

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	2 September 2015
Subject:	Stroud District Local Plan - Further Post Submission Proposed Changes
Report of:	Julie Wood, Development Group Manager
Corporate Lead:	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor D M M Davies, Lead Member for Built Environment
Number of Appendices:	None.

Executive Summary:

The Stroud District Local Plan, has been prepared by Stroud District Council to cover the period to 2031. Tewkesbury Borough Council has previously made comments in respect of the Stroud District Council Local Plan at the 'Alternative Strategies', 'Preferred Strategies', consultation on Policies stage and Pre-Submission stage.

The Stroud District Local Plan – Consultation on Further Post Submission Proposed Changes has been published for public consultation and Tewkesbury Borough Council has been invited to comment on the current proposals by Wednesday 9 September 2015.

Recommendation:

That the comments set out at Section 2 (paragraphs 2.1 – 2.6 inclusive) of this report be APPROVED for submission to the public consultation on the Stroud District Local Plan.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure the views of Tewkesbury Borough Council and the emerging Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy are taken into consideration in the development of the Stroud District Local Plan.

Resource Implications:

None.

Legal Implications:

Pursuant to Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011, Local Planning Authorities have a duty to cooperate with each other in maximising the effectiveness with which the preparation of development plan documents are undertaken so far as relating to strategic matters, such as sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas.

In particular, the duty requires Local Planning Authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process by means of which the preparation of development plan

documents are undertaken.

If the person appointed to carry out the independent examination of the development plan documents considers that the Local Planning Authority has not complied with its duty to co-operate under Section 33A in relation to its preparation the person can neither recommend adoption or modifications and in such cases the Local Planning Authority cannot then adopt the development plan document.

Risk Management Implications:

Additional development near to the border of Gloucester City could potentially impact on the emerging Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy. This strategy is currently assessing sustainable development locations across the Joint Core Strategy area to meet the needs of the three authorities to 2031.

High levels of development immediately to the south of the Joint Core Strategy area could impact on service and infrastructure requirements for the Joint Core Strategy area.

The allocation of land to the south of Gloucester within Stroud District to meet Stroud's housing requirement, rather than Gloucester's housing requirement may have a direct impact on land take within Tewkesbury.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Tewkesbury's Planning Policy Team will continue to review the progress of the Stroud District Local Plan and report on its production.

Environmental Implications:

Biodiversity has been considered by Stroud District in the preparation of the public consultation document.

The Stroud District Local Plan has been published alongside a Habitats Regulations Assessment, which assesses the potential impacts of the Plan on protected European species and habitats.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Stroud District Local Plan has been prepared by Stroud District Council to cover the period up to 2031. Previously the Plan period looked to 2026. The Stroud District Local Plan – Consultation of Further Post Submission Proposed Changes Draft has been formally published and Tewkesbury Borough Council has been invited to comment on the current proposals by 9 September 2015.
- 1.2** Stroud District's Local Plan covers the administrative area of Stroud District. It sets out the development strategy for the area and allocates land to deliver housing and employment growth to 2031. Given the removal of both regional and structure plans, the amount of future employment and housing development has been determined at a local level and Stroud has assessed the need for housing locally to provide a bottom up approach.

- 1.3** Stroud District Council submitted its Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in December 2013. The examination commenced in April 2014 and the Inspector conducting the Examination in Public suspended the examination whilst Stroud District Council prepared additional supporting information. Stroud District Council approved a series of changes to its Plan in December 2014 to include a revised housing requirement figure in the draft Stroud District Local Plan. The figure of at least 11,400 dwellings for the period 2006-2031 was subsequently recently recommended by the government's Planning Inspector who has been examining the Local Plan this year. This represents a slight increase from the figure of 11,200 dwellings approved by Stroud District Council in December 2014 and Stroud District Council resolved to include the 11,400 figure at its Council meeting on 16 July 2015.
- 1.4** Tewkesbury Borough Council has previously made comments in respect of the Stroud District Local Plan, which sought greater clarity on the emerging proposals. At the last stage, Tewkesbury supported the overall distribution strategy which Stroud had set out and the principle of extending the Gloucester urban area. However, Tewkesbury raised concerns that the duty to cooperate had not been discharged with respect to cross boundary development, in particular helping to meet the unmet needs of Gloucester City.
- 1.5** The Inspector conducting the examination into the Stroud District Local Plan considered that Stroud District Council had discharged its legal requirements in relation to Duty to Cooperate and it is not for this report to reopen that debate.
- 1.6** A copy of the Stroud District Local Plan can be accessed at <https://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/local-plan-further-post-submission-proposed-change/consultation> and a copy has been placed in the Members' Lounge.

