

## **CABINET**

<b>DATE</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
<b>REPORT OF</b>	Councillor Stewart Swinburn, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	Sharon Wroot, Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Local Plan Review – Scoping and issues
<b>STATUS</b>	Open
<b>FORWARD PLAN REF NO.</b>	Not included on the Forward Plan therefore, to be considered under the General Exception provisions of the Constitution.

### **CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS**

The current Local Plan was adopted in March 2018. The Plan supports the Council's priorities of 'Stronger Economy and Stronger Communities'.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides information on the review of the North East Lincolnshire Local Plan. The Scoping and Issues paper marks the first informal stage in the preparation process and will provide the first opportunity for engagement in the process.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the publication of the Scoping and Issues paper set out in appendix 1.
2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to
  - a. commence the requisite engagement exercise

### **REASONS FOR DECISION**

The Council has a duty to maintain an up-to-date local plan. The National Planning Policy Framework stipulates local plans should be reviewed at least every five years and then updated as necessary. The original decision to commence the review of the adopted 2018 Local Plan was made by Cabinet in June 2020.

An informal decision to pause key elements of the review work was made after the Government published its Planning White Paper in August 2020. This proposed significant and wide-ranging reforms to the planning system, including the process of preparing a local plan and to its form and content.

A further cabinet decision in October 2021 recommended that work on the review be restarted. The publication of the Scoping and Issues paper marks the first stage in that review process.

## 1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

### Local plan review

- 1.1 National Planning Policy Framework required local plans to be reviewed, and where necessary updated, within five years of being adopted. The North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013 to 2032 was adopted in March 2018, so a review should therefore be undertaken by 2023.
- 1.2 The original cabinet decision (June 2020) approved the commencement of work on the local plan review. This decision was made based on evidence provided in the completed Planning Advisory Service toolkit assessment. The decision of the original cabinet report delegated the authority to the Director of Economy and Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to:
  - Approve the commencement of the review of the North East Lincolnshire Local Plan
  - Agree the principles that will guide the review of the Local Plan
  - Approve and commence consultation to determine the full scope of the review
- 1.3 Much of the Local Plan continues to operate effectively and the evidence that supports many of the on-going policies remain up to date. The principles for the review that were originally agreed were as follows:
  - Maintain a single all-encompassing local plan
  - Maintain a pro-growth strategy which supports the council's economic strategy
  - Produce a plan which is viable and deliverable
  - Revise the Plan only where necessary to address the changes to the NPPF or where the need is highlighted in the PAS toolkit
- 1.4 However, since that original cabinet report the Government has proposed more wide-ranging changes to the planning system and National Planning Policy Framework the impact of which will need to be addressed by the local plan review. Whilst it is considered appropriate to continue to follow those principles it is also important to note the areas that now have a greater emphasis, including:
  - An increased emphasis on design quality
  - An increased focus on addressing aspects of climate change
  - A drive to improve the environment through bringing forward biodiversity net gain (as set out in the Environment Bill)
  - A broadening of the timeframe, larger developments now set within a vision looking ahead at least 30years
- 1.5 In line with the Government's planned reforms to the planning system, the local plan review will seek to:
  - Simplify the local plan

- Focus on local priorities
- Not repeat national guidance
- Provide a framework for development which will support the Council's vision for North East Lincolnshire to be a place where people are proud to live, work, invest and visit

## **Consultation and Engagement**

- 1.6 The Government sets out the minimum statutory consultation requirements all local planning authorities must follow when preparing and reviewing a local plan. Councils can carry out additional informal public engagement to this if they wish.
- 1.7 The intention is to carry out an initial informal stage of public engagement to establish the scope of the local plan review and to identify the issues that need addressing, as set out in this report. The publication of this Scoping and Issues stage forms part of this initial stage.
- 1.8 Following on from this the formal statutory stages of the local plan review will commence. This will include the following stages:
- Draft plan – this is the first statutory consultation stage of the review, where the Council will set out its draft revisions to the policies set out in the adopted 2018 Local Plan
  - Submission draft – this statutory consultation stage is the final opportunity to make representations on what the Council considers to be the version of the local plan it would adopt
  - Submission – the Council will submit to the Secretary of State the version of the local plan it would adopt along with any representations received during the submission draft consultation period and the supporting evidence base documents for independent examination
  - Examination – the examination is held in public and run by the appointed Planning Inspector. The timetable for this is set out by the Inspector and he or she may ask for additional information to be provided or prepared. It is their opportunity to clarify any concerns they may have before they provide their recommendations
  - Adoption – subject to any recommendations from the Planning Inspector the revised local plan will be adopted. At this time the current 2018 Local Plan will be superseded
- 1.9 It is anticipated that this work will take around three years to complete with the new updated Local Plan being adopted in 2025.
- 1.10 All the above will be carried out in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out who and how we intend to engage with and by what means.

