

Agenda Item No. 4(g)

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER - HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**8 September 2015**

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**CONSULTATION: HIGH PEAK LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION – FURTHER  
EVIDENCE**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To agree the County Council's formal response to High Peak Borough Council's (HPBC) public consultation on its High Peak Local Plan Examination – Further Evidence.

(2) **Information and Analysis** The High Peak Local Plan Submission (HPLPS) was subject to an Examination in Public (EiP) in January and February 2015. Following the closure of the EiP, the Local Plan Inspector required further evidence from HPBC on:

- a) the implications of the 2012-based Sub-National Household Projections (SNHP) on the Borough's objectively assessed housing needs (OAHN) for the Plan period because the projections had been published shortly after closure of the EiP; and
- b) concerns raised by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) about the likely adverse impacts of the proposed housing allocation at Woodhead Road, Old Glossop, on the area's heritage assets and landscape.

HPBC commissioned consultants to provide further evidence on these two matters which was subject to public consultation. Conclusions on the examination of further evidence are set out below:

- a) The High Peak Housing Needs Study 2012-based SNHP Update (HPHNSU) concludes the Borough's OAHNs would be between 310 and 350 dwellings per annum (dpa) and a total 6,200 and 7,000 dwellings for the Plan period of 2011 to 2031, based on a range of growth scenarios.
- b) Woodhead Road Heritage and Landscape Appraisal (WRHLA) concludes that the proposed Woodhead Road housing allocation would be likely to cause either 'substantial' or 'slightly less than substantial harm' to the heritage assets (Old Glossop Conservation Area, All Saints Roman

Catholic Church and All Saints Anglican Church) and to the landscape and landscape character of the area.

On the basis of this further evidence, HPBC has recommended that:

- the Local Plan's (HPLP) new housing requirement should be 350 dpa (7,000 dwellings in total) over the period 2011 to 2031. This is a reduction from 360 dpa (7,200 dwellings in total) set out in the HPLPS; and
- the Woodhead Road housing allocation for 121 dwellings should be deleted from the HPLP.

The statutory deadline for submission of comments to HPBC on the Further Evidence was 16 July 2015, therefore, provisional member and officer technical comments were submitted by then, subject to agreement at this Cabinet Member Meeting. A copy of the response can be made available on request or viewed online (see below). Since then, the Inspector has confirmed to HPBC he will hold a further hearing session on 3 September 2015 to consider the Further Evidence and HPBC's recommendations for revisions to the HPLP. Whilst officially closed, the consultation documents for these two matters referenced V1, V2 and V3 and Derbyshire County Council's response, reference W3, can be viewed at: [http://highpeak-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/high\\_peak/exam\\_library](http://highpeak-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/high_peak/exam_library)

### **Local Member Comments**

Local County Councillors with electoral divisions in High Peak Borough were consulted on the Further Evidence. Councillor Beth Atkins' comments are given verbatim below.

*'There is a change of use of some land – brownfield site – near Newtown Station. There was a change to the plan to accommodate an application for a retail unit (Aldi) and an industrial unit.*

*Bearing in mind the number of houses to be built - and that many of the occupants will work in the Greater Manchester Area employment zone – and will have cars and will need to travel by train, the space that is to be designated as an industrial unit really needs to be earmarked for parking.*

*This needs to be promoted to the rail line franchise bidders – actually I have raised this - and the land designated for parking. There is no parking at Chapel-en-le-Frith, Whaley Bridge or Furness Vale so they will either head for New Mills to park or face severe delays on the A6 or other routes.*

*I am concerned because nobody seems to be considering the infrastructure needed to support the residents of all the proposed housing.*

*Besides the car parking issue for commuters, what about the main town sewers? Will they cope? The deluges that cause flash flooding demonstrate that this – water management - is an issue likely to cause problems. You cannot just build houses in the villages without the main infrastructure to support it'.*

## **Officer Comments**

### **a) Objectively Assessed Housing Need and the Local Plan Requirement**

Derbyshire County Council previously provided officer technical comments to HPBC on the OAHN of the Borough set out in the HPLPS, and the Housing Needs Study: 2012-based Sub-National Population Projections Update (HNS Update) (August 2014), which was commissioned by HPBC prior to the Local Plan Inquiry. The HPLPS identified an OAHN range of between 420 and 470 dpa over the HPLP period, and the HNS Update identified a range of between 280 and 420 dpa. In the context of both of the above, it was considered that HPBC's preferred housing requirement of 360 dpa (7,200 in total) fell within the OAHN range and, although not at its top end, the target was justified by both the significant environmental and infrastructure constraints that existed in the Borough and the need to promote jobs growth to support economic development.