2.0 STROUD DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY - Consultation on Further Post-Submission Proposed Changes

- 2.1** The Stroud District Core Strategy is at an advanced stage of its preparation. The Council is now consulting on further changes to the Plan, post examination.
- 2.2** The main changes to the Plan at this stage include:
- increasing the housing requirement from 9,500 to 11,400 dwellings;
 - increasing the Hunts Grove extension site at Hardwicke from 500 to 750 dwellings;
 - increasing the employment requirement from 38 to 58 hectares;
 - a new affordable housing policy reflecting amended government policy;
 - detailed changes to policy wording as a result of the examination process; and
 - early review of the Plan is proposed within 5 years of adoption or by December 2019 whichever is the sooner.
- 2.3** The increases in the requirement for both housing and employment land are noted and the pressure for development within Stroud District is recognised.

- 2.4** The most relevant location for strategic growth is at the Gloucester fringe. Part of the justification for providing development at this location is given as its proximity to Gloucester and its primary level of services, facilities and major employment hubs and development at this location would have the potential to be easily integrated into the existing and planned development. The principle of providing urban extensions to Gloucester fully accords with spatial strategy set out within the emerging joint Core Strategy.
- 2.5** The provision of an increase to the urban extension to the Hunts Grove site to the south of Gloucester at Hardwicke is one which this Council has previously supported and continues to support. However the houses to be delivered at this location, referred to within the Stroud Local Plan as part of the Gloucester urban area, are proposed in full to meet the housing needs arising within Stroud District. The 500 homes are not fully or partly being delivered to meet the unmet needs of Gloucester City.
- 2.6** Tewkesbury Borough Council, and the other Joint Core Strategy authorities, would welcome the opportunity to work closely with Stroud District Council in an early review of the Stroud District Local Plan, particularly with regard to future growth issues and the potential for any further urban extensions to Gloucester.
- 2.7** Officers consider that the above responses represent an appropriate consultation response in respect of the further post submission changes in order that the Stroud District Local Plan can progress. Responses will be considered by the Planning Inspector before he issues his report, expected later this year.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1** In arriving at the development strategy set out in the Stroud District Local Plan, it has been demonstrated that alternative options have been considered and that the emerging strategy presents the most sustainable and robust option in accordance with the overarching vision. Several alternative strategies and options were considered and the reasons for not selecting them were provided within the Plan.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** General public consultation is being carried out by the Stroud District Council. The consultation will run between Wednesday 29 July and Wednesday 9 September 2015. Only comments relating to the Further Proposed Changes, the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum or the Habitats Regulations Assessment will be considered by Stroud Council and the Inspector before he reaches his final conclusions about the legal compliance and soundness of the Plan.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 5.1** The saved policies of the adopted Tewkesbury Borough Local Plan (2006).
Tewkesbury Borough Housing Strategy 2012-2016.
The Pre-Submission version of the Joint Core Strategy.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 6.1** National Planning Policy Framework.
National Planning Practice Guidance.
Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

8.1 Development to the south of Gloucester could impact on facilities and infrastructure in Gloucester and the wider Joint Core Strategy area.

8.2 The allocation of land to the south of Gloucester within Stroud District to meet Stroud's housing requirement, rather than Gloucester's housing requirement may have a direct impact on land take within Tewkesbury.

8.3 A Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (SA) and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Further Proposed Changes have been prepared and representations are also invited on these documents.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

9.1 The impacts on Equalities and Human Rights will need to be considered by the Stroud District Local Plan Team in preparation of the Plan.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 Executive Committee decision 7 April 2010 regarding the Stroud District Core Strategy – Alternative Strategies.

10.2 Executive Committee decision 29 February 2012 regarding the Stroud District Local Plan – Preferred Strategy.

10.3 Executive Committee decision 2 October 2013 regarding the Pre-Submission Stroud District Local Plan.

Background Papers: Stroud District Local Plan – Further Post-submission Proposed Changes (including further potential Main Modifications. Available electronically via <https://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/local-plan-further-post-submission-proposed-change/consultation>

Stroud District Local Plan – Post-Submission Proposed Changes. Available electronically via https://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/local-plan-post-submission-proposed-changes/supporting_documents/PLAIN%20TEXT%20Local%20Plan%20Incorporating%20Postsubmission%20Proposed%20Changes_Feb2015.pdf

Stroud Local Plan – Pre-Submission Draft. Available electronically via http://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/stroud-district-local-plan-pre-submission-consulta/consult_view

Stroud Local Plan – Towards a Preferred Strategy. Available electronically via http://consultation.stroud.gov.uk/planning-strategy/http-consultation-stroud-gov-uk-planning_strategy/consult_view

Stroud Core Strategy: Alternative Strategies Consultation. Available electronically via http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/1_4.pdf

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Appendices: None.