## **Local Development Scheme**

- 1.11 The Council is required to publish its timetable for the local plan review in a document called the Local Development Scheme. As an initial guide an

indicative timeframe has been set out below

- August 2022: Cabinet paper seeking approval to undertake engagement, which will provide the framework for the review
- Sept 2022: commence engagement
- 2023 to 2024: Draft Local Plan is developed. Two iterative rounds of statutory consultation on the Draft Local Plans.
- Late 2024: Submission to the Secretary of State for formal examination
- Early 2025: New Local Plan adopted

## **2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- 2.1 Restarting the local plan review does present some risks to the Council, particularly the fact that the Government intends to bring forward further changes to the planning system through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and other legislation and policy. Whilst some of the more radical changes aired in the Planning White Paper have been dropped others are still being proposed. These will need to be picked up as part of the local plan review.
- 2.2 There is a degree of uncertainty over the exact scope and timing of the planning reforms. The risk is that the Council could end up preparing a plan that is immediately out of date if it ignores on what the Government intends to introduce.
- 2.3 Due to the uncertainty of both the exact detail and timing of the new legislation assessing the impact of mitigating this risk is difficult. However, much of the work in preparing the local plan review would still be of value, such as maintaining an up-to-date evidence base. Although there may be some work that may need to be revised as the new legislation is established.
- 2.4 There is also a risk that the scope of the review may be expanded beyond what is necessary to address the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. Failure to control these aspects would extend the timeframe for the review process, increasing costs.
- 2.5 Changes to national planning policy will be tracked as part of the local plan risk assessment process to maintain progress on the review.

## **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 3.1 The preparation of the Scoping and Issues paper (Appendix A) marks the initial stage of the local plan review process and represents an informal stage in the preparation process. The content of the paper is designed to highlight those key area that have been identified as needing review and to establish the overall scope of the review. This is considered a valuable first step in the review process and will set the stage for the more formal statutory consultation stages.
- 3.2 No other options were considered.

## **4 REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 There are potential positive and negative reputational implications for the Council resulting from this decision.
- 4.2 An action plan will be agreed with the Council's communications service, covering both the informal public engagement period and formal statutory consultation requirements involved in the local plan review. In addition, it seeks to identify the communication channels to be used to promote and increase awareness of the local plan review.

## **5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1 The costs of preparing the local plan review documents and carrying out the various engagement periods will be funded by EQUANS.
- 5.2 There will be a requirement to update some of the background evidence documents which inform the local plan, the need for which will be defined by the scope of the review. The costs for updating these documents will be shared between the Council and EQUANS.
- 5.3 The costs of the Secretary of State appointed Planning Inspector for the local plan examination will be met by the Council.

## **6 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The local plan includes policies that will affect future development in the Borough. This will therefore have implications on the lives of people living in the area and the opportunities that are available to them.

## **7 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Local Plan includes many policies that have climate and environmental implications. The Government has strengthened the approach to these aspects as part of its changes to the planning system and is introducing new legislation through the Environment Bill. The local plan review will need to address these changes.

## **8 CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY**

- 8.1 The proposed changes identified in the local plan review will be considered by Scrutiny in due course. Due to the wide scope of the Local Plan consultation will be held with all Scrutiny panels throughout the local plan review process.

## **9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications to the Council as a result of this report.

## **10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 As set out in the above report, the Council is required to carry out periodic reviews of the local plan in line with regulatory and policy requirements. The delegations sought are appropriate for the review process to be started.

10.2 The return to Cabinet prior to submission to the secretary of state is prudent and reasonable, as is regular engagement through the scrutiny process in the intervening period.

## **11 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no direct HR implications

## **12 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 All wards are affected.

## **13 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

13.1 Cabinet report of 6 October 2021

(<https://democracy.nelincs.gov.uk/meetings/cabinet-5/>)

13.2 Cabinet report of 10 June 2020

(<https://democracy.nelincs.gov.uk/meetings/cabinet-51/>)

13.3 Statement of Community Involvement (<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/statement-of-community-involvement/>)

13.4 North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013 to 2032, adopted March 2018

(<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/the-local-plan/>)

## **14 CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

Sharon Wroot, Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources, NELC, Tel: 01472 324875.

Mark Nearney, Assistant Director of Housing, Highways, Transportation and Planning, Tel 01472 323105

Ian King, Spatial Planning Manager, EQUANS, Tel 01472 323370

**COUNCILLOR STEWART SWINBURN**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**North East Lincolnshire**

**Local Plan Review**

**Scoping and issues**

23 June 2022

**DRAFT**



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Working in partnership

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## Introduction to the Local Plan review

- 1.0.1** This document forms part of the first phase of work in reviewing and updating the current [North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013 to 2032](#), which was adopted in March 2018. The 2018 Local Plan contains policies to guide development and land use changes in the Borough. It also allocates many sites for housing, employment, and other uses.
- 1.0.2** The 2018 Local Plan is used to determine planning applications and has been applied successfully since its adoption. Whilst it plans for development to 2032, it is important that its capability to respond to changes at national and local levels is monitored and any necessary action is taken to prevent it from becoming out of date and less useful in the consideration of planning applications. Planning legislation and the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) therefore require local plan reviews to be undertaken at least every five years, and then updated as necessary.
- 1.0.3** In line with the Government reforms to the planning process, the local plan review will seek to:
1. simplify the Local Plan
  2. focus on local priorities
  3. not repeat national guidance
  4. provide a framework for development in North East Lincolnshire to be a place where people are proud to live, work, invest and visit
- 1.0.4** The Government sets out the minimum statutory consultation requirements all local planning authorities must follow when preparing and reviewing their local plans. Councils can carry out additional informal public engagement to this if they wish. Further information about the ways in which we hope to carry out this is set out in our [Statement of Community Involvement](#).
- 1.0.5** At the moment the intention is to carry out an initial round of informal engagement, followed by more formal stages of consultation, these are:
1. Scoping and issues (**this stage**) - At this early engagement stage in the local plan review we are setting out what we consider are the main issues that need addressing as part of the review. We are asking you to consider these and to make any suggestions about additional areas you feel need reviewing.
  2. Draft plan (*Regulation 18 - Preparation of a local plan document*) - This is a formal statutory stage of consultation and will be your opportunity to consider our first draft of the updated local plan document and suggest any changes to the draft policies it contains.
  3. Submission draft (*Regulation 19 - Publication of a local plan document*) - This a formal statutory stage of consultation is your final opportunity to comment on what the Council considers to be the version of the local plan it would adopt subject to recommendations received following the examination in public.

