

Strategic Housing and Planning Committee

28 March 2019

Early Engagement on the Local Plan

Report by Director of Growth

Relevant Portfolio Holder Planning Policy, Culture & Heritage

Purpose

To authorise consultation on the Early Engagement (Regulation 18) Draft and Site Assessments for a new Local Plan for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. To note that this document is the first consultation for the development of a new Local Plan and is a statutory stage.

Recommendations:

To **Resolve** that -

1. the Early Engagement (Regulation 18) Draft and Site Assessment documents for the purposes of public consultation (Annexes 1 and 2) be approved; and
2. prior to consultation, the Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders and opposition spokesperson(s) be given delegated authority to;
 - a) agree the branding and consultation collateral of the Issues and Options;
 - b) make amendments to these documents and approve the consultation collateral

Benefits to the Community:

The Early Engagement (Regulation 18) Draft document on the Local Plan is the first stage in the preparation of the Borough's Local Plan. This will be the first public consultation on the new Local Plan for Kingston Borough, thereby allowing the community to shape the document from the outset.

Key Points

- A. This report seeks authorisation to publicly consult on the Early Engagement (Regulation 18) Draft (Annex 1) and Site Assessment (Annex 2) documents. This is the first public stage of development of a new local plan for the borough. An adopted local plan has full statutory weight when determining planning applications, alongside the Mayor's London Plan and any neighbourhood plans.
- B. The Early Engagement document (formerly known as Issues and Options) and the Site Assessments were both considered by the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee (SHAP) on the 8 November 2018. The Committee approved the items for public consultation by seven committee members (three abstained). This

approval to consult was however subject to a community call in, therefore was heard at the Scrutiny Panel on 20 December 2018.

- C. At Scrutiny Panel, the resolution was to bring the final draft of the consultation document back to a future meeting of the SHAP committee for consideration. This was voted for by six members, with one abstaining.
- D. The Early Engagement document and the Site Assessments are therefore being brought back to this SHAP Committee for a resolution to run a public consultation.
- E. Further detail on the local plan process can be seen in the previous SHAP Committee report which was heard on 8 November 2018 (see link in background papers).

Context

- 1. The Issues and Options and Site Assessments draft documents were considered at SHAP committee on 8 November 2018. The Committee resolved to approve the item for consultation. Resolutions from this committee were the same as those set out in this committee report.
- 2. However, since the resolution to approve the Issues and Options and Site Assessment documents, they were subject to a community call in and therefore heard at Scrutiny Panel on 20 December 2018. At Scrutiny, it was resolved that:

“...the Panel partially agrees with reason 12 of the call-in and that the final draft of the consultation document should return to a future meeting of the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee for its consideration.”

This resolution was voted for by six members, with one abstaining.

- 3. Reason 12 of the Community Call-In read:

“12. The document presented to Committee was so vague and incomplete and uninformative and confusing that It should not have been approved in its current form. The final consultation draft, with what will doubtless be major changes, should come back to The Strategic Planning and Housing Committee for approval before going out for consultation.”

- 4. Since the Scrutiny Panel meeting, officers have been working closely with members to address both the resolutions from SHAP committee on 8 November 2018, and also the concerns raised in reason 12 as part of the Scrutiny resolution.

SHAP resolutions

- 5. **2a and b) - Branding and consultation collateral**
The document has been branded by appointed designers to make it more user friendly and engaging. By designing the Early Engagement document, it breaks down large sections of the document, which were otherwise text heavy. The document now incorporates more images, graphics and maps, making it both easier to read and more accessible for our communities when we go out for public consultation. This designed document will also be used to produce the consultation

material, as well as on the council's online consultation portal, so that the document is recognisable in all forms of engagement.

6. It is also proposed to use this same branding throughout the production of the plan, so this will be used at each stage of the preparation of the local plan going forward, right through to adoption.
7. Housing Delivery Test results were published by government in February 2019. The numbers published set out the net homes delivered over three years against the net homes that should have been built in the same period, based on the adopted housing requirement for the borough. The data for Kingston shows that as a council we have delivered 1,042 homes against our current target of 1,381; meaning that Kingston's Housing Delivery Test result is 75%.
8. With regards to the Early Engagement document for the Local Plan, the council are currently following the new draft London Plan housing targets, which are being tested at examination. These may well change, and the council have objected to these figures, but they are lower (1,364) than the government target.

Scrutiny resolutions

9. **Addressing reason 12 from the community call in**
Officers and members have worked hard to ensure that the Early Engagement document being brought back to committee is much clearer than before; removing lots of technical planning speak, and making the document more user friendly and engaging. Officers have worked with colleagues in the Communications team to address language issues throughout the document.

