



Knowsley Council

Mr Martin Pike BA MA MRTPI
c/o Programme Officer
Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy Examination
Municipal Buildings
Archway Road
Huyton
Merseyside
L36 9YU

Our Ref: Local Plan

26 June 2014

Dear Mr Pike,

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY - EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC - PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

I am writing to confirm that, at its meeting on 18 June 2014, the Council's Cabinet approved the proposed modifications to the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (KLPCS). The modifications can now be considered at the re-convened hearings which are due to start on 22 July 2014. Subject to their consideration during these hearings, the Council proposes to consult on the modifications later in the summer in accordance with the draft programme for the remainder of the Examination.

The schedule of proposed modifications (published with this letter) sets out the reasons for each modification, and whether each is considered to be a "main modification" or an "additional modification" as defined in Section 23(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as revised by the Localism Act 2011). The schedule includes changes which were provisionally included in the modifications schedule dated December 2013 (which have in some cases been subject to further minor changes) and new modifications. The "main modifications" mostly aim to address the key issues identified in the "Inspector's Interim Findings Following Hearing Sessions", January 2014.

A brief commentary concerning the modifications now proposed is set out below.

Proposed Sustainable Urban Extensions

In response to paragraphs 2 and 10 of the Interim Findings, the Council has assessed in detail the options which are available to address:

- the shortfall of 391 units in Knowsley's 5 year supply of deliverable sites for housing development; and
- the need for early release of sites from the Green Belt to meet needs for a high quality new business park and large scale distribution uses.

As a result, the Council has decided to bring forward all the 9 sites, previously identified as "reserve" locations for future release from the Green Belt, to form "Sustainable Urban Extensions" to be released from the Green Belt on adoption of the Plan and allocated for housing, employment or for mixed uses.

The rationale for bringing forward the allocation of all these sites at this stage (as opposed to continuing to delay allocation of some or all of them until the future Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies) are summarised in section 5 of the report to Cabinet on 18 June 2014. These reasons include that this approach is needed to ensure that land supply for housing and employment meets the short term needs identified in the Interim Findings and that a satisfactory supply is subsequently maintained. Further details are set out in the "Technical Report: Sustainable Urban Extensions" published with this letter.

Planning applications for development in all the Sustainable Urban Extensions and the master planning of the 3 largest of these sites (at Knowsley Lane, Huyton; East Halewood; and South Whiston/land south of the M62) would be guided by new policies SUE1, SUE2, and SUE 2a), 2b) and 2c). These policies aim to ensure that development proposals affecting the Sustainable Urban Extensions reflect their strategic nature and address infrastructure and other requirements comprehensively. In response to paragraph 10 of the Interim Findings, the proposed new policy SUE 2a) will ensure that a significant and specified minimum area of the site at Knowsley Lane, Huyton is allocated for business park or other suitable key economic sector uses.

These new policies will be in a new chapter which is to be numbered 6A at this stage. The Council proposes to fully re-number chapters (along with paragraphs, tables and footnotes etc.) when the Plan is adopted.

Plan period employment target (2010-2028)

The Council proposes to reduce the Plan period employment target from 183.5 hectares to 164 hectares. The slight difference between this and the figure of 160 hectares suggested in paragraph 6 of the Interim Findings is in the Council's view justified by the latest monitoring information on employment development.

Target levels of affordable housing provision

In response to paragraph 18 of the Interim Findings, the Council proposes changes to policy CS15 "Delivering Affordable Housing" to reduce the target level of affordable housing provision from 25% to 10% for sites in the urban area. Within the "Sustainable Urban Extensions" referred to above the figure will remain at 25%. These differential targets are justified by the viability evidence and will (as previously proposed) be subject to consideration of viability on a case by case basis. Changes are proposed to paragraph 7.8 of the Plan to create greater flexibility when considering the tenure mix of affordable housing which will be sought in specific cases and to take into account the need to re-balance the housing market.

Prioritisation of developer contributions

Modifications are proposed to policy CS27 "Planning and Paying for New Infrastructure" to provide guidance on the relative priority to be given to different forms of developer contributions sought in cases where viability is insufficient to fund all the non-mandatory requirements set out in the Plan. This will address the point related to this issue in paragraph 19 of the Interim Findings. The Council has prepared new Technical Reports covering this and the revised approach to affordable housing.

Town centres and retail

Changes are proposed to policy CS10 "Principal Regeneration Area – Kirkby Town Centre" and its supporting text to address the advice in paragraph 16 of the Interim Findings.

Other modifications

The modifications also include changes required to respond to changed circumstances (including any revisions to Government policy since the earlier hearings such as the CLG Planning Practice Guidance published in March 2014), or to improve the detailed operation or internal consistency of the Plan.

Sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment

In accordance with the relevant legislation the modifications have been subject to robust processes of sustainability appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Habitats Regulation Assessment.

Proposed changes to the Council's adopted Policies Map

The boundaries and other details of the proposed Sustainable Urban Extensions and the proposed safeguarded site at Knowsley Village are set out in a new Appendix E "Sustainable Urban Extensions and Safeguarded Land – Allocation Profiles". These proposals would result in changes to the Council's Policies Map when the Plan is adopted. To illustrate the effects of these changes the Council has also prepared a booklet (entitled "Proposed Modifications to the Policies Map") showing the new Sustainable Urban Extensions in the context of other designations on the current Policies Map which will continue to apply.

Tracked changes version of the Core Strategy

To assist representors at the re-convened hearings the Council has prepared a "tracked changes" document. This shows the impact of the proposed modifications on the version of the Core Strategy which was submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2013.

Duty to cooperate

To illustrate how the proposed modifications impact upon the "duty to cooperate" set by the Localism Act, the Council has prepared an Addendum to its previous Duty to Cooperate Statement. This sets out how the Council has continued to cooperate with

relevant bodies since the previous hearings in November 2013, and how in the Council's view the modifications affect the cross boundary strategic matters affecting the Borough.

Additional Examination documents

This letter is accompanied by a number of supporting documents as listed in Annex A. I have asked the Programme Officer to add these documents and this letter to the Examination Library (in hard copy and on the website) and to ensure that the representors to the Examination are made aware of them.

I hope that this letter helps to set the context for the proposed modifications. The Council will be able to provide further details and justification for the proposed modifications at the re-convened hearings in July. If any of the representors to the Examination or other interested parties wish to receive further details about the modifications process or the re-convened hearings we would advise that they contact:

Paul Morris,
Programme Officer
Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy Examination
Municipal Buildings
Archway Road
Huyton
Merseyside
L36 9YU

Email programmeofficer@knowsley.gov.uk

Tel. 0151 443 3077

The Local Plan team (who can be contacted on 0151 443 2326) will be able to answer any queries focussing on the modifications themselves.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Clarke

Jonathan Clarke

Policy Manager – Places, Knowsley Council

ANNEX A

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY - EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE COUNCIL (JUNE 2014)

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR AND DATE</u>	<u>EXAMINATION LIBRARY REF.</u>
Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy – Schedule of Proposed Modifications to the Submission Document	KMBC, June 2014	CS08
Erratum Sheet for Schedule of Proposed Modifications – Minor Changes	KMBC, June 2014	CS08a
Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy - Submission Document Incorporating Proposed Modifications (tracked changes version)	KMBC, June 2014	CS09
Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy – Proposed Modifications to the Policies Map	KMBC, June 2014	CS10
Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy – Proposed Modifications – Sustainability Appraisal Report	Urban Vision, June 2014	SD28
Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy – Proposed Modifications – Sustainability Appraisal Non Technical Summary	Urban Vision, June 2014	SD28a
Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy – Proposed Modifications – Sustainability Appraisal Appendices	Urban Vision, June 2014	SD28b
Letter to Council entitled "HRA of Changes to the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy following Examination in Public"	URS Infrastructure and Environment UK Ltd, 13 June 2014	SD29
Technical Report: Sustainable Urban Extensions	KMBC, June 2014	TR07
Technical Report: Developer Contributions	KMBC, June 2014	TR08
Technical Report: Affordable Housing	KMBC, June 2014	TR09
Duty to Cooperate Statement - Addendum	KMBC, June 2014	SD30
Examination Library List (2 nd Revision)	KMBC, June 2014	SD26b
<i>(Note: the following documents have been added solely to the on line Examination library but a hard copy can be made available on request)</i>		
Economic Viability Assessment – Executive Summary	Keppie Massie, 2012	EB06a

Phase 1 Habitats Survey – South Whiston and Land to the South of the M62	Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, February 2014	EB28
Sub-National Population Projections Update	KMBC, June 2014	SD31
Planning Practice Guidance	DCLG (on line guidance, 2014)	PG01b
Knowsley Monitoring Report 2013	KMBC, December 2013	PP24
Liverpool City Region SuperPort Study – Executive Summary	NAI Global/Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership	LC28
Proposed Modifications -Cabinet Report – 18 June 2014	KMBC, June 2014	CR11
Proposed Modifications – Cabinet Minutes – 18 June 2014	KMBC, June 2014	CR11a
Delegated Report – Supporting Documents for the Proposed Modifications – 20 June 2014	KMBC, June 2014	CR12
A New Approach to Developer Contributions – Cabinet Report – 18 June 2014	KMBC, June 2014	CR13