What are we seeking your views on at this time?

- 2.0.1** Much has changed since the Local Plan's adoption in 2018. The UK's withdrawal from the European Union at the end of January 2020 coincided with the emergence of Covid-19, and since March 2020 nations have been fighting to control the pandemic. The permanent effects of these events on day-to-day life, our interaction with places and our ways of doing business are beginning to emerge. What this means for land use and spatial planning will be explored through the local plan review and appropriate policy responses will be considered and assessed.
- 2.0.2** Several updates to national planning policy and legislation require a local plan response too. Many of the substantial changes brought about through publication of revised NPPFs in 2018, 2019 and 2021 align with government's objective of building more homes. It is within this context that the [Housing Delivery Test](#) and [Standard Method](#) for calculating housing need were introduced and their implications are discussed at Section 4 'Responding to housing needs'. The review will need to ensure that the Local Plan remains consistent with national planning policy.
- 2.0.3** Government has indicated that it intends to progress further proposals for reforms to the planning system as part of the [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill](#), together with other revisions to legislation and policy. These changes will need to be addressed as the review progresses.
- 2.0.4** Detailed and refined proposals are not presented in this document. Rather, it identifies the areas of the review's initial focus under a number of specific headings (recognising that others may emerge as work progresses), and seeks your contributions and feedback on these matters so that they can be taken into account as our work continues. It is, however, important to recognise that many of the policies are likely to remain principally the same with minor amendments to respond to small changes in the NPPF or reflecting on experience of using the policies over the last few years.

## 2.1 How to provide feedback on this initial paper

- 2.1.1** The easiest way for you to comment is via our web-based Consultation Portal [*insert link to new portal once live*] which allows you to add your comments directly alongside the relevant sections of the online document. This ensures no responses are lost in the post or missed during the manual transfer process associated with email or paper submissions.
- 2.1.2** You will need to create an account in order to submit comments via our consultation portal. This is a one time registration and you can request to be removed from the database at anytime, however any comments you have made will remain in the public domain along with your name and organisation. Once registered you will automatically receive notifications about future planning policy consultations.

- 2.1.3** North East Lincolnshire Council is registered under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the purpose of processing personal data in the performance of its legitimate business.
- 2.1.4** Any information held by the company will be processed in compliance with the principles set out under the GDPR.
- 2.1.5** Due to the statutory nature of planning policy consultations the Council can not treat comments/representation received as confidential. Therefore any comments received will be published on the consultation portal along with your name and organisation. We will not publish you personal contact details or use them for any other purpose than to contact you regarding the preparation of planning policy documents. This includes postal addresses, telephone number(s) and email addresses.
- 2.1.6** Further information about the Council's approach to data protection and the GDPR is available on the Council's website (<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/>)
- 2.1.7** You can download a copy of the response form from the Consultation Portal [insert link] or Council's website [insert link], complete the form and then send it to us via email to: [Spatialplanning@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:Spatialplanning@nelincs.gov.uk).
- 2.1.8** Paper copies of the response forms are available on request from the Planning Department at:
- 2.1.9** EQUANS  
New Oxford House  
2 George Street  
Grimsby  
DN31 1HB
- 2.1.10** These should be returned to the above address and received no later than the closing date shown below.

## Information 1

### Consultation period

The consultation starts on \*\*\*\* and will close at \*\*\* on \*\*\*\*. *DATES TO BE CONFIRMED*

Responses received after this date will not be accepted. However, there will be future rounds of consultation on this emerging Plan, so you will get a chance to make comments at those future stages.

## 2.2 Alternative formats of this document are available

**2.2.1** You can view this scoping paper online via our consultation portal [insert link] or on our website at: [insert link] where you can also download an Adobe PDF version.

**2.2.2** Paper copies are also available to view at the following locations during their normal working hours:

- *locations to be confirmed prior to publication of document*

**2.2.3** You can request a paper copy from the Spatial Planning Team, a charge of £??? will be made to cover the costs of printing, from:

Call for sites



- 3.0.1** As part of this first phase of the local plan review, we are inviting developers, landowners and other interested parties to put forward sites with potential for future development. These sites will inform the development of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) document, the [Brownfield Land Register](#) and potentially site allocations in the revised local plan. The call for sites also presents the opportunity for landowners to identify sites that present opportunities for delivery of biodiversity net gain (BNG). Further information about BNG can be found in Section 6.2 'Biodiversity'.

## Information 2

### **It is important to note that:**

Identifying sites and buildings in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment **does not** guarantee their inclusion in the Local Plan or that planning permission will be granted.

