

Ipswich Borough Council
Local Plan Examination – Stage 1 Hearings
Opening Statement (22nd March 2016)

Ipswich Borough Council presents to this Examination a Core Strategy and Policies development plan document review and a Site Allocations and Policies (incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) development plan document.

These documents represent a full local plan for the Borough and seek to replace the adopted Core Strategy and Policies development plan document from December 2011 and the remaining saved policies of the 1997 Ipswich Local Plan.

The Core Strategy covers three areas of policy:

- It sets out the strategic vision and objectives to guide the development of the town
- It promotes the spatial strategy for the town to 2031 through strategic policies; and
- It provides a suite of up to date policies to control, manage and guide development across the Borough.

The Site Allocations and Policies DPD adds the site specific detail to the Core Strategy.

The Borough boundary is tightly constrained and these documents set out the strategy for delivering development in a fast growing urban area. Sites are identified on a mixture of brownfield and greenfield sites, with much development focused in the town centre and waterfront area. An urban extension of approximately 195 hectares is planned for north Ipswich and is known as the Ipswich Garden Suburb.

Ipswich remains the key employment centre in the functional economic area which includes the districts of Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal, and the town centre and the numerous industrial estates play a key role in providing employment.

There is a pressing need for both the DPDs to be adopted as soon as possible. In particular:

- They will provide an up to date, robust framework to ensure the sound, comprehensive development of the Ipswich Garden Suburb. The current absence of a workable strategic policy is inhibiting the formal adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document;
- They will provide the certainty which landowners and developers of previously developed urban land need to bring forward sites for development; and
- They will provide a suite of up to date NPPF compliant policies to guide development within the Borough.

In terms of wider strategic planning, the Ipswich housing market area also includes the districts of Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal, and planning for the wider Ipswich area is also undertaken through an Ipswich Policy Area. This is a long established policy area which reflects the interrelationships between the town and the surrounding districts and has consistently and effectively delivered on cross boundary issues.

Going forward, on 16th March 2016, a Devolution Agreement for East Anglia was published and supports the preparation of a spatial framework (see para 22 – bullet a) for planning across the Combined Authority area. A Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Framework for Suffolk will be prepared in 2016.

The two development plan documents were subject to a Regulation 18 public consultation between 13th January 2014 and 10th March 2014. At this stage the Core Strategy and Policies DPD was a focused review.

A later Regulation 19 public consultation on the documents as presented was undertaken between 12th December 2014 and 5th March 2015.

An additional public consultation on Proposed Main Modifications to the development plan documents was undertaken between 9th October 2015 and 23rd November 2015.

The team representing Ipswich Borough Council include Martyn Fulcher (Planning and Development Operations Manager), Robert Hobbs (Planning Policy Team Leader), Andrea McMillan (Senior Planner) and Sarah Barker (Senior Planner). They are supported by James Cutting (Planning Strategy Manager) of Suffolk County Council in respect of housing need.