Overall, officers consider the latest evidence in the HPHNSU provides a thorough and robust assessment of the OAHNs of the Borough based on the recently published 2012-based SNHP. Derbyshire County Council previously carried out an independent analysis of the 2012-based SNHP for Derbyshire which indicates significantly lower levels of household growth over the next 25 years for most local authority areas in the County (except Derby City), compared to household growth reflected in the 2008-based SNHP and 2011-based Sub-National Interim Household Projections (SNIHP). This is particularly the case for High Peak Borough where lower levels of projected household growth are most pronounced in Derbyshire, compared to these previous sets of household projections. The trends identified above are fully reflected in the HPHNSU which sets out an OAHN range of between 310 and 350 dpa based on a range of different growth scenarios.

It is noted that only two of the growth scenarios at the top end of the range would provide for sufficient population growth and people of working age to support an increase in jobs growth in the Borough over the Plan period. All the other scenarios would provide for a decline in the level of working age population and jobs. Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to ensure that housing growth strategies in local plans are supported by appropriate jobs growth and economic development to provide for sustainable patterns of development. The need for housing and employment growth strategies to be mutually supportive in local plans has recently become a key issue in Inspectors' decisions on local plan inquiries.

For these reasons, it is considered that HPBC should plan for a housing requirement at the top end of the range of growth scenarios that would deliver a significant increase in jobs growth (+480 jobs) over the Plan period. In view of this, the housing provision target of 350 dpa (7,000 dwellings in total), recommended by HPBC, is therefore supported.

In its comments on the HPLPS, Derbyshire County Council had welcomed Cheshire East Council's (CEC) provision of 500 dwellings made in the Cheshire East Local Plan Submission (CELPS) to contribute towards meeting housing needs arising in High Peak Borough. On the basis of HPBC's recommended reduction in its housing target from 360 to 350 dpa however, HPBC considers it can now meet its housing needs entirely within the Borough without the need for CEC's contribution. In this context, it is considered appropriate and justified for HPBC to delete any references in its emerging Local Plan to CEC's 500 dwelling contribution.

#### **b) Woodhead Road Heritage and Landscape Appraisal**

The HPLPS allocated land for approximately 121 dwellings at Woodhead Road on the edge of Old Glossop, consisting of four separate parcels of land identified as Sites G8, G9, G10 and G11. In its comments on the HPLPS and in supplementary statements for the Local Plan EiP, Derbyshire County Council raised significant concerns about the allocation of these sites due to their likely harmful impacts on the landscape and landscape character of the area.

The Council has reviewed the WRHLA and considers it provides a thorough and robust assessment of the likely impacts of the proposed housing development in sites G8 to G11 on the heritage assets and landscape and landscape character of the area. It is clear from the conclusions of the WRHLA that:

- sites G8 to G11 would be likely to cause either substantial or slightly less than substantial harm to the landscape and landscape character of the immediate and wider area, which contributes significantly to the setting of the nearby heritage assets; and
- the scale of harm to the landscape and heritage assets, as a result of the proposed housing development on sites G8 to G11, would be of such magnitude that its impacts could not be satisfactorily mitigated.

The evidence above therefore supports and justifies Derbyshire County Council's concerns on this issue expressed in its comments on the HPLPS and supplementary statements. For this reason, HPBC's recommendation to remove the Woodhead Road allocation from the Local Plan is supported on grounds of likely adverse impact on landscape and landscape character.

**c) Infrastructure Requirements**

Councillor Atkins raised concerns about the level of housing development proposed in the HPLPS and the need for necessary supporting infrastructure to be provided, particularly in the Borough's villages. In comments made on the HPLPS and supplementary statements to the Local Plan EiP, Derbyshire County Council provided details on the necessary strategic infrastructure that would be required to accommodate the housing growth proposed in the HPLP. These comments particularly related to the school place planning, highways infrastructure, household waste and flood risk management implications of the housing allocations identified in the HPLP. They remain relevant to all the housing allocations kept in the HPLP and have been reaffirmed to HPBC.

(3) **Financial Considerations** There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The recommendation in this report is made in the context of the County Council's responsibilities and services under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Steve Buffery, extension 39808.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That the Cabinet Member delegates authority for a formal letter of response to High Peak Borough Council to be written by officers in line with the issues and comments set out in this report.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**