

North York Moors National Park Authority

25 March 2019

Publication of the Draft Local Plan for the National Park

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To request Members' approval for the publication of the 'pre-submission' draft Local Plan.
- 1.2 To delegate authority to the Director of Planning to make any changes as required to rectify any errors and make minor changes to improve the plan prior to publication under Regulation 19 of 2012 the Local Plan Regulations.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Director of Planning to submit the draft Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate following a six week consultation period.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This report asks Members to approve the draft Local Plan for the next round of consultation (**Appendix 1**).
- 2.2 This draft is the 'publication' or 'pre-submission' version of the Local Plan. It will be published according to Regulation 19 of the 2012 Town and Country (Local Planning) Regulations. A six week consultation period will then commence. The purpose of this stage is to collect representations for the forthcoming independent examination. The Authority is seeking comments on whether the plan is 'sound' as defined by the National Planning Framework i.e. positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- 2.3 Officers presented a draft of the 'Preferred Options' version of the Plan to Planning Committee on 19 July 2018. Following public consultation, a summary of responses was presented to the same committee on 13 December 2018. This is attached again at **Appendix 3**. The plan has been modified in light of these comments, and also following comments from Members of the Development Plan Working Group which met on 13 February.
- 2.4 Members of the Authority should note that this version (if approved) is the final draft and cannot be amended by the Authority except in response to a modification suggested by the Local Plan independent Inspector.
- 2.5 Changes have mainly been made to respond to consultation feedback. This showed general support for much of the Plan; however developers and estates considered draft policies to be too restrictive in respect of housing, employment and tourism development. Officers received a consistent message from both consultation responses and at public drop in sessions that residents and businesses are concerned with the long term viability of villages, given the closure of facilities, the increase in second home ownership, an ageing population and the lack of job and housing opportunities for younger people. There was also opposition from landowners to the designation of many individual 'Visually Important Spaces.'

3. **Main Suggested Changes**

3.1 A schedule of main changes to the Preferred Options version is included at **Appendix 2**. This includes a summary of the 'headline' changes. In brief:

- Easington is now named a 'Larger Village' (Strategic Policy A);
- The proposed 'infill' housing policy definition (an evolution of existing policy) is replaced with a wider policy definition relating to 'suitable sites', aimed at providing further opportunities for new housing in villages where they are '*well related to the form and grain of the existing surrounding residential development*' (Paragraph 7.28)
- Linked to this, deletion of individual Visually Important Spaces site designations and replacement with a new criteria-based policy protecting 'Important Undeveloped Spaces' (Policy ENV14);
- Up to five dwellings on 'suitable sites' could now be permitted in Larger Villages, it was previously two on infill sites (Policy CO7);
- Policies UE1 and UE2 on tourism development have been amalgamated and now allow a circumstance where a business may be on site or in close proximity to a site and can be used to manage accommodation. Previously the Preferred Options policy required a residential unit on site. There were also comments that some glamping style units may be larger than 25 sq.m. and be connected to the mains drainage system which the Preferred Options policy precluded. The policy now directs that where the scheme is a 'more permanent' glamping type development it would be assessed under the former Cabins and Chalet policy criteria.
- A new policy on the development of existing tourism and recreational businesses is included (Policy UE2);
- Policy UE3 now includes safeguards to make sure that local amenity and safety is protected when an existing holiday cottage is changed to a residential dwelling subject to a local connection restriction. Current policy only allows for change of use to a local occupancy dwelling for let;
- There is a new policy on shopfronts (Policy ENV13).

4. **Next Steps**

4.1 The plan will be published at the earliest opportunity, this is likely to be one week after this committee (1 April). Following the a statutory six week period of consultation the draft Plan, and all comments made will be submitted to the Government. From this point the timetable is out of the Authority's hands, however allowing for a conclusion of school holidays and assuming no delays in appointing an Inspector we expect the Examination in Public to take place in mid-September, with final adoption of the Plan in late February 2020.

5. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

5.1 None at present. Work has been carried out in house within existing budgets. The completion of the Local Plan process will allow transfer of staff resource to other priorities.

6. **Contribution to National Park Management Plan**

6.1 An up to date Local Plan supports several of the priorities set out in the Management Plan and sets a framework for ensuring that the objectives can be delivered.

7. **Legal Implications**

7.1 None at present

8. **Recommendation**

8.1 That Members approve the draft plan for publication subject to any changes proposed.

8.2 That Members delegate authority to the Director of Planning to make any changes as required to rectify any errors and make minor changes to improve the plan prior to publication under Regulation 19 of 2012 the Local Plan Regulations.

8.3 That Members delegate authority to the Director of Planning to submit the draft Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate following the six week consultation period.

Contact Officer:

Paul Fellows

Head of Strategic Policy

Tel No 01439 772700

Appendices: **Appendix 1** - Pre-submission Draft Local Plan.

Appendix 2 - Schedule of Suggested Main Changes to the Preferred Options.

Appendix 3 - Summary of Main Responses.