

Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan

Topic Paper: Ipswich Garden Suburb

Strategic site allocation

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Introduction

What the Council is doing

1. The Council is currently preparing a focused review of its adopted Core Strategy and Policies development plan document (December 2011) and a draft Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) development plan document. These documents form the Council's Local Plan, which guides future development in the Borough.
2. The Core Strategy and Policies development plan document focused review (hereinafter referred to as the Core Strategy focused review) will replace the adopted Core Strategy and Policies development plan document when adopted (anticipated in 2015).
3. The Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) development plan document (DPD) (hereinafter referred to as the Site Allocations Plan) replaces the 2007 Site Allocations and Policies DPD preferred options and the 2007 IP-One Area Action Plan preferred options. This document will also replace the remaining saved policies of the adopted Ipswich Local Plan (November 1997) when adopted (anticipated in 2015).
4. The Council has also produced a draft Ipswich Garden Suburb supplementary planning document (SPD), which will guide the proposed development of a strategic site allocation in north Ipswich. This document follows on from public consultation on an Issues and Options report relating to this site in early 2013. The Core Strategy focused review seeks to allocate this strategic site for up to 3,500 dwellings and associated facilities including schools, shops, community facilities and a country park. The supplementary planning document provides more detail particularly around the character and layout of proposed development.
5. The Council is undertaking a public consultation on the changes to the adopted Core Strategy (2011) in the draft Core Strategy focused review, the Site Allocations Plan and their supporting sustainability appraisal and appropriate assessment reports. Public consultation is also being undertaken on the draft Ipswich Garden Suburb SPD and its sustainability appraisal. The consultation period will run from Monday 13th January to Monday 10th March 2014 and further details can be found on the Council's website, www.ipswich.gov.uk, at the Council's offices at Grafton House and the Customer Service Centre at the Town Hall, or in Ipswich libraries.
6. The Core Strategy focused review and the Site Allocations Plan will undergo a further round of public consultation in the summer of 2014 before an Examination in Public (anticipated in late 2014) prior to any adoption by the Council. Comments on the Ipswich Garden Suburb SPD will be considered prior to adoption by the Council after the Examination in Public of the Core Strategy focused review.

National Planning Policy Framework

7. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in March 2012 following the introduction of the Localism Act in November 2011. The NPPF is national planning guidance and Local Plan documents such as the Core Strategy must refer to the principles established in the document.

8. The NPPF notes in paragraph 182 that the Local Plan will be assessed at the Examination in Public whether it has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate, legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound.

To be sound the plan must be:

- **‘Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.’ (Para 182, p. 43)
9. Paragraph 15 of the NPPF notes ‘a presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved with delay’ and plans include ‘clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally’ (p. 4).

National Planning Policy – Housing

10. The Council is required by the NPPF to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes and the NPPF requires local planning authorities, in this case Ipswich Borough Council, to:

‘use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period’ (paragraph 47 bullet 1, page 12).
11. The NPPF in paragraph 52 states that the supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities.
12. This paper sets out how a strategic allocation in north Ipswich for housing and associated facilities will assist the Council to meet the objectively assessed housing need for Ipswich.

Background

13. Over recent years urban regeneration objectives have led the Council to focus development into central Ipswich. This has supported the successful regeneration of the Waterfront and Ipswich Village, introducing a greater range of uses into each, thereby adding to their diversity and vibrancy. This strategy has seen significant redevelopment of previously developed sites within the town (including 93% of all housing between 2001 and 2013).

14. There is concern that the previously developed sites towards the centre of Ipswich are unlikely to meet the overall demand for future housing needs both in type and the number of dwellings and as such other land must be considered. The tight urban boundary to Ipswich Borough means that there is only one area of extensive greenfield land available on the periphery of the town and within the Borough. The land is located on the northern edge of the urban area and is known as the Northern Fringe.
15. The Council's adopted Core Strategy and Policies development plan document (DPD) (December 2011) allocates the Northern Fringe land (between Henley Road and Westerfield Road and south of the railway), for up to 1,000 dwellings prior to 2021. It also defines the wider Northern Fringe area as the main source of supply of housing land in Ipswich after 2021. Development of the Northern Fringe would represent a major urban extension to the town.
16. An over-arching framework in the form of a supplementary planning document (SPD) is required for the whole of the Northern Fringe area to ensure that any early phases of development fit in with an area-wide plan, make provision for infrastructure, and to avoid a piecemeal approach. The Council has prepared a draft SPD in consultation with the local community, the landowners and a wide range of outside agencies including Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council, NHS Suffolk, Anglian Water, Natural England, Sport England, the Environment Agency, and Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The draft document is entitled the Ipswich Garden Suburb SPD.

