



Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	8 March 2022
Subject:	New Portsmouth Local Plan progression update
Report by:	Ian Maguire, Assistant Director of Planning & Economic Growth
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progression of the new Portsmouth Local Plan following public consultation in September/ October 2021 and to seek approval for the revisions to the Local Plan timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progression of the draft new Portsmouth Local Plan *and the summary of responses to the 'Regulation 18' consultation during September-October 2021.*
- 2.2 To approve the revised Local Plan timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 2.3 To grant delegated authority to Assistant Director Planning & Economic Growth to make minor amendments to the LDS and Development Plan Document timetables as necessary.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council is preparing a new Local Plan for Portsmouth. This document will set out a planning strategy to meet future development needs in the city for the period to 2038. The Plan will set out details on the level of development that will need to take place in the city and where it will be located. It will contain planning policies to guide decision making on planning applications.
- 3.2 The process for producing the new Local Plan is set out in the *Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)*. Its content and scope will be tested on its consistency with the *National Planning Policy Framework*



(NPPF) and *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPGs) and the justification provided by the Plan's evidence base. A public examination process will consider the soundness of the Local Plan, and it must be found sound in order to be adopted by the Council. The new Portsmouth Local Plan, once adopted, will replace the policies from existing planning policy documents.

The new Portsmouth Local Plan

- 3.3 The preparation of the new Local Plan has been informed by three Preparation Stage ('Regulation 18') public consultations: an *Issues and Options document* in August 2017 on the topics and issues to be addressed by the Plan, an *Evidence Base Update consultation* and a consultation on the *Tipner Strategic Development Area* proposals in February 2019 and a consultation on a *draft Local Plan* in September 2021.

Draft Local Plan consultation (September 2021)

- 3.4 The Regulation 18 draft Plan document was published for consultation for six weeks from 17th September to 31st October. Engagement and promotion of the Plan was through a mix of print, digital and in-person communications, including four public 'drop in' events across the city. This helped achieve a significantly higher response rate and level of interest compared to previous Local Plans consultations. Close to 500 individuals responded; 410 via the 'virtual room' (6,016 individual comments) plus 71 responses received by email. 153 people attended the drop in events. In addition the Council received 8,995 proforma emails from a petition coordinated by the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) and Royal Society of the Protection for Birds (RSPB) to object to development/ land reclamation at Tipner.
- 3.5 Broadly, the overall approach of the Plan and direction of most draft policies received a general level of support¹ with some notable areas of objection or uncertainty. A full summary of the responses to this consultation are contained in a report in Appendix 1.
- 3.6 The sustainable community and enabling land reclamation proposed for **Tipner** (Policy S2, Option 1) received a significant level of objection. The draft proposals for regeneration **in Portsmouth City Centre** (Policy S1) were well supported overall but with mixed views regarding preferred building height and land use in the north of the masterplan area around Victory Retail park. There was overall more objection to the level of new development proposed for the **Cosham** strategic site area (Policy S4) with concerns on the potential impact on local infrastructure. While the other site allocations were broadly supported there were some site specific issues and concerns raised: the loss of green space and impact on local traffic for the development of **St James' and Langstone Campus** (Policy S5); uncertainty about introducing a residential element to **Lakeside Business Park**; and the impact on local traffic and other infrastructure at **Fratton Park and the Pompey Centre**.

¹ A greater number of 'agree' responses than 'disagree' or 'don't know'