Key Changes to the document

10. Since SHAP committee on 8 November 2018, the following key changes have been made to the Early Engagement document.
 - a. **Changing the name of the document**
Issues and Options used to be a common term for the first round of engagement on a local plan. However it was thought that Issues and Options doesn't really address the key elements of this document. It was also thought that the document should be more open to engagement, rather than simply giving two options to respond to the key challenges that lie ahead, the document is now more open, allowing for a more open engagement.
 - b. **Addition of a foreword**
This has been prepared jointly between the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy & Culture and Heritage, and the Portfolio Holder for Resident Engagement to address the key changes and challenges that the borough is facing in the next 22 years.
 - c. **Language changes**
Chapters have been renamed to be more meaningful and engaging, such as the removal of 'Context' for 'What is this about?', the addition of a section called 'Is there anything else...' and renaming the 'Next Steps' section to read 'How to get involved'. All sections have also been reviewed for their language and tone. Technical planning language and legislation has also

been moved into boxes, allowing the reader to either read in the context of the rest of the section, or simply bypass it. The text is however still present if the reader wishes to read planning definitions and regulations.

d. Population figures

One of the key changes in the document is the variance in the population figures since the last committee. The council are conscious of using the most up to date population statistics, which means that these do not necessarily reflect previous documents such as the previous Issues and Options or the Direction of Travel. In November 2018, the council used GLA 2016-central based trend projections, which stated that the population growth in the borough would be set to increase by 23,000 from 2019 to 2041. However, since then, the council more consistently use the GLA 2016 based housing led population projections, which incorporates SHLAA data from the GLA. The council have checked this with the GLA and been recommended that this is the data to use going forward. This data does however set out that there will be a population increase of 34,000 between 2019 and 2041 - 11,000 higher than originally anticipated.

e. Site Assessments

The site assessments have also been updated to reflect concerns from members that the council were putting forward sites that they thought had potential for development. The proformas are now more factual, simply reflecting what was submitted to the council by developers/interested parties, giving no view as to whether these would be acceptable or not. The proformas now also identify key strategic designations such as if the site is located within the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, Strategic Industrial Location or adjacent to a Listed Building. Also, a review of the sites contained within the Site Assessment consultation document (Annex 2) has meant that one of the sites that was included in the November 2018 version has been removed. The site (previously referenced SA044) at 40-52 Mill Place has recently been built; (it was completed in 2015 under planning permission 14/13004) and is therefore not expected to be available for development within the lifetime of the local plan. Public engagement would therefore not be meaningful on this site.

Consultations and Next Steps

11. Subject to approval, the Early Engagement and Site Assessments will be taken forward to public consultation. It is proposed that consultation will run from May to July 2019, closing before the summer holidays, thereby allowing as many people to engage in this first and most important stage of the local plan as possible.
12. It should be noted that if the Early Engagement and Site Assessment documents are approved for consultation, Part 4C - Community Call In Procedure Rules indicates that a *'decision may only be called-in once under this procedure'*, therefore the Call in timetable would not apply to these documents. Although previously known as Issues and Options, this is the same consultation previous considered by the SHAP Committee on the 8 November 2018.

Resource Implications

13. There are no additional resources implications arising from the changes made to the Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at SHAP on 8 November 2018. All resource implications set out in the Committee report for 8 November 2018 remain in relation to this item.

Legal Implications

14. There are no additional legal implications arising from the changes made to the Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at SHAP on 8 November 2018. All legal implications set out in the Committee report for 8 November 2018 remain in relation to this item.

Risk Assessment

15. There are no additional risks identified in relation to the changes made to the Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at SHAP on 8 November 2018. The risk assessment set out in the Committee report for 8 November 2018 remains relevant.

Equalities Impact Assessment

16. There are no additional identified impacts to any person or group of people with protected characteristics in relation to the changes made to the Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at Committee on 8 November 2018.

Health Implications

21. There are no additional identified health implications as a result of the revised Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at Committee on 8 November 2018.

Road Network Implications

22. There are no additional identified road network implications as a result of the revised Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at Committee on 8 November 2018.

Environmental and Air Quality Implications

23. There are no additional identified environmental and air quality implications as a result of the revised Early Engagement document following the item that was heard at Committee on 8 November 2018.

Appendices

- Annex 1 - Early Engagement (Regulation 18) Draft of the Local Plan
- Annex 2 - Site Assessments

Background papers

- [Issues and Options for the Local Plan papers from SHAP - 8 November 2018](#)
- [Minutes from Scrutiny Panel - 20 December 2018](#)
- [Kingston's Core Strategy \(2012\) Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames](#)
- [Kingston's Direction of Travel \(2016\)](#)

- [Statement of Community Involvement \(2007\)](#)
- [The Draft New London Plan \(2017\) Mayor of London](#)
[The Draft New London Plan showing minor suggested changes \(2018\) Mayor of London](#)
- [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)
- [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)
- [Part 4C Community Call In Procedure Rules](#)

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