

Gedling Borough Council Local Planning Document
Opening Statement by Council
7 February 2017

The following statement will be delivered by the Council at the opening of the Hearing when the Inspector requests it.

Good Morning,

On behalf of Gedling Borough Council I would like to welcome all participants to this independent Examination into our Local Plan.

My name is Jenny Hollingsworth and I am the Portfolio Holder responsible for Growth and Regeneration.

The purpose of this opening statement is to provide a very brief overview of the Council's Local Plan and to set the scene for the examination hearing sessions that will take place over three weeks. I will also introduce the planning policy team members who will be leading on the subsequent matters.

To provide some **context**, Gedling Borough is a mix of urban and rural areas with around 113,500 residents of which around 80% live within the suburbs of Arnold and Carlton. Part of the north west of the Borough adjoins Hucknall which is located outside the Borough in Ashfield District. Other significant settlements within the Borough include Bestwood Village, Calverton and Ravenshead which have good accessibility to a range of services and facilities and as such are identified as key settlements. Other villages in the Borough include Burton Joyce, Lambley, Linby, Newstead, Papplewick, Stoke Bardolph and Woodborough.

The Local Plan is a key document for the Council and its partners, setting out the spatial dimensions of our work. For Gedling Borough the Local Plan will comprise the **Local Plan Part 1: The Gedling Borough Aligned Core Strategy** (adopted September 2014) and, on adoption the **Local Plan Part 2: the Local Planning Document**. This examination is to consider the Part 2 Local Plan which considers non-strategic sites and detailed policies for development management.

The Council believes it has submitted a Local Plan which is '**sound**'. We have set out in our response to the Inspector's legal compliance questions that we consider that the Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the legal and procedural requirements, including those relating to publicity and public engagement.

The Local Plan has been subject to **extensive consultation** and people have had a number of opportunities to have their say. The Council has undertaken masterplanning work for Bestwood Village, Calverton and Ravenshead; and held topic based workshop sessions and site based workshop sessions for Burton Joyce, Lambley and Woodborough. The Council has continued to work

closely with the **Duty to Cooperate** bodies and has an excellent track record of co-operation with other Greater Nottingham and adjoining authorities. All comments and views have been used to inform and shape the Local Planning Document as it evolved.

We consider that the Local Plan is consistent with a range of other plans at the national and local level, including the Government's National Planning Policy Framework and guidance notes; and the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy. We also consider that the Local Plan is based on robust local evidence and has been subject to a continuous **Sustainability Appraisal**.

In terms of the **Habitats Regulations Assessment** a review has been undertaken of the proposed allocations and confirmed that there are no significant effects to the prospective Special Protection Area.

An **Equality Impact Assessment** has also been undertaken with consideration of policies and their relevance to characteristics protected by the Equality Act and changes have been made to policy where appropriate.

Part 1 of the Local Plan, the Aligned Core Strategy was prepared in partnership with other Councils in Greater Nottingham who have worked together to produce an aligned set of policies and principles on how the areas can develop up to 2028.

The Aligned Core Strategy defined **the spatial vision** for the area and included a number of objectives to achieve the vision and sets out the development strategy to meet these objectives. It also indicates the number of new homes to meet the objectively assessed needs of the Council is 7,250 which are required to be built by 2028. Sufficient sites are allocated in the Local Planning Document to meet the objectively assessed housing needs of the Borough to 2028 and the strategy has sought to maximise the development of brownfield sites and over 75% of the housing provision is met within or adjoining the urban area.

The importance of **sustainable development** is recognised through the strategy of urban concentration and regeneration and thus ensuring the optimum use of existing infrastructure and reflects the need for regeneration in parts of the built up area where opportunities to reuse brownfield sites such as Gedling Colliery/Chase Farm are maximised.