- 3.0.2** Further information about the call for sites is available on the Council's website at: *This is a new webpage address to be confirmed.*

## Issues

## Responding to housing needs

- 4.0.1** The 2018 Local Plan sets a requirement of 512 new homes to be built, on average, per year. The data and evidence that informed this figure is now widely considered to be out of date and is inconsistent with government guidance on calculating housing need. Despite a large number of sites allocated for housing, our data suggests the identified Local Plan requirement is proving difficult to achieve with a net average of only 328 homes built each year since the start of the plan period in 2013.
- 4.0.2** Market issues are not the only reason for this lower than predicted growth rate. Large scale demolition programmes within the Borough, which were not anticipated at the time of the Local Plan's preparation, have significantly impacted the net number of new homes recorded. Residential demolitions are deducted from the number of gross completions which, on average have been around 400 per year. However, even without accounting for demolitions and other housing stock losses, housing delivery rates fall short of the Local Plan predictions. As part of the review, new evidence will need to be prepared and the housing issues carefully explored to meet the latest requirements of the NPPF.

## 4.1 Housing growth

- 4.1.1** Government introduced the national standard method for calculating local housing need in 2018, shortly after the Local Plan's adoption. The calculation sets the minimum number of homes needed within the Borough and is expected to be the starting point for understanding an area's growth needs. Currently (2022), the standard method results in an annual housing need figure of 208. This is based on the 2014-based household projections and the latest affordability ratios as required by the [Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG).
- 4.1.2** It is important to note that the standard method does not build in wider policy or economic predictions, or other factors that might impact on demographic behaviours. The PPG therefore recognises that there may be situations where it is appropriate to consider whether the actual housing need for an area needs to be higher than the standard method indicates.
- 4.1.3** The previous assessment of housing need factored in local economic growth forecasts at the time and generated the substantially higher annual figure in the current Local Plan. North East Lincolnshire Council remains fully supportive of growth and, as part of the review, new evidence will be gathered and analysed in order to understand the latest predictions and explore how they might translate into an aspirational housing requirement figure.
- 4.1.4** The updated Local Plan will need to balance the scale of aspiration with the lower local housing need figure generated by the standard method. It may be appropriate to apply a range to the housing figure. The intention being that the policies and allocations facilitate higher growth (the upper end of the range), but the five year land supply is measured against local housing need (the lower end of the range). A revised

range would continue to provide choice in the housing market whilst being more deliverable than current targets. It could also offer some security should the method for calculating local housing need be substantially revised during the course of the review and result in a higher figure.

### Question 1

#### Housing need and requirement

Is the principle of using a range to identify the housing need and requirement for North East Lincolnshire appropriate?

Please provide an explanation for your answer.

### Question 2

#### Housing requirement

Are there any specific issues that you think should be explored or considered as part of our work to understand whether more housing should be planned for than the amount generated by the standard method?

- 4.1.5** The 2018 Local Plan establishes a spatial strategy that directs most residential development to urban settlements and those higher in the settlement hierarchy, whilst maintaining their independence. Growth of the Borough's rural settlements is much more limited. Presently, there does not seem to be any evidence to suggest that the distribution of development should be fundamentally changed. As such, the strategy focused on growth in sustainable locations with an urban focus is likely to be the retained.

### Question 3

#### Spatial distribution of new housing

Do you agree that the Borough's urban area should remain the focus for new housing?

If not, please explain why and provide details of any alternative proposal that you think should be considered.

## 4.2 Housing mix

- 4.2.1** The NPPF expects local planning authorities to provide a wide choice of homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable mixed communities. To help achieve this, local plans need to reflect the need for different house sizes, types and densities. The accommodation needs of specific groups in the community must also be considered, including the needs of older people and of disabled people, and the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.
- 4.2.2** The Council is bringing together evidence to support the delivery of homes suited to the specific needs of the Borough. This will include the preparation of new a Housing Market Assessment which will update the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) completed in 2013. The information will be used to assess whether the flexibility in the current Local Plan under Policy 15 (Housing Mix) should be revised to include more specific detail on the type and tenure of housing needed.

### Question 4

#### Housing Mix

Are there any issues that you think should be considered as part of the review of the policy on the mix of new housing?

## 4.3 Affordable housing

- 4.3.1** The 2018 Local Plan requires developments of a certain size and in particular locations to make affordable housing contributions. The policy is generally working well with most schemes delivering affordable housing at the rate it sets out.
- 4.3.2** Whilst the need for affordable housing within the Borough remains acute, at the moment there is no expectation that Policy 18 will be significantly amended. However, as the evidence is updated there may be a need to consider adjusting the thresholds for when affordable housing is sought or the scale of provision that is required.
- 4.3.3** We recognise that increasing the provision of affordable homes through development of market housing can only be achieved if the approach is financially viable. Our assessments of the latest viability and housing need evidence will establish whether the thresholds and proportions should or could be amended. This will take into account other infrastructure that schemes must fund or contribute to, and any changes to development costs that also impact on these considerations.

## Question 5

### Affordable Housing

Planning policy will only meet a proportion of affordable housing need. Do you think the Local Plan can do more to increase the delivery of affordable housing through other approaches?

If yes, please explain your answer.

