

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A LOCAL PLAN AND WHAT DOES IT COVER?

- 1.1. The Local Plan considers the overall likely levels of growth (for example increases in population), and the needs of people at different stages of their lives (people starting work, young families, or retired people). Developing the Plan for Bolsover District started by asking local people, businesses and key interest groups how they want to see their communities develop up to 2033.
- 1.2. However, even at this stage it was not a blank canvas. The Plan had to recognise existing permissions for development and as it has evolved it has had to accommodate development pressures and the changing nature of planning permissions.
- 1.3. The Local Plan has to accord with national planning policy and guidance as well as the Council's own ambitions for growth and change in the district. It translates these ambitions into a plan to help deliver the growth the district needs, whilst preserving the characteristics people value and features they cherish.
- 1.4. However, it is important to recognise that in developing the Local Plan, difficult choices have to be made. Not all sites people may wish to see protected from development can be, and not all sites people would like to see allocated for development, will be.
- 1.5. By allocating sites for development it provides certainty for both developers to invest in the District, and some clarity for local residents to see how their area is expected to change. The Local Plan is not just concerned with allocating land, it is a vehicle to bring about change; it translates what people want, to how their aspirations can be fulfilled.
- 1.6. In short, the Local Plan is about providing for the future development of an area in a way that benefits people the most. It helps to deliver places with a high quality of life where people want to live, work and visit. Perhaps most importantly it offers a means for people to shape the future of the communities in which they live.
- 1.7. Once formally adopted the Local Plan will form the key part of the Development Plan for Bolsover District. This means that planning applications will have to be determined in line with the policies in this Plan unless there are material considerations (considerations which outweigh the policy), not to do so.
- 1.8. An overview of how policies in this publication version of the Local Plan were developed can be found at Appendix 1.1, 'Development of the Local Plan'. Further details of the consultation undertaken at all the stages of the development of the Plan, together with how public engagement has helped

to shape this version of the Plan can be found in the Council's Statement of Consultation.

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POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE LOCAL PLAN

National Policy

- 1.9. The UK Government's five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development are set out in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy: 'Securing the Future', and are:
- living within the planet's environmental limits;
 - ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
 - achieving a sustainable economy;
 - promoting good governance; and
 - using sound science responsibly.
- 1.10. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies in relation to achieving sustainable development in the United Kingdom.
- 1.11. The NPPF firstly sets out that "the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development". It continues by stating that the national policies on a wide range of forms of development contained within it, "taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system".
- 1.12. Crucially, the NPPF states that there are three key dimensions to 'sustainable development', namely:
- a) An economic role: contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation: and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) A social role: supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well being: and
 - c) An environmental role: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment: and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 1.13. These three dimensions are reflected in the Vision and Objectives for Bolsover set out in chapter 3.
- 1.14. In relation to Local Plans, the NPPF states that “Local Plans are the key to delivering sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspirations of local communities. Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise” (paragraph 150). This underlines the central role of Local Plans within the UK planning system.
- 1.15. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that Local Plans should be as focussed, concise and as accessible as possible, concentrating on the District’s development needs and opportunities, paying careful attention to both deliverability and viability. The Local Plan should be clear in setting out the strategic priorities for the area and policies to address these and provide the strategic framework within which any neighbourhood plans may be prepared to shape development at the community level.
- 1.16. Before the Council can adopt the new Local Plan for Bolsover District, the Plan has to be examined by an independent Inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound. A local planning authority should submit a plan for examination which it considers is “sound” (NPPF paragraph 182) – namely that it is:
- a. **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - b. **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - c. **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities;
 - d. **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

High Speed 2 (HS2) Proposals

- 1.17. The Government have announced a Safeguarding Direction in relation to the proposed route for HS2. Whilst the Policies Map indicates the safeguarded route, the Safeguarding Directions have been made by the Secretary of State for Transport. They are not proposals by Bolsover District Council and the route shown will not be determined through the development plan process. The route will be considered in Parliament

under hybrid Bill procedures, which will provide appropriate opportunities for petitions to be made to Parliament by those directly affected by the scheme. Objections to the safeguarded route cannot be made as part of the Local Plan process.