- 3.7 In terms of **housing density** (Policy H5) there was a clear divide in the consultation responses between the need to deliver a greater number of dwellings in key locations (through tall buildings for instance) and the notion that the city is already too densely populated and would be at risk of further negative impacts on air quality from congestion. In terms of **housing type, mix and affordability** (Policy H2) there is some uncertainty on appropriate requirements for affordable housing delivery given the need and aspiration for greater provision but known viability constraints, and the recognition that the newly introduced 'First Homes' requirement has not yet been subject to viability testing. Consultation responses strongly indicated that Portsmouth should argue exceptional circumstances to justify an alternative approach to **housing need** in place of the Government's standard method derived target (Policy H1). The approach to **housing supply** (Policy H1) was contested but with no clear overall view on a preferred strategy other than to ensure all brownfield land opportunities are fully utilised.
- 3.8 There was general overall support received for the draft approach to economic development (other than the allocation of Tipner for employment uses) (Chapter 3) infrastructure and community provision (Chapter 4), the environment (Chapter 5) Sustainable design & heritage (Chapter 6), but some uncertainty over new requirements such as new standards for sustainable design and construction assessment frameworks (Policy D2), carbon offsetting (Policy D4) and the suggested assessment tool for green infrastructure delivery (Policy G2) for applicants, suggesting that may require further clarification or assessment may be needed.
- 3.9 The proposed strategic site allocations, and the certainty regarding their deliverability over the plan period, will be critical to the progression of the new Local Plan and may influence key decisions on other policy areas, particularly for the Plan's overall spatial strategy, housing form, type (inc. affordable housing) and supply, but potentially also the deliverability of wider aspirations for greening, employment growth, community provision and lower carbon development.

Progression of the new Local Plan

- 3.10 Since the completion of the regulation 18 consultation five meetings of the Local Plan Cross Party Working Group have taken place to discuss in more detail key issues arising from the consultation response. A further three meetings are currently planned to consider further Tipner, Housing Density, Mix and Need / Supply.
- 3.11 Sessions have already been held on Tipner, The City Centre, St James and Langstone Campus, Lakeside and Cosham. The outcomes of these discussion is set out in more detail below.



Tipner

- 3.12 Six member briefings sessions were held in September - November 2021 to discuss options for the development strategy for the Tipner opportunity area. This matter was further considered by Local Plan Cross Party Working Group on the 17th of December, and a revised position is due to be considered again at a further upcoming meeting.
- 3.13 At the meeting on the 17th of December a number of potential options were represented for the redevelopment of Tipner, considering the provision of housing, employment, infrastructure provision, the environment and viability. Members asked officers to prepare further options for development utilising the existing land mass and not including land reclamation. The City Council's Strategic Developments team is currently preparing a revised scheme to bring to a future Local Plan Members Working Group Session.

City Centre

- 3.14 The City Centre has been considered at two separate Local Plan Cross Party Meetings on the 13th and 20th of January 2022.
- 3.15 For the first of the two meetings considered potential options for the city centre based on the need to meet the shortfall created by a likely discounting the land reclamation option at Tipner. A number of detailed options were presented based upon the areas identified through the city centre masterplanning work. Based on the feedback received an updated assessment of capacity within the city centre was brought for consideration at the second of the two meetings. This suggested that a range between +428 and -509 dwellings from the regulation 18 position was possible in the city centre.
- 3.16 To inform this update, a number of specific questions were posed. These included parking standards for the city centre, where members in the cross party working group discussed the merits of reduced parking provision where the impact on neighbouring areas was raised but overall it was felt that lower or zero parking provision was necessary to deliver the numbers required for the city centre. The potential for tall buildings was also discussed with members feeling they were a good solution in the City Centre especially in the portion of the centre close to Portsmouth and Southsea train Station where there were already a number of tall buildings.
- 3.17 Three options were presented for the mostly northerly area of the centre, the Herbert Street / Victory Retail Park area, with varying options for residential / employment mix. With option 2, as described in the Regulation 18 consultation, looking at a mix of the two uses being the preferred approach from the cross party working group.