**4.3.4** Our refreshed evidence will also need to consider the implications of [First Homes](#), the new type of home for affordable home ownership, introduced by Government in May 2021. It is a mechanism designed to allow people, particularly key workers, to get on the housing ladder in their local area. The PPG stipulates that at least 25% of all affordable housing delivered through developer contributions are First Homes. Essentially, they are:

- discounted in perpetuity by a minimum of 30% against market value, with 40% or 50% discount set through local plans where there is evidence to do so
- no more than £250,000 after the discount has been applied
- sold to a person meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria, including a household income not exceeding £80,000
- secured through Section 106 agreement to ensure their delivery and restrictions on title

**4.3.5** Delivering First Homes in North East Lincolnshire in accordance with the PPG is likely to result in some trade-offs between making them attractive and affordable to purchase and being able to offer a wider range of affordable tenures. The PPG does, however, grant local authorities the opportunity for some deviation where there is evidence to do so. The Council is committed to fully exploring the issues as the evidence is brought together and will pursue an approach that best suits the needs within the Borough.

## Question 6

### First Homes

Whilst the evidence will guide our approach. Are there any further specific aspects that you think the Local Plan should address in respect to First Homes?

Please provide an explanation.

## 4.4 Self-build housing

- 4.4.1** Self-build and custom housebuilding forms part of Government's agenda to increase the supply of housing and is intended to give more people the opportunity to build their own homes.
- 4.4.2** The [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#) (as amended by the [Housing and Planning Act 2016](#)) ('The Self-build Act') provides the legal definition of self and custom housebuilding. It is defined as the building or completion by individuals, an association of individuals or persons working with or for individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. In summary, the Self-build Act also:
- requires the Council to maintain a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the Borough for their own self-builds and custom housebuilding
  - places a duty on the Council to have regard to the register when carrying out their planning function and in terms of plan-making
  - places a further duty on the Council to grant planning permission for enough suitable plots of land in the Borough to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding
- 4.4.3** The NPPF also promotes self and custom build properties. It recognises the contribution that smaller sites can make to overall housing delivery and encourages Councils to work with developers to sub-divide larger plots. However, neither legislation or the NPPF requires proposals for self and custom build applications to be treated differently to applications for housing in general. Schemes are expected to comply with general housing policies in the Local Plan, for example the expectation that new housing development is to be located within the defined development boundaries.
- 4.4.4** The 2018 Local Plan includes a policy on self and custom build (Policy 20). It gives general support to this form of housing and specifically requires strategic sites to provide self and custom build options on one percent of all residential plots. Through the local plan review, the Council will consider whether an alternative or enhanced approach should be pursued. This could, for example, include a threshold for when self and custom build serviced plots are sought on non-strategic sites.

### Question 7

#### Self and Custom Housebuilding

Do you think the Local Plan should do more to support the provision of self and custom build opportunities?



Please provide an explanation for your answer.

## 4.5 Gypsy and Travellers

- 4.5.1** The Local Plan under Policy 21 sets out a policy approach to meet the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers based upon an assessment undertaken in 2014 (North East Lincolnshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment). This identified that the need for permanent facilities could be met at the site at Habrough. At the time there was also identified a need to address transient need of groups who pass through the Borough. The policy therefore included a requirement for the Council to identify, deliver and maintain provision of a designated stopover site. The Council has however, despite attempts to identify a site, not delivered a stopover site.
- 4.5.2** An update to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was undertaken in 2021. This confirmed that there was no additional need for permanent pitches. It went on to identify that due to low historic numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the existence of private transit pitches, there is no current need for a formal public transit site. It was recommended that in the short-term the Council should continue to use its current approach when dealing with unauthorised encampments, and management-based approaches such as negotiated stopping agreements could also be considered.
- 4.5.3** The term '[negotiated stopping](#)' is used to describe agreed short-term provision for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It does not describe permanent 'built' transit sites but negotiated agreements which allow caravans to be sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. Agreements are made between the Council and the (temporary) residents regarding expectations on both sides.
- 4.5.4** Temporary stopping places can be made available at times of increased demand due to fairs or cultural celebrations that are attended by Gypsies and Travellers. A charge may be levied as determined by the local authority although they only need to provide basic facilities including: a cold-water supply; portable toilets; sewerage disposal point and refuse disposal facilities.

### Statement 1

#### Gypsies and Travellers

The Council will amend the Local Plans approach to align with the updated assessment recommendation.

## 4.6 Housing standards

- 4.6.1** The Council is keen to ensure that all new homes maximise their technical functionality. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) allows local planning authorities to set technical housing standards which exceed the minimum required by Building Regulations in respect of access, water efficiency, and internal space. In each case evidence is required to justify inclusion of a technical standards policy in a Local plan.
- 4.6.2** Policy 34 of the 2018 Local Plan currently requires proposals to demonstrate higher water efficiency standards. Through the review the Council is keen to understand if the approach could be widened to incorporate the access and internal space standards to address the needs of the wider community. The viability implications of introducing such measures will be fully explored and balanced against the likely evidence of the 'need' to introduce the optional standard.

### Question 8

#### **Housing standards - accessibility**

Do you think the Local Plan should introduce standards related to higher accessibility and internal space measurements?

Please provide reasons for your answer.