Policy in the **Homes chapter** is intended to secure an appropriate mix of housing taking into account housing need and demographic mix in the local area. The Local Planning Document allocates non-strategic sites on the edge of the main built up area of Nottingham, the edge of Hucknall and in and around the more sustainable key settlements of Bestwood Village, Calverton and Ravenshead. Allocations to provide for local needs which may include smaller housing units or specialist housing for the elderly are made within the other villages.

The Local Plan will directly support **economic development** by providing new homes which will help support the future labour force needed to sustain the local economy. The Council will seek to negotiate local labour agreements for major developments. New office, commercial, industrial and residential space will be provided with the Sustainable Urban Extensions at Top Wighay Farm and Teal Close and the document will seek to maximise the potential of the Gedling Colliery/Chase Farm site for a mix of uses, including residential and employment.

Designated employment areas are protected and a more flexible approach will be taken to the types of employment uses that can be accommodated. Policies also address working from home and guide the development of live/workunits.

New Retail and town centre uses will be directed to the identified shopping centres and policy seeks to ensure a vibrant mix of town centre uses while protecting the core retail function. Leisure uses that cannot be accommodated in centres will be directed to sustainable locations. Provision is also made for community facilities to be located in accessible locations and where they are re-located it is to a place that is convenient.

The **site selection process** for allocating land for development has taken into account impact on heritage and landscape and sought to avoid development in these locations. Policy on design seeks to ensure that development respects local character and policy on landscape and visual impact requires development to be responsive to landscape character.

Policies require new development to be designed to encourage walking and cycling through the layout and design of development and the provision of safe routes encouraging natural surveillance. The **new Gedling Country Park** is a major recreational facility with a proposed visitor centre that will serve the south of the Borough in addition to the other country parks that are already well used. Policies also promote the Sherwood Forest Regional Park, the Greenwood Community Forest and Trent River Park. Land is safeguarded for the transport schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan and regard will be given to opportunities for longer term transport aspirations including the possible new River Trent crossing.

The Local Plan is underpinned by the **Infrastructure Delivery Plan** which is an evolving document that identifies the necessary infrastructure requirements to support the level of development planned for in the Borough to 2028 and sets out how it can be delivered. Contributions will be sought from developers towards the need for educational and health provision as well as open space and other facilities arising from new development. The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy in October 2015 and the projects to be funded include infrastructure to support housing and economic growth.

The Local Plan is supported by a robust and extensive evidence base to justify the policies put forward for examination. In particular we have sought

to ensure that our decision making process is clear and transparent, in particular in relation to the identification of sites for development.

This **Examination** represents an opportunity for us to explain the reasoning that has gone into shaping the strategy. Over the scheduled sessions the Examination will explore the strategy in depth, and each day will bring a focus on different elements of the plan.

Whilst inevitably we will get into points of detail during the Examination it is hoped that the Inspector and participants keep in mind the overall vision and strategy for the Borough that the Local Plan provides, set within the context of a pro growth Borough. Work will not stop on adoption of the Local Plan and we will continue to work closely with developers and landowners to ensure that the sites identified for development will come forward as intended.

In conclusion, it is our view that the Local Plan addresses the key planning issues in Gedling Borough and sets out a clear and locally distinctive Spatial Vision for the future development of the Borough. With the Local Plan in place the Council will be able to provide certainty for investors, co-ordinate the delivery of infrastructure and seek funding to support infrastructure and growth. This will enable the Council to deliver on its strategic objectives by the timely delivery of new homes, encouraging economic growth and supporting regeneration. The Council is firmly of the view that it has submitted a 'sound' Local Plan and welcomes the independent examination of the document.

The team representing this Council look forward to the discussion generated in the hearing sessions.

May I take this opportunity to introduce the team:-

- Alison Gibson and Joanna Gray – Service Managers (Planning Policy)
- Graeme Foster – Principal Planning Officer
- Ian McDonald – Planning Officer
- Seb Wilkins – Planning Officer
- Supported by
 - Melanie Downing and Stephen Seaton