

Examination of the City of York Local Plan

Inspectors: Simon Berkeley BA MA MRTPI and Andrew McCormack BSc (Hons) MRTPI
Programme Officer: Carole Crookes

Neil Ferris
Corporate Director of Economy and Place
City of York Council

By email only

25 October 2021

Dear Mr Ferris

Examination of the City of York Local Plan – Next Steps

We write to update you on our position with regard to moving the examination forward efficiently and effectively. On 17 August 2021, we received the representations made during the consultation period relating to the various additional documents and work produced by the Council. We have now reviewed these latest documents and the representations received, and set out here our intentions for progressing the examination.

Given the passage of time since the Phase 1 hearings in December 2019 and as new evidence has since been produced by the Council regarding the matters explored, it is necessary for further hearings to revisit those topic areas. Moreover, we have decided to now set out an indicative timetable for all of the matters and issues we presently consider it likely that will be the subject of hearings.

We intend to hold future hearing sessions across three further phases. These will be identified as Phases 2, 3 and 4 and will address matters and issues as follows:

HEARING PHASE	MATTERS	INDICATIVE DATE
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarification (or potential revision) of the Plan Period• Vision and Development Principles• Objectively Assessed Housing Need / Housing Requirement• Employment Requirement (Land and Jobs)• Spatial Strategy:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Site Selection Process:- Strategic Housing Sites- Strategic Non-Housing Sites• Approach to Setting Green Belt Boundaries (inc. Land Release)• Housing Land Supply (5 Year Supply)• Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery	February 2022

Programme Officer: Carole Crookes
Independent Programme Officer Solutions, PO Box 789, Wakefield WF1 9UY
york@iposolutions.online
Mobile: 07397 909822

HEARING PHASE	MATTERS	INDICATIVE DATE
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of Green Belt Boundaries TP1 Addendum (2021) (Annexes 2, 3, 4 and 5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outer Boundary (Annex 2) - Inner Boundaries (Annex 3) - Other Densely Developed Areas in the General Extent of the Green Belt (Annex 4) - Freestanding Settlements (Annex 5) 	April 2022
4	<p>All Other Plan Matters and Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Retail • Housing Policies • Health and Wellbeing • Education • Placemaking, Heritage, Design and Culture • Green Infrastructure • Managing Appropriate Development in the Green Belt • Climate Change • Environmental Quality and Flood Risk • Waste and Minerals • Transport and Communications • Delivery and Monitoring 	May/June 2022

It is our intention to issue our Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) for the Phase 2 hearings early January 2022. Our MIQs for subsequent hearing sessions will be issued later on, allowing sufficient time for hearing statements to be prepared for each phase.

In line with the Council's wish, the hearing sessions will be held on a 'hybrid' basis. 'In-person' sessions will be held at a suitable venue for participants to attend. These sessions will be supplemented by 'right to be heard' virtual hearing sessions for those who wish to put their points to us verbally but do not wish/are unable to attend in person. In terms of timing, we intend that – for each phase – the virtual sessions will follow shortly on after the in-person sessions are completed. We will provide a detailed timetable for both in-person and virtual hearing sessions once the availability of the chosen hearing venue is known and firm dates can be set. That is, at least, our current intention. If the situation or Government guidance concerning Covid-19 should change then it may be that wholly virtual hearings will be necessary.

The indicative timetable we have set out is, in our view, the most realistic and achievable to progress the examination as efficiently and effectively as possible. However, if the Council believes this to be incorrect or takes a different stance then we would be happy to hear its views. Equally, if the timetable we have set out is considered a realistic and achievable one from the Council's perspective then we would be grateful to have confirmation of this.

If agreeable, we therefore now ask the Council to secure a suitable venue for the hearing sessions with reference to the timeframe set out above. We also ask the Council to ensure and confirm that it is in a position to facilitate and host the 'virtual' sessions when they take place, whether as part of a 'hybrid' package or as the sole platform for the hearings.

Following our reading of the recent documentation and representations, there are some requests that we have of the Council. Firstly, in reference to the Housing Trajectory, we note that the Housing Supply Update provided in Annex 7 to the TP1 Green Belt Addendum (January 2021) has a base date of 1 April 2020. The Council is now asked to provide the latest housing supply update available as soon as possible.

Secondly, with regard to infrastructure requirements and delivery, we would find it very helpful if the Council could produce an up-to-date Gantt Chart of all site allocations in the Plan showing their anticipated delivery of housing development year by year of the plan period (and beyond). In addition, on the same Gantt Chart, the required infrastructure (particularly relating to education and transport) to support development requirements and their anticipated delivery timescales year by year of the plan period (and beyond) are also to be plotted. This should be laid out in such a way as to make a clear comparison between anticipate delivery of housing and employment development and the provision of the necessary infrastructure to support that growth.

We hope that this letter is sufficiently clear in setting out our programme for taking the examination forward as efficiently and effectively as possible. Should you require it, we would be happy to clarify any points you may have regarding any aspect within this letter. Please contact us via the Programme Officer Carole Crookes should you wish to clarify anything we have raised.

Please ensure that a copy of this letter is placed on the examination webpage.

Yours sincerely

Simon Berkeley and *Andrew McCormack*

Inspectors