Strategic Level Planning & Duty to Co-operate

- 1.18. The East Midlands Regional Plan was revoked in April 2013. Responsibilities for cross boundary strategic planning now rest with local planning authorities and key stakeholders under the Duty to Co-operate introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.19. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) advises that the “Duty to Cooperate seeks to ensure that local planning authorities lead strategic planning effectively through their Local Plans, addressing social, environmental and economic issues that can only be addressed effectively by working with other local planning authorities beyond their own administrative boundaries. The aim is to encourage positive, continuous partnership working on issues that go beyond a single local planning authority’s area” (NPPG paragraph 008 reference ID: 9-008-20140306).
- 1.20. As a result of this change to the UK planning system, it is necessary for local planning authorities to address strategic matters within their individual plan making processes effectively through the Duty to Cooperate.
- 1.21. In developing the Local Plan the Council has sought to be aspirational but realistic. In developing the policies in this Plan, the council has worked with neighbouring authorities to address strategic matters for example, by the development of shared evidence bases.
- 1.22. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (November 2013) identified that the most appropriate Housing Market Area (HMA) for Bolsover District is the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA, which covers the four authority areas of Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire. This influenced the Plan up to the Consultation Draft Local Plan (CDLP) stage.
- 1.23. Following the release of the 2014 based Sub National Population Projections, and 2014 based Household Projections in 2016¹, the authorities in the Housing Market Area commissioned an update to the Objectively Assessed Needs in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The update identifies an annual objectively assessed need of 1,211 across the four authorities in the Housing Market Area. The study calculated the annual objectively assessed need for housing in Bolsover district as being 272. This has been utilised for the development of this Publication Draft Local Plan (PDLP).

¹ Current Government Guidance is that these national datasets should be the starting point for identifying objectively assessed housing need.

- 1.24. All local planning authorities in the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA recognise both the robustness of the evidence provided by the SHMA and the shared responsibility and challenge of meeting their own identified share of this housing requirement
- 1.25. Although the Sheffield City Region is not generally considered to be a single functional housing market, the 9 authorities within the Region have worked together to produce a Duty to Co-operate Statement on Housing. The purpose of the statement is to set out the position on planning for housing growth across the Region.
- 1.26. However, the Duty to Co-operate on the delivery of housing is not limited to authorities in the Housing Market Area (HMA), or even the wider Region. As noted in the section above, the Council should aim to meet any requirements from any neighbouring authority where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- 1.27. In this regard it is worth noting that no neighbouring / nearby authority has formally requested that Bolsover District help deliver part of their objectively assessed housing needs, since the start of the development of this Local Plan in 2014. Whilst discussions have been had about the potential to help neighbouring areas, there has been no formal request for Bolsover to provide additional development sites to help meet other area's needs.
- 1.28. The Economic Development Needs Assessment (October 2015) identified that the Functional Economic Area (FEA) for Bolsover District principally covers the authority areas of Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Amber Valley, Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Ashfield. Beyond the strong links within this central area, the wider economic areas of the two Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) to the north and south of the District also exert a weaker influence on the functional economic area of Bolsover District.
- 1.29. The Functional Economic Area covers more than one local planning authority area. Therefore, the delivery of employment land across the Functional Economic Area is legally a cross boundary strategic matter and thus subject to the Duty to Co-operate. However, as each local planning authority's Functional Economic Area differs and overlaps the Functional Economic Areas of their neighbouring authorities, there is no fixed quantum of employment land to be distributed across the District's Functional Economic Area. In accordance with national guidance, the Council's Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) has been used to identify a range of employment land targets for Bolsover District.
- 1.30. In addition to working together to deliver the quantum of development, and assess the impact of development across a wider than local authority area, the Duty to Co-operate provides for local authorities to work together to deliver development on sites which cross local authority boundaries.

- 1.31. The former Coalite works straddles the border with North East Derbyshire District. In January 2015, both Councils agreed to set up a Coalite Project Control Board to secure the remediation and development of the site. Both members and officers of each authority together with the Homes and Communities Agency's (HCA's) Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) were involved in progressing this work. As noted above, the site owners have progressed planning applications for the development of the site parallel to putting the site forward in the Local Plan(s). Planning permission has now been granted by both Bolsover, and North East Derbyshire District Councils, and work on the remediation of the site has commenced. It is anticipated that both Councils will continue to work together with the site owners to ensure that work is progressed and the site is remediated.

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Local Economic Partnerships

- 1.32. Bolsover District Council is within two Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas:
- Sheffield City Region (Consisting of nine authorities, including all of the SHMA authorities)
 - D2N2 (the LEP for the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County and the Derby and Nottingham City areas).
- 1.33. Both of the LEPs' 2014 Strategic Economic Plans (SEP) were the basis for their respective Growth Deals with central government at that time.

Combined Authorities

- 1.34. In March 2016 Bolsover District Council determined a 'preferred membership status' option in favour of becoming a constituent member of the proposed North Midlands Combined Authority and a non-constituent member of the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Combined authority.
- 1.35. These are early days for the Combined Authority approach and it is currently uncertain whether they will progress, and if so, in what form. It is also unclear how they will support the implementation of the Local Plan.