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## Reflecting on future employment growth

- 5.0.1** Over the past ten years economic performance in terms of GVA has grown by 16.5% to £3.1billion (ONS by GVA local authority) The number of jobs however, has not increased as was anticipated. In 2019 the number of jobs stood at 66,000 a drop from 67,000 in 2015 ([ONS Business register and employment survey](#)).
- 5.0.2** In addition, 2020 to 2021 has brought further challenges with the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit and associated economic uncertainties. There are however, future opportunities presented by the Freeport proposals, the transition to a low carbon economy and the underlying strength of key employment sectors that point to a stronger economic outlook.
- 5.0.3** The local plan review will examine the evidence of economic performance looking forward, address the the current challenges and seek to maximise the opportunities for existing and new businesses.

## 5.1 Infrastructure

- 5.1.1** North East Lincolnshire has in the most part been a stable and resilient economy shaped by its connection to the North Sea, ports and connecting infrastructure. To develop further, development of the supporting infrastructure is key. In recent years the area has seen some significant transport improvements, including; the dualling of the A160 link from the A180 to the port of Immingham, the construction of a link road from the A180 Stallingborough interchange to the A1136, the construction of the South Humber Bank Link Road connection Hobson Way to the Pyewipe industrial estates, and improvements along the route of the A18. These improvements have opened up land for development, facilitated increased investment and offset the impacts on the existing network.
- 5.1.2** The Freeport proposals come with the potential for around £15million of additional seed capital investment to support future economic growth. It is important that this funding is directed to where it will provide the maximum benefit.
- 5.1.3** The Local Plan must also consider how it can support the full scope of infrastructure provision including health, education and support the transition to a low carbon economy.

### Question 9

#### Infrastructure

Are there key infrastructure improvements that the local plan review should relate to or safeguard land to deliver?

If so, please specify what.

## 5.2 Sectors

**5.2.1** North East Lincolnshire is home to 4,800 businesses ([ONS Department of Business Register 2021](#)) including major international companies such as Young's, Associated British Ports, Siemens, Myenergi and Orsted. The business environment is made up of seven priority sectors based on specialisms, key strengths, employment concentrations and numbers in employment, these are:

- ports and logistics
- renewable energy
- chemical processing
- construction
- food processing and manufacturing
- health and care
- visitor economy, service and retail

**5.2.2** In addition advanced manufacturing has seen employment growing by around 50% over the past ten years.

**5.2.3** The land allocations set out in the Local Plan support these sectors and accommodate future growth. It is not anticipated that the employment land allocations will be significantly revised as part of the local plan review, however, changes to the [Use Classes Order](#) introduced in 2020 will need to be addressed.

### Question 10

#### Employment land allocations

Do you agree that the employment land allocations set out in the Local Plan should in principle be retained?

If not, please provide an explanation for your answer.

## 5.3 Freeports

**5.3.1** In March 2021, it was announced that the Humber was to gain Freeport status, one of eight locations across the country. The success of the bid is considered to offer transformational benefits for the local economy.

**5.3.2** The [Humber Freeport](#) proposal includes a package of tax sites, custom sites and seed capital sites across the four Humber local authority areas. The tax sites located in Goole, Hull and at the marine energy park site at Killingholme provide tax incentives

including an enhanced [Structures and Buildings Allowance](#), [enhanced Capital Allowance](#) (ECA), [Stamp Duty Land Tax](#) (SDLT) relief and full [Business Rates relief](#) as well as a possible employer National Insurance Contribution (NIC) relief for employees. The custom sites, which includes sites in Immingham and Grimsby provide benefits from the deferral of duty, and import tax, until goods are exported from the customs zone. In addition there is scope to move goods between other custom zones.

- 5.3.3** The sites included In the [South Humber Industrial Investment Programme](#) (SHIIP) at Stallingborough have been identified as seed capital sites supported by a possible £15million investment package.
- 5.3.4** The measures introduced as part of the Humber Freeport proposals are expected to see growth of existing businesses together with attracting new businesses who will benefit from the freeport status.
- 5.3.5** As the Freeport proposals progress there may be land use implications which the local plan review will need to respond to.

## 5.4 Skills

- 5.4.1** In January 2021, the Government published the [Skills White Paper, Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth](#). Locally there are two main aspects to the skills challenge:
  - new technologies are bringing highly skilled job opportunities, but they are not matched to the local talent pool
  - North East Lincolnshire has high levels of multiple deprivation, linked to a history of earning rather than learning, this presents barriers to gaining qualifications, skills and capabilities to take up the training and employment opportunities.
- 5.4.2** There is a need to focus on an 'all ages approach' rather than a traditional focus on young people. The establishment of new, and expansion of existing facilities including [Grimsby Institute](#), [CATCH](#), [HETA](#) and the [Modal Training](#) facilities at Grimsby, Stallingborough and Immingham have supported the skills challenge but there is a need to do more.
- 5.4.3** The Freeport initiative also has a strong focus on the development of skills and is working closely with skills training providers. The Local Plan will look to support this work and address the local challenges.

### Question 11

#### Skills

Are there any further specific approaches which the local plan review can progress which would support the skills agenda?

If so please expand upon your answer.