St James' and Langstone Campus, Lakeside Business Park, and Cosham

- 3.18 These three Strategic Sites were taken to the Local Plan Cross Party Meeting on the 3rd of February 2022.
- 3.19 For St James and Langstone Campus site there was acceptance that St James would be dealt with through Planning Application and the discussion focused upon Langstone Campus. The Milton Neighbourhood Plan and its timescales were discussed including how it would come forward before the Portsmouth Local Plan. The concept of a land swap at Langstone Campus to move the settlement edge and increase the area of contiguous open space, as put forward in the Milton Neighbourhood plan was supported. The idea of increasing the area developed and number of potential dwellings at Langstone Campus was raised but did not receive general support from the cross party working group.
- 3.20 Lakeside Business Park was considered for its potential to accommodate different scales of residential development. There was discussion about the role of Lakeside as an employment / office destination for the City, the members were reassured that this role would continue and that 50,000sqm of employment floorspace was include in the plan for the site. The role of the Land immediately to the east of the main Lakeside office building and west of Village Hotel was discussed, with it being earmarked for further employment development. Overall members in the cross party working group were satisfied with the proposed Local Plan approach for the site.
- 3.21 Cosham was discussed in the context of changes to the expected housing supply following the regulation 18 consultation and latest update to housing background work, a potential reduction to between 366 and 546 dwellings was discussed based on land availability and examples of the types of densities that would be needed in order to achieve these levels of development were considered. It was felt that the area would benefit from a planned approach. While the opportunity for a tall landmark building within this opportunity area was discussed, there was not an appetite from the cross party working group as a whole for further densification above the higher of the two densities proposed.
- 3.22 The potential for development at the Pompey Centre was also raised, and members were directed to the policy position in the Local Plan for that site. Members were happy that the site was being considered, however questions were raised as to whether it could accommodate a greater scale or variety of development.

4. Reasons for recommendations

Updated Local Development Scheme

- 4.1 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is required under Section 15 of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* (as amended). The LDS must specify the development plans, the subject matter of those plans and the geographical areas

they cover and the timetable for the production and adoption of the plans. For the Council is this primarily the new Portsmouth Local Plan. Local planning authorities have an obligation to keep the LDS up to date and publish it on their website. Portsmouth's LDS was last updated on in July 2021 following approval by Cabinet.

The Revised Portsmouth Local Plan Timetable

- 4.2 Additional time has been necessary to present the responses to the options presented to the Regulation 18 consultation to the Members Cross Party Working Group for discussion and allow their consideration.. The outcome of the decisions on development at Tipner and the other options outlined will require a full reassessment of the potential housing supply and related policies. The work programme for the Plan has a number of dependencies that will depend an agreed spatial strategy for the quantity and location of new development in the city; background evidence and assessment work (i.e. transport, infrastructure provision, sustainably appraisal and habitat regulations assessment) and engagement with other local authorities on unmet housing need cannot be progressed or finalised ahead of this. A full review of the Local Plan timetable has therefore been undertaken; the estimated target date for the Council's Regulation 19 version of the Plan has been moved to late 2022, moving likely Submission of the Plan to late spring 2023. The timescales for the latter stages of the plan preparation (post 'Submission') will be outside of the Council's direct control.

Table 1. Updated Timetable for production

Timetable for Production of the new Portsmouth Local Plan			
Preparation ('Reg. 18')	Issues and Options consultation	✓	July 2017
	Evidence base consultation ('Local Plan update')	✓	February 2019
	Consultation on a draft Local Plan	✓	Summer 2021
Publication ('Reg. 19')	Consultation on the proposed Local Plan for submission		Late 2022
Submission ('Reg. 22')	Submission of Plan to Secretary of State		Spring 2023
Examination hearings ('Reg. 24')	Examination of the Plan by an appointed Inspector		<i>tbc</i>
Inspectors report ('Reg. 25')	Inspectors Report on whether the plan is legally compliant and sound		<i>tbc</i>
Adoption ('Reg. 26')	Formal adoption of the plan by the council		<i>tbc</i>

5. Integrated impact assessment

An equality impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the specific protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010. All projects/ plans within the Local Development Scheme would be subject to their own EIA if there was a potential positive or negative impact on any of the protected characteristics

6. Legal implications

Legal comments are contained within the body of this report. The Regulations referred to in Table 1 are the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, which provide the statutory framework for the production of a local plan as envisaged by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications as result of approving the recommendations within this report.
- 7.2 The final production of the Local Plan will be met from the existing cash limited budget.
- 7.3 Further work is required for a revised scheme at Tipner that will be brought back to the Local Plan Members Working Group Session, the cost of this will be met from the approved capital program.

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Signed by: Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration

Appendices: Appendix 1 Draft Reg 18 consultation response summary report

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: