



Notes of meeting of Derby HMA Joint Advisory Board

4 February 2021

Via Microsoft Teams

9.30 pm – 11.30 am

Chair – Councillor Ben Bellamy, Amber Valley Borough Council

Item 1 Welcome and introductions

Amber Valley Borough Council

Councillor Ben Bellamy (Cllr BB)
Derek Stafford, Assistant Director (Planning) (DS)

Derby City Council

Councillor Matthew Holmes (Cllr MH)
Paul Clarke, Chief Planning Officer (PC)
Andrew Waterhouse, Spatial Planning Group Manager (AW)
Nicky Bartley, Planning Policy Team Leader (NB)

Derbyshire County Council

Councillor Tony King (Cllr TK)
Steve Buffery, Team Leader – Policy & Monitoring (SB)

South Derbyshire District Council

Councillor Stephen Taylor (Cllr ST)
Steffan Saunders, Head of Planning & Strategic Housing (SS)
Karen Beavin, Planning Policy Team Leader (KB)

Item 2 Apologies for absence

None

Item 3 Appointment of Chair

Cllr BB agreed to chair the meeting.

Item 4 Notes from JAB meeting on 10 November 2020 and matters arising

It was agreed that the notes were an accurate record of the meeting.

SB updated the group on item 8 of the minutes – in relation to the concerns expressed around unimplemented planning permissions and ‘land banking’. SB confirmed that officers were working on a draft letter to MHCLG recognising the importance of this issue. However, it was considered that trying to reach agreement on a letter from all authorities in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire was too ambitious. Instead officers propose to take forward a response on behalf of all Derbyshire authorities and seek to agree this at the next meeting of Derbyshire Planning Officers Group on 4 March 2021.

Item 5 Derby HMA Growth Options Study – key findings

DS advised that a final report had been received by the consultants (AECOM) at the end of January 2021 and that it was an independent assessment of where future strategic and sustainable growth in the HMA could be accommodated up to 2050. DS confirmed that the study had been paid for by external grant funding and the only cost to the HMA was through officer time. The study is a high-level assessment not intended to replace or pre-judge decisions made in respective Local Plans and that it does not suggest sites but broad areas of potential.

DS confirmed that the Study did not cover land within Derby City and that the City Council would be undertaking a separate urban capacity study to establish the scope for further growth within the city.

DS further explained that the study is ‘policy off’ not ruling out any sites initially but building up a picture of constraints. Broad areas capable of accommodating 1,000+ homes have been looked at for their potential to deliver growth in the form of autonomous settlements, co-dependent settlements and urban/village expansions. 16 areas are identified and rated in one of three categories, namely i) being suitable for strategic growth ii) having potential for strategic growth or iii) being unsuitable for strategic growth. These broad locations now require further analysis by officers and therefore areas are only indicative at present, deliberately avoiding site specifics.

Cllr TK stated that the Erewash dimension was missing and what happened on the east of the HMA should inform the report. DS explained that the consultants Aecom had also recently completed a similar study for the Greater Nottingham HMA, which includes EBC, and the two studies could be read together. AW added that HMA officers have advised EBC and Greater Nottingham counterparts that we are keen to talk to them about what the two Aecom studies mean for the respective HMAs moving forward but that due to the pandemic and the timing of the studies this had yet to happen.

Cllr ST was keen to understand how strategic road and rail routes, including HS2 proposals had informed the study. DS advised that HS2 has been factored in and the accessibility of strategic routes was a factor in how areas were assessed, those areas with poorer accessibility scoring lower.

Cllr MH agreed that it would be difficult to agree the location and amount of future growth if we have not had discussions with Erewash, especially in view of DtC. He expressed concerns around further growth to the west of the City, in relation to the risk that infrastructure identified in the report would not be delivered, resulting in a series of bolt-on extensions being added to existing/planned urban extensions. He felt a very careful approach was needed to this and EBC issue.

Cllr BB asked if EBC were invited to join our meetings. DS explained that we have been waiting for the GOS to be completed before extending an approach to EBC to attend the officer meeting and/or JAB. It is clear that JAB members (and officers) see EBC as fundamental to the issues and it is now time to start discussions.