Core Strategy focused review

17. The adopted Core Strategy and Policies DPD is currently under review to ensure the alignment of the Core Strategy with the policies of the NPPF, and legislative requirements contained within the Localism Act. The provisions of the Localism Act have resulted in the abolition of Regional Strategies, and consequently any of the policy requirements of the East of England Plan such as regional housing and employment targets.
18. The current review of the Core Strategy will determine the precise extent of further development within the wider Northern Fringe area beyond 2021, and it makes specific allocations for an appropriate mix of housing and supporting infrastructure as part of the revised Core Policy CS10: Ipswich Northern Fringe.

Northern Fringe supplementary planning document – Ipswich Garden Suburb SPD

19. The draft SPD provides guidance on how the allocations in the development plan will be delivered both in spatial terms and in terms of sequencing, along with more general supplementary planning and design advice. It is arranged in two parts:
 - Part A: Planning and Design
 - Part B: Implementation and Delivery

Part A: Planning and Design

20. Part A: Planning and Design establishes the Council's vision and objectives, the overall approach to, and principles to guide the detailed master planning and design of the development. This is broken down into four chapters.

21. Vision and Core Objectives for Ipswich Garden Suburb. This chapter makes clear the Council's vision for an 'Ipswich Garden Suburb', and sets these within the national and local policy context. It provides guidance on a suitable approach to sustainable design and development, which is focused around the key themes of Character, Community, Connectivity, and Climate Change.
22. Ipswich Garden Suburb Framework Plan. This chapter presents the Development Framework Plan – an overarching site plan which will guide the quantum and disposition of land uses across the site.
23. Spatial Strategies. Provides four site-wide spatial strategies to guide the co-ordinated planning of landscape, movement, walkable neighbourhoods and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
24. Designing and Delivering Garden Suburb Character. The chapter provides design guidance which will guide the creation of a garden suburb character at the Northern Fringe development.

Part B: Implementation and Delivery

25. Part B: Implementation and Delivery, sets out the Council's expectations about how the vision and objectives can be realised in relation to infrastructure, community development, management and the planning application process. In particular:
26. Transport Strategy. This chapter explains how the transport strategy should guide future outline applications. The strategy has been prepared by Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council (the Highways Authority).
27. Infrastructure to Support the Growth of a Community, lists what infrastructure will be required to support both the new garden suburb community and the existing surrounding community.
28. Community Development. This chapter explains the approach to developing a Community Development Strategy which will centre on creating a place where people choose to live and on promoting community well-being. A key factor will be the funding to support development including the appointment of a Community Development Officer.
29. Long Term Management and Maintenance, sets out guidance on the necessary long term management and maintenance of the landscape and green infrastructure within the proposed development. This will be achieved through a Management plan which will be required prior to the development commencing, and will be jointly prepared by Ipswich Borough Council and the landowners.
30. Requirements for Future Planning Applications. This chapter explains the Council's likely planning requirements at an outline application stage and beyond to ensure a co-ordinated approach and the delivery of a high quality design.

Ipswich Garden Suburb development timeframe

SPD consultation timeframe

31. The public consultation on the draft SPD will take place for a period of 8 weeks between Monday 13th January and Monday 10th March 2014.

32. The Council's aim is for the adoption of the SPD sometime after the Examination in Public of the Core Strategy focused review.

Development timeframe

33. The Ipswich Garden Suburb will be planned and delivered over many years, and the proposals will require both outline planning permission and reserved matters applications at different stages.
34. Outline planning applications will be required to be submitted with:-
- An Illustrative Master plan of either the entire site or a complete neighbourhood identifying open space networks, different land uses, sequencing and outline indicative densities and building heights by land area.
 - A Design and Access Statement will need to include design details for District and Local Centres, schools, a spine road, a country park and visitor centre, and rail bridges, and a car parking strategy.
 - A Transport Assessment should quantify and assess the impact of the proposals on traffic movement and highway safety, quantify and assess how the development could be accessed by alternative transport modes and how such alternative modes would be promoted and provide details of any proposals for access or transport improvements.
 - A Landscape and green infrastructure strategy, including play and sports provision strategy.
35. Design Code approval will either be considered after the outline planning application process has finished, or can be submitted at the same time.
36. Reserved Matters applications would then follow the approval of design briefs for primary streets; schools and local and district centres as part of the Design Codes development.
37. Construction of houses and the associated infrastructure would then follow.
38. It is anticipated that the completion of the whole development could take until at least 2034.

Conclusion

39. The Council in its draft Core Strategy and Policies focused review revises policy CS10 to allocate an area of 195 hectares for three neighbourhoods consisting of up to 3,500 dwellings, public open space, a country park, a district centre, two local centres, a secondary school, three primary schools and primary road infrastructure including a road bridge over the railway. Land to the west of Tuddenham Road north of the railway line is also allocated for the replacement playing fields necessary to enable development of the Ipswich School playing field site as part of the Northern Fringe development. The detailed infrastructure requirements of the development are set out in Table 8b of the focused review.

40. The Ipswich Garden Suburb SPD provides comprehensive supplementary planning and design guidance for the masterplanning of the Ipswich Northern Fringe, which will support the borough of Ipswich in meeting its objectively assessed housing need and provide the opportunity for future residents to live in a sustainable garden suburb.