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## Responding to the climate emergency

- 6.0.1** North East Lincolnshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, confirming its ambition to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero by 2050, while also bringing new jobs to the local area. Following the declaration, the Council undertook an in-depth review of current policies, procedures and activity, setting out an approach to reduce the council's own carbon emissions as well as contributing to mitigation work and reduction of carbon emissions across North East Lincolnshire. This work was further expanded to ensure equal attention is given to the ecological impact of climate change and longer-term threat to biodiversity. This looked closely at the international direction set by the UN sustainable development goals, as well as government direction set out in the [25-year Environment Plan](#), the [Agricultural Act 2020](#), and the [Environment Act 2021](#).
- 6.0.2** The Council has recently developed a [Carbon Roadmap](#) which considers the national picture whilst taking account of the needs of the local area through consideration of the latest public survey results. It sets out an approach and commitment to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2040, and supports the wider Borough to follow the same path by 2050.
- 6.0.3** Alongside the Carbon Roadmap, a [Natural Assets Plan](#) has been prepared which sets out eight areas of focus to deliver protection and improvements to nature and wildlife in the Borough and ensure the Council complies with new legal requirements and government targets. The Plan further supports the Carbon Roadmap by seeking to create and restore biodiverse habitats to lock up carbon as well as provide nature solutions to adapt to climate change.
- 6.0.4** The local plan review will look to strengthen the policies set out in the 2018 Local Plan to support these approaches and respond positively to the climate emergency. This will include measures to support the drive to a low carbon economy, implementing measures to require developments to achieve a 'biodiversity net gain' and support measures to mitigate future flood risk.

## Question 12

### Responding to the climate emergency

Are there any further specific revisions to local plan that you consider should be made to address these matters?

If so please set them out and provide an explanation for your answer.

## 6.1 Flood risk

- 6.1.1** The 2018 Local Plan acknowledged flood risk as a key concern during its preparation. Specifically, no standalone greenfield sites which were known to be at risk from flooding at the time were allocated for housing development, and those brownfield sites at risk from flooding are required by policy to minimise the flood risk impacts and mitigate against likely effects to ensure the development is safe.
- 6.1.2** The evidence relating to flood risk is however, continuing to be updated and approaches to responding to the increasing flood risk as a consequence of climate change are under review. A new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment *website to be update with this link to be added once complete* has been produced working jointly with North Lincolnshire Council, and a new flood risk strategy for the Humber Catchment Area is in preparation. This looks forward to 2100+ when the climate change predictions bring increasing challenges.
- 6.1.3** Humber 2100+ is a partnership consisting of 12 local authorities from around the Humber and the Environment Agency. The partnership is working together, in association with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Natural England and Internal Drainage Boards, to develop a strategy that will reinforce the long term ambition for a prosperous Humber with a world class economy and a world class environment, which is a safe and sustainable place to live, work and visit.
- 6.1.4** The local plan review will need to respond to these challenges, and track the development of the [Humber 2100+ strategy](#). This may require different approaches to sustainable drainage approaches, revisions to flood defence infrastructure or possibly revisions to land use proposals.

## 6.2 Biodiversity

- 6.2.1** The Environment Act 2021 implements the Government's ambitions for improving the natural environment, which were previously set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan (2018). These ambitions have now formed the basis of statutory or legal requirements which mandate action, under the oversight of the newly formed [Office for Environmental Protection](#) ( OEP).
- 6.2.2** While the Environment Act is now part of UK law, its required actions do not commence either directly or immediately, or at least not all actions for all parties. There remain a range of preparatory actions that need to be undertaken before further implementation of the wider legal framework (secondary legislation or regulations) will take place.
- 6.2.3** Part 6 of the Environment Act importantly makes provision for mandatory biodiversity net gain in planning which will apply to applications under the Town and Countryside Act and the [Planning Act](#) once appropriate regulations have been amended. In simple

terms biodiversity net gain is an approach which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. From a development perspective this means there should be an improvement to the natural environment of a site after development from that which existed before.

**6.2.4** Under the requirements of the Environment Act developers will need to ensure a minimum ten percent net gain in the biodiversity value of the site is achieved after development. Developers must seek to achieve this on site but if this is not possible they can secure this by purchasing credits in a site where the biodiversity net gain has or will be achieved. Landholders will be able to record land on a national register that will serve this purpose. The Council is keen, through the local plan review, to set out a mechanism to achieve an increase in biodiversity locally. To this aim landowners can identify sites that can serve as biodiversity net gain sites. A section has therefore been included on the Call for Sites *include link to new webpage* which specifically related to the identification of possible biodiversity net gain sites.

**6.2.5** In addition, the responsibilities on Government or public bodies have changed, including through:

- strengthening the existing biodiversity duty
- requiring biodiversity reports
- setting up local nature recovery strategy areas
- providing for national habitat mapping, and
- establishing species conservation and protect site strategies

### Question 13

#### **Biodiversity**

Are there any further specific approaches or measures that should be incorporated in the local plan to improve the natural environment?

If so, please set them out and provide an explanation for your answer.

## 6.3 Health and wellbeing

**6.3.1** The importance of health and wellbeing is a topic that has risen in importance and significance as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Wellbeing is defined as the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy. What is important to people in terms of their local environment and the way they live their lives has changed.

**6.3.2** There is a need to recognise that wellbeing is about having a balance of a number of key elements:

1. physical - This includes lifestyle choices that affect the functioning of our bodies. What we eat and how active we are will affect our physical wellbeing
2. emotional or psychological - This is our ability to cope with everyday life and reflects how we think and feel about ourselves
3. social. - This is the extent that we feel a sense of belonging and social inclusion. The way we communicate with others, our relationships, values, beliefs, lifestyles and traditions are all important factors of social wellbeing
4. spiritual. - This is the ability to experience and integrate meaning and purpose in life. Achieved through being connected to our inner self, to nature or even a greater power
5. intellectual - It is important to gain and maintain intellectual wellness as it helps us to expand our knowledge and skills in order to live an enjoyable and successful life
6. economic - Economic wellness, in short, is our ability to meet our basic needs and feel a sense of security

**6.3.3** It is important that from the perspective of the Local Plan that the heightened awareness of wellbeing and the changing balance of what is important to people is acknowledged given to whether policy approaches need to be adjusted.

