12 January 2021.

In response to a query, the Panel was advised that the Greater Norwich Development Partnership Board had put a great deal of hard work into the Plan and it was extremely unlikely that any one of the local authorities would not approve the draft GNLP for publication.

It was noted that the land allocation in the plan was up-to-date with only minor amendments to be made.

A query was raised about the possibility of the economic downturn leaving large developments without retail centres, but it was confirmed that policies were in place to ensure that local centres which would meet people's everyday needs would form part of developments.

The Panel was also advised that in areas where housing numbers had increased following consultation at the Regulation 18 stage, the Regulation 19 stage would be an opportunity to challenge the process and procedure of the allocation and subject it to independent examination

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

That subject to receipt of the Economic and Retail Study:

- (1) To publish the draft GNLP under regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 from 1 February to 15 March 2021; and,
- (2) Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, authority to make any minor or factual corrections to the GNLP ahead of its publication.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning commended the Greater Norwich Development Team for the huge amount of hard work they had put in to bring the GNLP to this stage.

28 UPDATE TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Place Shaping Manager introduced the report, which proposed amending the Local Development Scheme (LDS) to reflect changes to the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) timetable.

The LDS set out the timetable for preparing new plans and summarised what they contained. The last update was in July 2020, but since then it had been agreed to accelerate the process to allow the plan to be put in place before an increased housing requirement was introduced by the Government using a revised methodology.

On 19 December the Government had published a further revision of the methodology which did not result in the scale of increase that it had earlier implied. However, as substantial work on the Regulation 19 version of the Plan had been done it proposed to carry on with the new agreed timetable.

Publication of the pre-submission Regulation 19 plan would take place during February and March, with submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination in July 2021 and the anticipated adoption of the plan in September 2022.

The GNLP would directly replace the Joint Core Strategy and the Site Allocations documents, but not the Area Action Plan for the Growth Triangle or Development Management Documents.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

It is recommended that Cabinet recommends to Council that it approves the proposed amendments to the current Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The meeting closed at 5.53pm