

SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Report of: South East Lincolnshire Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager

To: South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (the Joint Committee)

(Author: Chris Holliday, South East Lincolnshire Deputy Joint Policy Unit Manager)

Subject: Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (Consultation) Publication Stage

Purpose: To consider the tests of soundness relating to the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan

Recommendation:

That Members consider that the preparation of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan meets the tests of soundness.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As Members may know the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee have been preparing a Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire. This preparation has now reached the statutory public consultation stage known as the Publication stage. This is the stage prior to submission to the Secretary of State and the stage at which the 'tests of soundness' are considered.
- 1.2 The South East Lincolnshire Joint Committee have been asked to formally respond to the consultation particularly with regard to the Duty to Cooperate element of the tests of soundness.
- 1.3 As the closing date of the Statutory Consultation was the 26th of May officers of this Joint Policy Unit have responded as an officer response and this report seeks to ratify that response (as per the Recommendation).

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP) has used economic forecasting and expected job growth over the plan period (2012-36) to identify the Objectively Assessed Need for Dwellings. Using economic growth forecasting is one of several modelling approaches that can be used to assess housing need. The total number of new dwellings identified is 36,960 (@ 1,540 per annum). The focus for the majority of the growth is the Lincoln Strategy Area (64%), Gainsborough and Sleaford accommodating 12% each and the remaining 12% shared throughout the lower order settlements described as Market Towns, Large Villages, Medium Villages, Small Villages and Countryside.
- 2.2 Officers of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Policy Unit have had meetings and exchanged emails with officers of the CLLP policy team with regard to the growth proposals, in particular, and Duty to Cooperate issues in general. The policies and proposals within the CLLP are expected to deliver the forecasted economic growth and housing need entirely within that Plan Area without reliance upon neighbouring areas

meeting any of the housing needs. The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP) has similarly been prepared with the expectation that it would meet its housing needs entirely within its own Plan Area. There are no proposals within either the SELLP or CLLP that require infrastructure (e.g. new highways or significant infrastructure improvement) linking the Plan Areas and upon which the delivery of either Local Plan is dependent. Therefore it is considered that there is no Duty to Cooperate issue to either agree or resolve.

2.3 Duty to Cooperate is perhaps one of the most significant tests of soundness relevant to adjoining Plan Areas. The CLLP also has to satisfy the Planning Inspectorate that the Local Plan is:

- positively prepared;
- justified (i.e. that it is the most appropriate strategy when considered against any alternative strategy and supported by evidence);
- effective in terms of delivery and based upon joint working (especially where cross boundary strategic priorities may be relevant); and
- prepared to be consistent with national policy especially with regard to sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF.

2.4 The detailed examination of the policies and proposals in the CLLP and whether the Plan meets the tests of soundness will be the primary purpose of the Examination in Public. The Examination of the Local Plan is expected to take place before December 2016.

3.0 **CONCLUSION**

3.1 The examination of the CLLP is the main stage for an independent assessment of the CLLP. The SEL Joint Committee do not consider that there are any Duty to Cooperate issues which impact upon the effective delivery of the CLLP.

4.0 **OPTIONS**

4.1 Members could decide that the proposals within the CLLP do raise Duty to Cooperate issues that either have a negative effect upon the delivery of the CLLP or have a negative effect upon the emerging policies and proposals of the SELLP. In order to substantiate such a view would require an in-depth consideration of both the evidence supporting the CLLP and the SELLP in providing definitive conclusions on what these negative impacts might be.

5.0 **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 To allow the CLLP to proceed to Examination in Public unhindered where an independent assessment of the Plan can properly take place.

6.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

6.1 The proposed recommendation has the least impact upon resources available to this Joint Committee in the preparation of the SELLP.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 No direct implications for the Joint Committee.

Background papers:- None

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This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices: None