

## **Ashfield Draft Local Plan Consultation - How to Understand the Draft Local Plan**

### **The Local Plan**

The draft Local Plan together with a summary and the supporting background papers and evidence base is set out on the Council's website at:

<https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/planning-building-control/local-plan/emerging-local-plan/ashfield-draft-local-plan-consultation-regulation-18/ashfield-local-plan-consultation-regulation-18-local-plan-evidence-base/>

District and unitary councils are required to bring forward a local plan. It is a planning document that sets out how the district should be developed over the 15 years, in line with the requirements of national policy and legislation. It comprises a number of policies and site allocations that will replace the Council's existing Development Plan, adopted in November 2002. The Local Plan sets the overall requirement for housing and other development over the Plan period and must identify enough land for development to meet this requirement.

Once the development plan process has been completed and the plan has been adopted, it will be used as the basis for making decisions on planning applications in the District.

The current consultation reflects an early stage of the emerging Local Plan and identifies the following:

- The key issues the Local Plan should address.
- A draft vision and strategic priorities.
- Information on key strategic sites and policies.
- The infrastructure, homes and jobs needed for the District.
- Support for the development of the local economy.
- Support for more sustainable travel.
- The protection and enhancement of the environment.
- The Council's approach for meeting these needs including housing and employment allocations and the Council's proposed policy approach across a range of topics including environment, climate change, infrastructure, open space and heritage.

Additional studies and evidence will be required as the Plan moves forward. The responses received to the current consultation will help us to consider the next stage of the emerging Local Plan.

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If reasonable adjustments are needed to fully engage with the Authority - contact **01623 450000**

## The Basis for The Local Plan Policies and Allocations

The draft Plan is supported by background papers which bring together and explain the approach taken in relation to the emerging Local Plan.

These are located on the same web page as the draft Local Plan (it is necessary to scroll down the page):

<https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/planning-building-control/local-plan/emerging-local-plan/ashfield-draft-local-plan-consultation-regulation-18/ashfield-local-plan-consultation-regulation-18-local-plan-evidence-base/>

These are as follows:

- Background Paper No 1 Spatial Strategy and Location of Development, August 2021 – Sets out the national and local context, the local plan history, the spatial strategy, and considers the exceptional circumstances for sites allocated within the Green Belt.
- Background Paper No 2 Housing, August 2021 - Provides the context for the housing provision and supply in the Draft Ashfield Local Plan, together with the context, assumptions and reasoning behind the housing mix, and delivery aspects.
- Background Paper No 3 Economy and Employment Land, August 2021 - Analyses the background evidence and information on the economy and more particularly employment land, to reach conclusions to support the employment policy approach set out in the Ashfield Local Plan. Together with the Lichfield Nottingham Core HMA and Nottingham Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study 2021 , it provides an assessment of the sites that have been put forward to meet the future needs for offices, general industrial and distribution/logistics uses.
- Background Paper No 4 Green Belt Harm, August 2021 – The Study assesses the potential harm to the Green Belt that release of identified sites would cause. It is not the purpose of this paper to allocate sites, but to help inform site selection. It should be read in conjunction with the Strategic Green Belt Review (SGBR), 2016
- Background Paper No 5 Infrastructure Delivery, August 2021 – It sets out a summary regarding the current position on physical, social and environmental infrastructure.

Further evidence base studies are located on the same webpage under topic areas which reflect the chapter heading in the draft Local Plan. For example, under “*Meeting local housing needs and aspirations*” the following studies are relevant:

- Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - which sets out the analysis of the sites put forward to meet future housing employment and other land requirements.
- Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Housing Needs Assessment 2020 [PDF 5Mb] - Provides as assessment of local housing needs, addressing the need for different types of housing for different groups.
- Ashfield New Settlement Study Final Report March 2021 - consider the possibility of two new settlements in the north of District.

- Greater Nottingham and Ashfield District Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, March 2021

The policies in the draft plan also indicate the relevant evidence base and supporting background papers of relevance to that policy.

## **Reading the Plan**

The draft Local Plan has to be read as a whole, rather than as a series of individual policies, to understand all the policies and guidance which will apply to any proposal. Applications for planning permission will be considered against all relevant policies in the Local Plan (once adopted), a relevant neighbourhood plan and, as a material consideration, the National Planning Policy Framework. Development proposals that do not appropriately respond to all the policies will generally be resisted.

In reading the Local Plan the starting point is the wording of the policy assisted with the words of the supporting text which is relevant to interpretation of the policy.

## **Policies Maps**

Published with the Local Plan are the Policies Maps. The Maps illustrate geographically the areas in the District to which specific policies in the Plan apply. They show areas where specific uses are proposed (for example new housing or employment development), areas of protection (Green Belt, Conservation Areas and the countryside for example) and boundaries such as the main urban areas and town centres for example.

## **Sustainability Appraisal**

As part of the emerging Local Plan a consultant has been appointed to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Local Plan. The SA is a process which assesses the environmental, social and economic impacts (both positive and negative effects) in relation to the strategic options, the policies and the sites identified as potentially available to meet future development needs. The SA helps to inform decisions across a wide range of topics, but it does not decide which options or sites are taken forward.

## **The Local Plan Process**

The Local Plan has a number of stages based on legislation which are summarised below.

- Regulation 18 consultation - The Regulation 18 stage, which for Ashfield is the draft Local Plan, is a public consultation at an early stage in preparing the Plan. The Council sets out proposals for the emerging Local Plan and considers all the proposals comments received in relation to the policies and site allocations. If substantial changes are made to the draft Local Plan, a further Regulation 18 consultation may be necessary.
- Regulation 19 – The proposed Local Plan will be out to public consultation for a minimum period of 6 weeks (the Regulation 19 stage) before it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for ‘Examination In Public’. At this stage all responses to the consultation

will be considered by the Inspector appointed to undertake an examination of the Local Plan rather than the Council.

- Local Plan Examination – A Planning Inspector will undertake a Local Plan Examination including hearings where interested parties will be invited to speak. The Plan can only be adopted by the Council if the Inspector recommends adoption as it is submitted or subject to modifications.
- The Council considers whether to adopt the plan. This will be a formal resolution of the Council following the receipt of the Inspector's report. Once adopted the Plan will be used as the basis for making decisions on planning applications in the District.

### **Queries**

If you have any queries please contact Forward Planning Officers on 01623 4573781, 457382, 457383. Alternatively Email [localplan@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@ashfield.gov.uk)