Cllr BB suggested that if all members agreed that an invitation should be extended to EBC.

Decision: All Members agreed to invite Erewash to be part of these discussions at JAB.

DS advised that consideration also needs to be given to the publication of the Growth Options Study. Members expressed concerns regarding how the findings of the Study may be interpreted e.g. that decisions had already been made about where new housing growth will take place. Officers agreed to further consideration to this matter.

Cllr TK and SS left the meeting after item 5

Item 6 New Standard Methodology for Calculating Housing Need

AW advised that the Government had revised their standard methodology for calculating housing need in December 2020. Housing need is often the first and most fundamental evidence established in preparing a Local Plan and AW explained that for many years this was decided at County and Regional level with input from Councils. However, in 2010 the Government removed what were considered top-down targets in favour of a more local approach. This local approach however, led to an overly complex process that is considered both time consuming and expensive in developing and examining Local Plans. Furthermore, it has not led to the increase in housing delivery anticipated by central Government.

AW explained, that in order to address this in 2018 the government introduced a 'standard methodology' for calculating housing need, set nationally and simply given to Local Authorities as the starting point for their plan making. The Government consulted on changes to this approach in summer 2020 in a move to deliver more homes in line with their 300,000 new homes per annum manifesto pledge. The proposed changes included changes to the affordability adjustment and scrapping of the cap. This had the effect of directing more growth to rural districts, especially in areas with affordability issues and led to something of a backbench revolt.

AW outlined that in response to the consultation that the Government had changed its mind and, in December 2020, reverted back to the 2018 methodology but with an additional step included. Namely a 35% uplift for the 20 largest cities and urban areas, this includes Derby. AW explained that the guidance issued so far is unclear and clarity is required on whether the additional housing should be met in urban areas or administrative areas. Members then

considered the housing figures under the different approaches. AW advised that some of the affected Cities were considering a challenge to this approach and he would follow up to discover progress.

DS asked PC whether this is something that the City Council would be raising at their upcoming meeting with MHCLG. PC advised that DCiC would seek clarity on this matter.

Cllr MH suggested that there was a need for these discussions with MHCLG on how and where we build new housing to keep checks and balances on sustainability.

Item 7 Derby & Derbyshire Strategic Planning Framework – update on progress and relationship with HMA joint working

SB provided an update on the SPF, highlighting a recent report to the Derbyshire Chief Executives Group (27 November 2020), which noted 1) the progress made so far with partners in preparing the SPF, 2) setting the SPF in the context of the Planning White Paper which is silent on strategic planning and 3) draft Terms of Reference setting the key roles and responsibilities for the D2 Joint Committee to oversee and for governance of delivery of the SPF.

SB further highlighted a special officer meeting of all Derbyshire authorities on 10 December 2020 to consider the SPF in detail, take stock of progress and discuss how future work on the SPF is taken forward. SB advised that there was ongoing support for the preparation of the SPF from both meetings and a desire that the SPF recognises existing HMA arrangements across the County, including the incorporation of HMA strategies into the SPF

SB emphasised that the next meeting of the D2 Joint Committee on 4 March would be asked to endorse this approach and support the sign up to the Terms of Reference (ToR). This would then enable each authority to take the SPF through their respective political management arrangements.

AW agreed that this was a useful piece of work and that there needs to be further discussion about the synergies between both the Derby HMA strategy and the SPF and the respective County and City infrastructure plans. AW identified that there still needs to be a discussion on the ToR to clarify that any evidence collated to support the SPF should be done so at the most appropriate administrative level and in a proportionate way.

SB confirmed that resourcing of the SPF, including evidence, was raised at the Derbyshire Chief Executives Group and he expected existing Local Plan evidence to form the bulk of the evidence base for the SPF.

Item 8 AOB

None

Item 9 Date of next JAB meeting

Members were advised that the following weeks were identified for future meetings and that officers would be in touch to agree specific times and dates.

- 20th – 22nd April 2021
- 6th – 8th July 2021
- 9th – 11th Nov 2021

The meeting ended at 11.17am