

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**

**LOCAL PLAN TASK GROUP**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Local Plan Task Group held on  
Wednesday, 22nd November, 2023 at 1.30 pm in the Council Chamber,  
Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Moriarty (Chair)  
Councillors R Blunt, M de Whalley, S Everett, B Jones, T Parish, A Ryves and  
S Sandell

**Officers:**

Luke Brown, Interim Senior Planning Officer  
Michael Burton, Principal Planner (Policy)  
Claire May, Planning Policy Manager  
Wendy Vincent, Democratic Services Officer

1 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Spikings.

2 **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

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The notes of the meeting held on 10 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

6 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor A Kemp was present under Standing Order 34.

7 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

There was no Chair's correspondence.

8 **LOCAL PLAN - CONSULTATION ON ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE UPDATE**

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The Planning Policy Manager presented the report and explained that it provided a summary of the representations received to the consultation on the additional evidence base documents that formed part of the supporting evidence base for Local Plan currently at Examination. The consultation was undertaken between 8 September and 20 October 2023.

The Task Group was informed that 51 representations had been received with around 450 separate comments, details (summary comments, and the Council's response to each) were set out at Appendices 1 to 8 attached to the report.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the report set out the main issues under each of the topic papers. A lot of the comments had repeated representations that had been made at an earlier stage of the Local Plan process, some of the comments did not relate to the consultation documents. All comments had been included in the appendices to the report and had been submitted to the Planning Inspectors for their consideration and likely to issue the Agendas and timetables and additional questions and issues as a result of the representations at the end of January/early February 2024.

The Chair thanked the Planning Policy Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, a summary of which is set out below.

The Chair commented on the section on the representations form – wishing to be heard at the Examination Hearing and asked when a decision would be made. In response, the Planning Policy Manager explained that the Planning Inspectors would determine who would be invited to attend and make representations at the hearing. The Task Group was advised that written representations would be considered in the same way as verbal representations made at the Examination Hearing.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Kemp addressed the Task Group and asked the following questions/made the following comments:

1. Hardings Way and the proposal for up to 50 houses, Policy E1.10 and the issue of flood risk and added that the 7 already built

were not permitted to have any ground floor living accommodation because of the high flood risk and with climate change the Council should not be building houses with the high flood risk.

2. Change of settlement hierarchy for the West Winch Growth Area (WWGA) into the King's Lynn Regional Sub-Centre. Change of West Lynn from the King's Lynn Regional Sub Centre into a Tier 3 village and asked if this recognised/was affected any of the parish boundaries.
3. Ongoing concerns regarding traffic congestion around King's Lynn and the transport study which had been undertaken.

The Chair invited officers to respond to the questions/comments made by Councillor Kemp above.

In response, the Planning Policy Manager explained that the evidence base study on transport was prepared by the Highways Authority and undertaken in accordance with the Regulations and had been submitted to the Planning Inspector and would take Councillor Kemp's representation into consideration through the Examination Hearing.

With regard to Hardings Way, the Planning Policy Manager explained that it was a housing supply paper and at the previous Examination Hearing when the site E1.10 was discussed following the matters and issues and questions published by the Inspector prior to the previous hearing session. As a result the Inspector issued an action note at the end of hearings (22 December). Within the action note the Inspectors asked the Council to have a look again at the site boundary because of the discussions at the Examination Hearing and to reduce the site boundary and to present that update to the deliverability note. The work had been completed and housing supply update paper that went out to consultation detailed the revised site boundary which reduced the site from 3.8 hectares to just under 2.

The Planning Policy Manager confirmed that the Local Plan did not affect/was not affected by parish boundaries.

In response to comments made on the changes to the documents resulting from the consultation, the Planning Policy Manager outlined the minor changes within the topic papers.

**RESOLVED:** The Local Plan Task Group noted the representations received.

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## **LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION ACT**

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The Principal Planner (Policy) gave a presentation (copy attached to the Agenda).

The Chair thanked the Principal Planner (Policy) for the presentation and invited questions and comments from the Task Group, a summary of which is set out below.

In response to questions from Councillor Blunt regarding the proposed changes affecting the preparation of the current Local Plan, the Principal Planner (Policy) explained that the current Local Plan would continue to proceed under the current system. The Task Group was advised that there would be a transitional period up to the end of June 2025 to adopt Local Plans under the current system.

Following a further question from Councillor Blunt on whether the proposed changes would affect current neighbourhood plans being developed, the Principal Planner (Policy) explained that at some stage neighbourhood plans would be covered by a transitional period and highlighted that this would continue until the regulations (secondary legislation, detailing how the 2023 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act should be implemented had been adopted.

