

Barnsley Local Plan Examination

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STAGE 1 MAIN MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS (MIQs)

The Examination will take place in two stages. Stage 1 will consider the Duty to Co-operate and legal matters, the vision and objectives, and whether the scale of employment and housing development being proposed is soundly based.

These MIQs relate to the Stage 1 hearings and should be read in conjunction with the Inspector’s Examination Briefing Note. You may also wish to refer to the Inspector’s Initial Questions to the Council (ID001), the Council’s response (BMBC002) and the documents produced in response:

**‘Updating the Demographic Evidence’ (March 2017) (EB56)
‘Strategic Housing Market Assessment Addendum’ (March 2017) (EB45)
Revised Housing Background Paper (March 2017) (BP3)**

These are all available on the Examination web site at www.barnsley.gov.uk/local-plan-examination.

If, following the Stage 1 hearing sessions, the plan is likely to be capable of being found legally compliant and sound in relation to the Stage 1 matters (having regard to the potential for me to recommend main modifications) Stage 2 will consider all other matters. A provisional list of these is provided at the end of this document.

Abbreviations – BLP – Barnsley Local Plan, HRA – Habitats Regulations Assessment, LCR – Leeds City Region, NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework, OAN – objective assessment of need, OAHN – objective assessment of housing need, SA - Sustainability Appraisal, SCR – Sheffield City Region, SHMA – Strategic Housing Market Assessment, SNHP – Sub national household projections, SNPP – Sub-national population projections.

References in brackets are to the document references in the Evidence Base which can be found on the Examination web site.

Main Matter 1 – An Overview of the Soundness of the Barnsley Local Plan

Duty to Co-operate

- 1.1 What are the relevant strategic matters in relation to the duty to co-operate?
- 1.2 Has the Council maximised the effectiveness of the Barnsley Local Plan (BLP) by engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on these relevant strategic matters during the preparation of the plan, including:

Highway authorities including Highways England and Integrated Transport Authorities with regard to:

- The impact of proposed development on the strategic road network, including the M1 Junction 36 and the Birdwell roundabout and M1 Junction 37 and associated distributor roads and the A61(T) and A616;
- The implications of a Pan Northern route to connect Manchester with the A1 and Humber Ports; and
- The effect of development on the local highway network and public transport.

Natural England, with regard to Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment and the impact of proposed development on the South Pennine Moors Phase 1 and 2 Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area;

Historic England, having regard to whether any significant adverse effects on the historic environment have been adequately mitigated and whether there would be any harm to the significance of designated heritage assets arising from any of the proposed site allocations;

Environment Agency, in particular ensuring that a sequential, risk based approach has been taken to the location of development to avoid flood risk to people and property, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);

Barnsley NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, with regard to provision for health facilities.

- 1.3 Is the BLP based on effective joint working with neighbouring local authorities on relevant cross boundary strategic priorities as set out in paragraph 156 of the NPPF, including with:

Sheffield City Region Partnership with regard to the scale of employment and housing development, impact on the strategic highway

network and bus and rail transport, infrastructure requirements and Green Belt review;

Leeds City Region Partnership with regard to the scale of employment and housing development, impact on the strategic highway network and public transport and other infrastructure provision;

Adjoining local/planning authorities (including Sheffield City Council, High Peak District Council, Peak District National Park Authority, Rotherham Borough Council, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, Wakefield Council and Kirklees Council) on relevant cross boundary strategic priorities.

- 1.4 How has that co-operation been undertaken and have any formal agreements or Memorandum of Understanding been produced?
- 1.5 What outcomes have resulted from the co-operation with adjoining authorities including in relation to:
 1. The strategic highway network, bus and rail transport;
 2. Meeting Sheffield's unmet housing needs at the former Oughtibridge Paper Mill (Site AC44);
 3. Measures to deal with the impact of traffic on the A635 and on the Air Quality Management Areas at Hickleton and Marr;
 4. Approach to the Green Belt review;
 5. Areas of search for wind turbines;
 6. Contributing to the regional supply of minerals including aggregates; and
 7. Ensuring that development does not harm the landscape of the Peak District National Park.
- 1.6 What mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that there is future co-operation in relation to cross boundary issues that could arise as the plan is implemented and development progresses?

Legal Requirements

- 1.7 Do the content and timescale for preparation of the BLP accord with the latest version of the Local Development Scheme addendum (SD19)?
- 1.8 Has public consultation complied with the public consultation requirements in the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012?
- 1.9 Has the BLP consultation complied with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2006 & 2015 update) (SD13 & SD14)?
- 1.10 Has the BLP been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and have the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment been met?
- 1.11 Is it clear how the SA influenced the BLP policies and how mitigation measures have been dealt with?

