

Agenda

Session 6 - 13.30 Thursday 23 May 2019

Matter 6

Employment Land Supply, Employment Policies, Town Centres and Culture/Leisure/Tourism

This matter considers employment land supply and policies relating to employment, town centres and culture/leisure/tourism (Chapters 7 and 8 of the Plan). In response to preliminary questions the Council has indicated that:

- A table will be included in the Plan indicating how the 95 ha of employment land required under Policy SP1 will be provided (AM40);
- The existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP) has allocations in the city centre, Washington and Houghton so the policy framework exists to facilitate retail development in the right locations. The UDP allocations will be replaced by allocations in the A & D Plan; and,
- Policy VC3 will be modified to improve clarity (MM26).

Issues

1. Components of Employment Land Supply

1.1 Will the up to date employment land supply position and the components of the employment land supply that will meet the employment land requirement of 95 ha be clearly shown in the Plan (base date of 31 March 2019)?

The Council refer to AM40 which sets out the updated employment land supply position at 31 March 2019.

Inspector's Note – this should be a MM not an AM.

2. Primary, Key and Other Employment Areas

2.1 Are Policies EG1, EG2 and EG3 consistent with paragraph 22 of the Framework and the long-term protection of sites allocated or safeguarded for employment use?

The Council considers that the policies provide a balanced approach between protection and allowing for appropriate flexibility, taking into consideration that the supply of employment land is becoming particularly tight.

2.2 Are the criteria within Policies EG1, EG2 and EG3 relating the protection of employment sites and land and the introduction of alternative uses positively prepared and effective?

The Council states that the policy criteria ensure that employment areas perform efficiently and deliver the economic growth projected over the Plan period. Alternative uses can be considered through the submission and determination of applications.

2.3 Are all the Key Employment Areas allocated and safeguarded by Policy EG2 worthy of protection for employment use?

The Council notes that these sites are all long-term established employment areas, which support existing employment uses.

2.4 Does the evidence base, including ELR and planning history, support the

safeguarding of sites at Deptford Terrace and Hendon Paper Mill as Key Employment Areas?

3. Employment Development

3.1 Do the policies of the LP provide sufficient support for employment development within the area (Policies EG4 and EG5 in particular)?

The Council notes that the policies, whilst setting out the principle that the established designated employment areas are the most appropriate location for new employment development, provide a positive framework for assessing employment development where there are no suitable sites available within designated employment areas.

4. Main Town Centre Uses

4.1 Is the requirement for 45,400 m² of comparison floorspace within the Plan period justified?

The Council refer to the justification within the Retail Needs Assessment.

4.2 Does Policy VC1 provide sufficient protection to existing town centres, taking into account the requirements for additional comparison floorspace in the Sub-Areas?

The Council points out that a proportion of the additional comparison floorspace will be directed to the Coalfield and Washington Sub-Areas and the only two town centres in the Plan area, Houghton and Washington.

4.3 Is there any need to make specific allocations for retail development in this Plan taking into account the provisions of the UDP, the intention to make allocations in the A & D Plan and the fact that floorspace needs are primarily towards the end of the Plan period?

The Council does not consider this to be necessary for the above reasons.

4.4 Are the thresholds for retail impact assessments within Policy VC2 justified?

The Council points to the justification within the Retail Needs Assessment and Compliance Statement.

4.5 Do the provisions of Policy VC3 provide for both protection and flexibility for retail and non-retail uses within primary and secondary frontages?

The Council considers that the policy allows for sufficient flexibility. MM26 is also relevant.

4.6 Are the provisions of Policy VC4 (hot food takeaways) and Policy SP7 justified, particularly Section 2 of Policy VC4 in relation to healthier communities?

The Council refers to SD.18 in justifying its position.

4.7 Is there sufficient evidence to show a link between hot food takeaways and childhood obesity?

5. Culture, Leisure and Tourism

5.1 Will Policy VC6 be effective in supporting all forms of leisure development?

The Council points to the Sunderland Leisure Needs Study (which identifies that there is no requirement to pro-actively plan for any form of leisure development within the city over the Plan period.

Main Evidence Base

SD.18 - Public Health Evidence in Relation to the use of the Planning System to Control Hot Food Takeaways (2018)

SD.37 - ELR (2016)

SD.38 - ELR: Post EU Referendum Forecasting Analysis (2017)

SD.39-42 - Retail Needs Assessment (2016)

SD.43 - Leisure Needs Study (2016)

SD.66 - Compliance Statement

EX1.008 & EX1.010 – Council responses to Inspector’s preliminary questions

EX1.018 - Schedule of Main Modifications

Statements

EX7.001 - Sunderland City Council

EX7.002 - Steve Simms - SSA Planning Ltd (Kentucky Fried Chicken) (ID1131307)

EX7.003 - Chris Smith - Lichfields (Cowie Properties LLP) (ID1171391)

EX7.004 - Richard Swann - Barton Willmore (Persimmon Homes) (ID1129305)

Participants

Sunderland City Council

Name	Company	Representing	ID Number
Chris Smith Neil Westwick Justine Matchett	Lichfields	Cowie Properties LLP	1171391
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Steve Simms	SSA Planning	Kentucky Fried Chicken (Great Britain)	1131307