

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Scrutiny Committee

29 JULY 2015

PRESENT: Councillor C Poll (Chairman); Councillors M Collins (Vice-Chairman), P Cooper, M Edmonds, S Jenkins, L Monger and B Russel

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor C Paternoster

1. TEMPORARY CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

There were none

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 3 March and 27 May 2015 be approved as correct records.

4. HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (HEDNA)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stated that “to boost significantly the supply of housing local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing”. Originally this would have been established through a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). However, SHMAs have been replaced by Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessments (HEDNA).

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) stated that the primary objective of identifying need through a HEDNA was to:

- Identify the future quantity of housing needed, including a breakdown by type, tenure and size;
- Identify the future quantity of land or floor space required for economic development uses including both the quantitative and qualitative needs for new development; and
- Provide a breakdown of that analysis in terms of quality and location, and to provide an indication of gaps in current land supply.

The starting point for the assessment of housing need in an area were the household projections published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Household projections were trend based, but did not take into account factors affecting local demography.

Consultants, GL Hearn had been appointed to prepare a HEDNA for Aylesbury Vale and had reached some preliminary conclusions on the Vale’s needs for the VALP plan period 2013 – 2033. These were reported to Cabinet on 11 November 2014 ([Link to agenda and minutes](#)) at the time this concluded that a figure of around 1000 dwellings per annum would be sufficient to meet the Vale’s trend based needs adjusted for a range of local factors. As outlined in the report further work was required.

The consultants had prepared a final draft Aylesbury Vale HEDNA and the draft executive summary had been attached to the report as an appendix. The comments of the HEDNA Steering Group of Councils on the draft report were being considered.

When the Aylesbury Vale HEDNA was commissioned other Buckinghamshire councils were in the process of completing their Local Plans and already had evidence in place regarding housing need. Since then timetables for the preparation of other council's Local Plans have become much more closely aligned and a Housing Market Area (HMA) of Aylesbury Vale, Wycombe and Chiltern council areas had been defined.

Government guidance now stated that a HEDNA should be based on a HMA rather than individual council areas. As a result a joint Central Bucks HEDNA had been commissioned and the results of that will form the basis of VALP. The VALP Issues and Options consultation was due to commence in October 2015 and would be based on the need defined in the Central Bucks HEDNA.

In the meantime, the Aylesbury Vale HEDNA would be used to inform neighbourhood plans and five year supply calculations. The Central Bucks HEDNA would also need to have regard to the findings of the Aylesbury Vale HEDNA.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

5. BUCKINGHAMSHIRE GREEN BELT REVIEW

It was reported that substantial parts of South Bucks, Wycombe and Chiltern district council's areas were designated as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, whereas only a small part of Aylesbury Vale, mainly around Wendover and smaller parts of Aston Clinton and Ivinghoe, formed part of the Green Belt.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stated that "once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the local plan". With all four district councils preparing new local plans, a review of the Green Belt was being undertaken. The exceptional circumstances to justify the review were the lack of capacity for new development in South Bucks, Wycombe and Chiltern. This meant that all options for new development had to be examined before areas outside the plan area were examined.

The NPPF set out five purposes for Green Belt areas:-

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The purpose of the Green Belt review was to identify those areas which did not perform well in relation to the above purposes. ARUP Consultancy had been appointed to undertake the review. The first phase of the study would be completed by the end of August 2015, for the output to be considered in relation to the proposed VALP issues and Options Consultation in October 2015.

The first phase of the study would only consider how parcels of land performed against the purposes set out above. If a parcel performed poorly then a second phase would be

initiated to determine its suitability for development. However, it was acknowledged that the output from the first phase would give an indication of the potential for development in the Green Belt in each council's area. An indication had been given in the report on how the areas of Green Belt were to be split up. Each area would be given an overall score. Some land on the furthest edges of the Green Belt but not currently included would be assessed as to whether it would be suitable for inclusion into the Green Belt.

It was further reported that the methodology to be used needed to be signed off by all the councils involved and ARUO had completed their site visits and were working on the assessments.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

6. LOCAL PLAN WORK PROGRAMME

Members were given an update on the VALP work programme. So far the Scoping Consultation, a Call for Sites and the commissioning of a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) had been undertaken. As reported earlier, the initial results of HEDNA had been reported to Cabinet in November 2014. The final draft HEDNA had also been published as well a new Local development Scheme.

Work on a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) was nearing completion, but progress had been delayed due to a number of issues including work on neighbourhood plans. Other evidence to support the Local Plan including a Retail Needs Assessment, an assessment of evidence to support Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and Areas of Sensitive Landscape (ASLs), an update on 2013 Buckinghamshire Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment, the definition of a Central Bucks Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) had also been sourced.

As mentioned earlier in these minutes, work was progressing on the Buckinghamshire Green Belt Review, a Central Bucks HEDNA and a joint Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment Scoping study. Work was also being undertaken on the preparation of Water Cycle Study and flood risk assessments, and work had commenced on the Issues and Options Consultation for October 2015.

The Draft Plan stage was timetabled for mid 2016, with the submission stage in late 2016 and adoption by mid 2017.

The July Budget had measures included in it to speed up the preparation of Local Plans. Further guidance on the operation of the Duty to Cooperate was expected.

Members had concerns relating to the Forecast Economic Performance and the Need for Employment Land and other points in the GL Hearn study which had been attached as an appendix to the report on HEDNA.

Members requested that they would be given the opportunity to see the Issues and Options Consultation draft report before it went out for consultation in October 2015.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.