The Chair, Councillor Moriarty commented that the Local Plan was a rolling exercise and that over the coming months the current Local Plan would be revised. The Chair asked if the proposed changes would have any impact on the process. In response, the Principal Planner (Policy) explained that there could be as the content of the Local Plan was around the Management Development Policies (NDMPs) and it is expected that the most development management policies from the current Local Plan would be replaced by NDMPs resulting in a shorter Local Plan.

The Principal Planner (Policy) responded to questions from Councillor Ryves in relation to the requirement for the Council to maintain a 5 year land supply. The Planning Policy Manager added that changes would be consulted on if it was up to date or the Local Plan was less than 5 years old would be reduced to 4 years.

Councillor de Whalley asked if the Local Plan was adopted ... and asked if the most recent adopted document would be gospel. In response, the Principal Planner (Policy) advised that this would not change.

Following questions from Councillor Blunt regarding the NPPF and the 3 year Local Plan which would take precedent. In response, the Principal Planner (Policy) explained that in his view it would be the legislation would dictate that the NDMPs would take precedence over the NPPF. The Planning Policy Manager added that the NMDP would make the local plan process simpler and look to standardise policies and consult on the proposed policies which the Borough Council could make comments on in due course and confirmed that the NDMPs would have precedence over the NPPF.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Kemp addressed the Task Group and asked if the proposed changes to the NPPF would allow the ability for community engagement in the decision making process. In response, the Principal Planner (Policy) explained that it would allow community engagement (as is currently the case) but would not change principles of development land allocation/plan making.

Following further questions from Councillor Kemp on community engagement, the Principal Planner (Policy) advised that the community would always be involved on discussions around infrastructure.

**RESOLVED:** The Task Group noted the content of the presentation.

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### **UPDATE ON PLANNING FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION**

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The Interim Senior Planning Officer reminded Members that at the last meeting the Council undertook to carry out a call for sites, the exercise had resulted in 5 new sites put forward. In parallel, the Council had assessed if there was any Borough Council land available and had also contacted the Norfolk County Council to ascertain if they had any available land to be assessed for Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation. The Task Group was advised that the process was ongoing. In addition, an exercise was being carried out to systematically/objectively assess all existing sites and those which had come forward.

The Task Group was reminded that there was a requirement for the Council to provide a 5 year land supply to meet the need for Gypsy and Travellers and travelling show people and advised that out of the document it was the Council's aim to provide that supply or provision of land in the site options document proposed for consultation to start in early 2024. The Task Group was informed that the need for gypsies and travellers was 76 pitches and 5 pitches for travelling Show-people. Over the Plan period a total of 102 pitches were required. From the work being undertaken in assessing the sites the Council was confident it could meet the 5 year need for gypsies and travellers and travelling Show-people through new site allocations.

In conclusion, the Interim Senior Planning Officer explained that a further update would be presented to the Task Group in December 2023/early January 2024 (date to be confirmed).

In response to a question from the Chair, the Interim Senior Planning Officer confirmed that the Inspector would hear the evidence on the Gypsy and Traveller Policy at hearings at the end of June 2024, following hearings for other Local Plan matters, issues and questions.

The Planning Policy Manager outlined the timetable for the Examination Hearing currently scheduled for June 2024 and advised that details had been published on the Council's website.

A Task Group would need to be scheduled mid-December 2023/early January 2024 before Cabinet on 15 January 2024.

The Chair thanked officers for the update and invited questions from the Task Group, a summary of which is set out below.

In response to questions and comments from Councillor Blunt on the consultation process and whether any Parish Council presentations or roadshows had been scheduled, the Planning Policy Manager explained that currently there were no presentations or roadshows scheduled but a Parish Briefing could be programmed. Councillor Blunt commented that this would be a helpful approach to inform Parish Councils.

Following questions from Councillor de Whalley on the number of new sites and only one required, the Interim Senior Planning Officer explained that all sites were put forward had been through the assessment process and that the main issue identified was flooding and was a challenge when life was at risk. The Task Group was informed that all new sites had been through a flood risk assessment and a sustainability appraisal. Some sites were located in flood zone 2, medium risk of flooding and did not necessarily preclude development. Instead, it meant that the depth and velocity of the water on those sites had to be considered.

The Interim Senior Planner explained that majority of the existing sites were in EA flood zone 3 which in most instances without climate change was over a metre depth, rising to 1.5 metres taking account of climate change. Therefore from a vulnerability point of view these depths presented a significant risk (potentially to life). It was highlighted that some of the sites put forward were in flood zone 2 and the depth was only 10 cm and explained that although there was a risk of flooding, the risk to life was limited and it maybe that there were suitable for allocation with mitigation. These issues had presented a challenge because for gypsies and travellers because they were classed as semi-permanent and in mobile accommodation, therefore classified as at greater vulnerability/risk than dwellings.

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date to be advised.

**The meeting closed at 2.10 pm**