- 1.12 Does the SA test the plan against reasonable alternatives in terms of the overall requirement for land for housing and employment and its broad distribution as set out in the spatial strategy? What alternatives were considered in the SA?
- 1.13 How have the results of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) influenced the BLP and will the policies achieve the necessary mitigation to avoid an Adverse Effect on Integrity of the European protected sites as set out in the HRA?
- 1.14 Have the requirements for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations been met?
- 1.15 Has the preparation of the BLP complied with Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012 in all other respects?
- 1.16 What is the status of the 'List of Minor Modifications'? (SD30)?

Main Matter 2 –Vision and objectives and Barnsley’s role in the Sheffield and Leeds City Regions

- 2.1 Are the objectives appropriate, positively prepared and justified and will they be effective in delivering the vision for Barnsley set out in the plan?
- 2.2 What evidence justifies the aim to deliver 'substantial and sustainable' economic growth for the Borough and will the plan be effective in delivering this within the plan period?
- 2.2 How will the plan’s vision and objectives address the economic disadvantages faced by residents in some parts of the Borough?
- 2.3 Has an appropriate balance been struck between providing for economic development, supporting the role of the town centre and delivering new homes having regard to the effect on the environment, the transport network and other infrastructure and local services and facilities?
- 2.4 Is the plan period of 2014 – 2033 justified?
- 2.5 Is the role of Barnsley within the Sheffield City Region (SCR) and Leeds City Region (LCR) clear? Has an appropriate balance been struck between contributing to the growth of the city regions, meeting the development needs arising from the needs of the town’s resident population and addressing the effect on the environment?
- 2.6 What implications does the production of a SCR Spatial Plan have for Barnsley and does the BLP have sufficient flexibility to respond to any requirements that may arise during the plan period?
- 2.7 What are the implications of Barnsley’s location within the wider functional economic areas of the SCR and LCR? How will the employment and other

policies in the plan contribute to the Strategic Economic Plans of the Sheffield and Leeds City Regions?

- 2.8 Does the economic growth of the Manchester City Region have any implications for the BLP and if so should they be identified in the plan?

Main Matter 3 – Objectively assessed need for employment

The soundness of the allocated employment sites set out in the Economy chapter will be considered at Stage 2 of the Examination, other than the questions asked below in relation to specific sites.

Context – The Employment Land Review (EB33) sets out three Jobs Growth Scenarios. As explained in the Employment Background Paper (BP6), the plan is based on Growth Scenario 2 'Jobs-led Policy On' for 33,000 new jobs within the plan period, based on the aims of the 'Jobs and Business Plan' 2014 – 2017.

Issue – Does the plan appropriately identify the objectively assessed quantitative and qualitative need for employment as required by the Planning Practice Guidance? Is the OAN for employment soundly based and supported by robust and credible evidence?

- 3.1 Does the Borough represent the appropriate functional economic area for the purposes of assessing the OAN for employment?
- 3.2 What evidence justifies the statement in paragraph 4.6 of the plan that 'Barnsley's economy is too small for the size of the Borough' and what implications does that have for the plan?
- 3.3 In addition to the 'baseline' of 12,555 jobs based on previous rates of job growth, the plan anticipates an additional 17,588 jobs through council and partner interventions. Is that realistic and achievable? What interventions are necessary to achieve the additional job growth and are they likely to happen?
- 3.4 What evidence justifies the conclusion that there are likely to be land availability and topographical constraints in other Boroughs in the City Regions that could provide an opportunity for employment development to be located in Barnsley?
- 3.5 Are the jobs created likely to meet the job requirements of Barnsley's resident working age population? Are there any identified skills gaps/shortages? What would be the consequences of jobs not being filled by the resident working age population?

Issue – Will the plan meet the OAN for employment within the plan period?

- 3.6 Is Policy E1 which seeks to allocate 'around 300 hectares' of land to support the provision of approximately 33,000 jobs over the plan period soundly based and supported by robust and credible evidence?

3.7 How has the OAN for employment been translated into a requirement for floorspace and land? Are the assumptions for the following factors realistic and justified by the evidence:

- Site coverage/plot ratio¹ – 40%;
- Job densities²:
B1a (offices) – 19 sqm
B1b/c (research and development/light industry) – 34 sqm
B2 (general industry) – 34 sqm
B8 – (storage and distribution) - 50 – 80 sqm
- Loss of employment land to other uses – 5 hectares per annum;
- Margin to allow for choice and flexibility in the employment land market – 30%;
- Occupancy rates - 75%.