Local Aspirations and Initiatives

Sustainable Community Strategies

- 1.36. Sustainable Community Strategies aim to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of local areas and have a strong focus on balancing the needs of the local economy together with environmental and social issues. The common vision for the Sustainable Community Strategy for Bolsover 2006 – 2020 is:

"Our Sustainable Community Strategy has a vision of a diverse, healthy, fair and prosperous district, building on the strengths of our industrial past to become a vibrant, thriving community capable of meeting the challenges and the opportunities of the future."

Bolsover District Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019

1.37. The Corporate Plan identifies 'Unlocking our Growth Potential' as the Council's top aim. By focusing on this area, the Council hope to grow the local economy, increase the number of businesses across the District and increase the supply and quality of housing on offer. All of this is designed to help the Council attract the income and funding it needs to deliver its services without being reliant on anyone else. However, the most important aspect of this aim is that it will help the District's towns and villages to grow and thrive to become vibrant communities and places where people want to live, work and play.

Bolsover District Council Growth Strategy (June 2014)

1.38. The Council's Growth Strategy identifies key challenges and opportunities in the District and outlines the following priorities:

- a) Supporting Enterprise
- b) Enabling Housing Growth
- c) Unlocking Development Potential

Bolsover District Council Economic Development and Housing Strategy (March 2015)

1.39. The Council's Economic Development and Housing Strategy provides a framework that focuses on the Council's core priorities with the intention of helping:

- Support economic growth
- Ensure a more balanced housing market
- Support the development of existing and new business
- Support the creation of employment pathways and training opportunities
- Support housing growth

1.40. The Local Plan for Bolsover District forms one of the Council's best tools to help deliver the aims of its Corporate Plan; Growth Strategy; and core priorities of its Economic Development and Housing strategy.

Bolsover District Regeneration Framework – Strategies for Towns and Villages

1.41. Alongside the preparation of the new Local Plan, the Council developed a Regeneration Framework for the District, focussing on our four largest

settlements – Bolsover, Clowne, Shirebrook and South Normanton and their connections with local villages and hamlets.

- 1.42. The Regeneration Framework brought together the District's local communities and the Council and its partner organisations in order to understand the making of place in a strategic and holistic manner, identifying priorities and potential projects to help foster a greater sense of place.
- 1.43. In many cases, the Framework supports existing planning principles such as sustainability, supporting existing retail centres, improving accessibility, promoting good quality design and the regeneration of our towns. In these cases additional specific policies will not be required.
- 1.44. The Publication Local Plan has sought to integrate relevant parts of the Regeneration Framework into the future development plans for the District and its influence is most notable within elements of Chapter 6 - Working Communities, particularly the retail section.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 1.45. Planning has a key role to play in helping communities to deliver growth and change in the way they want to deliver it. Whilst it cannot deliver all facilities and services a community may wish for, it can help to protect and enhance existing assets and provide a positive framework to help shape and guide development with the involvement of the community at its heart.
- 1.46. The National Planning Policy Framework gives local communities new rights to shape their neighbourhood by preparing neighbourhood planning initiatives, such as Neighbourhood Plans. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans within Bolsover District would be prepared by Parish or Town Councils. When adopted these Plans form part of the statutory 'Development Plan' for that planning area alongside the District Council's adopted Local Plan.
- 1.47. The Council will support communities seeking to put in place Neighbourhood Plans or other neighbourhood planning initiatives but recognises that there is a significant amount of time and effort involved in creating these. To assist with this, the Council has adopted a Neighbourhood Planning Protocol to advise on the process and support Parish Councils if they choose to develop any neighbourhood planning initiative.
- 1.48. At the present time there are no adopted Neighbourhood Plans within Bolsover District.

NEXT STEPS

- 1.49. The new Local Plan for Bolsover District is based on a robust evidence base made up of a large number of studies over a period of years.

- 1.50. Specialist and technical assessments have been prepared to inform the policies and proposals in the Plan and they help to justify and explain the decisions taken. The evidence base covers a broad range of topics including housing and employment needs, landscape character, infrastructure delivery and open space and recreation needs, to name but a few. Integral to the process is the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- 1.51. An essential part of the process of developing the Local Plan has been community engagement. We have set out our approach to involving local communities and stakeholders in formulating our Local Plan in our Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.52. Figure 1A which follows outlines the various stages to the adoption of a Local Plan. We are currently at Stage 4 which is the consultation stage for the Publication Local Plan.

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Figure 1A: Local Plan – Key Milestones