### Question 14

#### Health and Wellbeing

Given the heightened importance of wellbeing, are there any specific approaches that the local plan review should consider?

If so please could you expand on your answer.

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## Reflecting on town centre changes



- 7.0.1** Pressures faced by town centres evident before the Covid-19 pandemic have been heightened during it. Recent updates to the [Use Classes Order](#) and National Planning Policy have increased the flexibility of change of use as a response to these pressures.
- 7.0.2** The Council has secured £17million funding through the [High Streets Fund](#) to support the town centre. The money will help completely transform part of Grimsby town centre for a cinema, market hall shops and restaurant which would breathe new life into the Top Town area of Grimsby.
- 7.0.3** The cinema is earmarked for where the present market hall now stands and some existing buildings would make way for new developments as part of the transformation.
- 7.0.4** These proposals support the changing role of the town centre from a dominantly retail function to a more mixed and varied environment featuring a greater leisure experience combined with, retail, service and housing elements. In addition, the plans which are advancing, for the [Grimsby Youth Zone](#) occupying the site off Garth Lane will broaden the character and attraction of the town centre
- 7.0.5** Central to the changing role of the town centre is the quality of the environment. The recent £1.5million improvement to St James Square and works to St James House together with the new River Freshney pedestrian bridge crossing, forthcoming proposals for Riverhead Square, and further connectivity works as part of the Grimsby Town Deal are all addressing this aspect.
- 7.0.6** The town centres of Cleethorpes and Immingham have also experienced challenges although to a lesser degree than Grimsby, being less dependent on national retail outlets. The [Cleethorpes Masterplan](#) (Hemingway Design 2022) incorporates a range of concept ideas, focused on the next 10 years, and shows how Cleethorpes could change to appeal more to people living in the resort, and those visiting with development opportunities and visitor attraction at its heart.
- 7.0.7** Although the Masterplan covers concept ideas and options for development, the projects aren't set in stone. This is a framework with identified projects that will help Cleethorpes become more attractive to a wider population, alongside recommendations for infrastructure development to support the projects.
- 7.0.8** Revisions to the town centre local plan policies will need to be made to address the changes to the Use Classes Order and the changing emphasis set out in the NPPF, and support local measures to support the town centres.

### Question 15

#### **Town centres**

Given the changing nature of town centres and the future challenges are there and further specific revisions that should be made?

If yes, please expand upon your answer.

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## Improving on the quality of design

- 8.0.1** Government has increased promotion of good design through the [National Design Guide](#) and [National Model Design Code](#), published in January 2021. Updates to the NPPF then followed, which stress the importance of design in making high quality places, and highlights the importance of responding to local character. The NPPF strongly encourages the use of plans, design policy, guidance and codes, to provide clarity on local design expectations.
- 8.0.2** The current intention is to strengthen the existing local plan design policy to reflect the changes to the NPPF and to develop further design guidance focused on delivering 'beautiful' and 'sustainable' places.
- 8.0.3** In accordance with the NPPF the Local Plan will make it clear that development which is not well designed should be refused, particularly where this fails to reflect local design policies and Government guidance.

### Question 16

#### Quality of design

Do you consider the approach to address design quality is appropriate?

If not, Please explain your answer.

Next steps

**9.0.1** As stated earlier this is the initial stage of the local plan review and at the end of this first round of informal public engagement all the responses received will be carefully considered and will inform how the review proceeds. Additional background information, also known as evidence, will be gathered or commissioned, where necessary, and a 'Draft plan' will be prepared.

**9.0.2** This will mark the start of the formal statutory stages of the local plan review, and will include the following:

1. Draft plan (*Regulation 18 - Preparation of a local plan document*) - This formal statutory stage of consultation and will be your opportunity to consider an initial draft local plan document and suggest any changes to the draft policies it contains.
2. Submission draft (*Regulation 19 - Publication of a local plan document*) - This formal statutory stage of consultation is your final opportunity to comment on what the Council considers to be the version of the local plan it would adopt subject to recommendations received following the examination in public.
3. Submission (*Regulation 22 - Submission of a local plan to the Secretary of State*) - The Council will submit the Submission draft document, along with any representations received during the final round of consultation and the evidence base documents to the Secretary of State for public examination by an independently appointed Planning Inspector.
4. Examination (*Regulation 24 - Independent examination*) - The examination is run by the appointed Planning Inspector, he or she will may ask for additional information from anyone who has made a representation.
5. Adoption (*Regulation 26 - Adoption*) - Following the examination the Council will adopt the revised local plan, subject to any recommendations by the Planning Inspector, at which time the current 2018 Local Plan will be superseded.

**9.0.3** Full details of the anticipated timescales for these future stages of the local plan review will be set out in an updated [Local Development Scheme](#). This will be prepared following this initial informal engagement, once we have considered any additional issues raised and assessed the amount of work required to update the Plan.

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