

# Site Allocations Development Plan Document Update

## Planning Policy Committee – 24 November 2022

Report of: Interim Chief Planning Officer - Cliff Thurlow

Purpose: To note

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

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### Executive summary:

- In September 2022, the Council decided to commence feasibility work on a Housing Site Allocations Development Planning Document (DPD). It is currently liaising with consultants with a view to awarding a tender.

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### This report supports the Council's priority of:

Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we need but prudently managing financial resources.

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### Recommendation to Committee:

That the report be noted.

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### Introduction and background

1. As agreed at the 22<sup>nd</sup> September meeting of this Committee, the Council is seeking to explore whether a Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD) can be added to the adopted Development Plan under the umbrella of the existing Core Strategy. The primary purpose of the document would be to identify a five-year housing land supply which is defensible and would include both constraints and infrastructure requirements. Plan-led development is essential in a district almost entirely Green Belt and where new development risks creating even more severe difficulties in terms of infrastructure delivery.

2. The primacy of the protection of the District's two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB'), candidate areas for AONB status and the Green Belt, together with recognising the limitations of infrastructure and other constraints, will be key planning considerations in drawing up the SADPD.
3. Infrastructure and services necessary for the sites included in the SADPD will not rely on future ad hoc provision, but instead must be explicitly planned for in the site requirements contained in the SADPD.
4. The maximum site yields in the SADPD site policies will fully reflect the need for affordable housing provision, infrastructure and/ or services and any other site specific requirements such as flood mitigation, heritage, landscape and biodiversity. In addition, there must be sufficient infrastructure and service capacity and, if not, there will be sufficient land allocated for any additional services/ infrastructure / flood mitigation etc and a realistic prospect for its delivery. The cumulative impact of development will also be explicitly provided for.
5. There is considerable overlap between the work to be completed for the SADPD and the ongoing work for the emerging Local Plan to address the gaps in the infrastructure delivery plan and other constraints on the sites. This provides the Council with considerable flexibility as to how the detailed site work will be used when clarity on future government planning policy emerges in the future.
6. A tendering process has been carried out by the Council and discussions are currently being held with a number of firms of consultants about the best way forward and so it is not yet possible to bring a budget and project plan before the committee.
7. Once the work has been commissioned from the appointed consultants, together with legal advice, a budget and project plan will be agreed. In light of the overlap, the consultancy fees for the preparation of the SADPD will be funded from the Planning Policy budget for the emerging Local Plan.

## **Key implications**

### **Comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

Although significant progress has been made over the last twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2023/24 remains uncertain.

With uncertainty about the ongoing impact of the economic environment and no clarity on the extent to which both central and local funding sources might be affected in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade.

This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.

As reported in paragraph 7, S151 Officer notes the costs for the preparation of the SADPD will be contained within the existing Planning Policy and emerging Local Plan budget.

### **Comments of the Head of Legal Services**

The Head of Legal has reviewed this report and is satisfied that all legal requirements have been met to date.

### **Equality**

Duty under the Equalities Act 2010

In assessing this proposal, the following impacts have been identified upon those people with the following protected characteristics (age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

The proposal would have a neutral impact on the protected characteristics.

### **Climate change**

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

### **Background papers**

None