3.8 How much of the land allocated for employment has been 'carried forward' from the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (EB14 – EB25)?

3.9 Will the location of employment sites at M1 Junctions 36 and 37 influence the extent to which jobs will be occupied by the working age population of Barnsley?

3.10 Does Policy E1 make clear the breakdown of employment land type to be delivered and what type of employment use is to be delivered on each of the allocated sites? Will it help to deliver the priority and enabling sectors identified in the 'Jobs and Business Plan' (EB31)?

3.11 Should the plan make provision for 3 Business Parks of at least 100 hectares each as envisaged in 'Growing Barnsley's Economy 2012 – 2033'?

3.12 Is the reserve employment site at Goldthorpe (Policy RSV1) required to meet the OAN for employment and the employment land requirement?

Main Matter 4 – Objectively assessed need for housing

Context – The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 and its Addendum (March 2017) (EB45) identify the objectively assessed housing need (OAHN) as a range from 967 to 1389 dwellings. This is based on demographic analysis as set out in the Barnsley Demographic Analysis and Forecasts Report (EB55), Addendum and Update (March 2017) (EB56) and the jobs growth envisaged in the 'Jobs and Business Plan 2014 – 2017' (EB31).

¹ The amount of employment floorspace that can be developed as a proportion of the site area

² Expressed as amount of floorspace per worker in square metres

Issue – Is the OAHN soundly based and supported by robust and credible evidence and is it consistent with national policy?

- 4.1 Does the geographical area of the Borough represent a robust and appropriate basis for assessing housing needs?
- 4.2 Is the SHMA's conclusion that the Borough is a self-contained housing market area justified by the evidence on migration and travel to work patterns?
- 4.3 Has any further work been completed in respect of housing market geographies within the LCR? (Housing Background Paper (BP3) paragraph 3.22)
- 4.4 What adjustments have been made to reflect the 2014 sub-national population and household projections (SNPP and SNHP)?
- 4.5 Have appropriate adjustments to the SNPP and SNHP been made to form the demographic starting point for assessing OAHN? In particular:
 - Past trends in migration and the likelihood or otherwise of these continuing in the future;
 - Past trends in household formation and the likelihood or otherwise of these continuing in the future.
- 4.6 Is any adjustment required to take account of market signals including:
 - Land prices;
 - House prices;
 - Rents;
 - Affordability;
 - Overcrowding.
- 4.7 Has an appropriate vacancy rate been used in converting the household projections into a dwelling requirement?
- 4.8 Does the OAHN take account of the need to ensure that the identified requirement for affordable housing is delivered? (annual net shortfall of 292 affordable dwellings)
- 4.9 Have the needs of particular groups (eg older people and those requiring specialist support) been appropriately taken into account in the OAHN? How will the plan help to deliver the housing needs of these groups?
- 4.10 Is the identified need for 15 additional pitches for gypsies and travellers (Policy GT1) over the 5 year period 2014/15 – 2019/19 justified by the evidence? What evidence supports the use of a 1.83 multiplier to produce an annualised requirement of 18 pitches over the five-year period?
- 4.11 In expressing the OAHN as a range related to the 'Jobs Led Policy On' scenario, do the SHMA, SHMA Addendum and Housing Background Paper

make clear what assumptions have been made in relation to the following factors? Are the assumptions robust and supported by the evidence:

- Improving economic activity rates (16 – 74 year olds);
- Unemployment rate;
- Changes to the commuting ratio.

Issue - Will the plan meet the full OAHN within the plan period?

Context – Policy H1 of the plan allocates land for at least 20,900 net additional homes or approximately 1100 within the plan period

4.12 What is the appropriate OAHN for Barnsley within the range of 967 to 1389 dwellings set out in the SHMA?

4.13 How has the range of OAHN informed the housing requirement in Policy H1?

Stage 2 Hearing Sessions – Provisional Matters

The list of Stage 2 matters and issues is provisional at this stage and is provided to give a broad indication of the areas to be covered. The list will be finalised subject to satisfactory completion of the matters discussed at the Stage 1 hearing sessions:

- Spatial strategy, settlement hierarchy and the distribution of housing and employment development
- Green Belt and Safeguarded Land
- Housing requirement and five year land supply
- Housing and employment allocations (including mixed use sites)
- Transport
- Natural and historic environment
- Town Centres and Retail
- Development management policies
- Viability, monitoring and delivery.