

Another milestone for our Draft Local Plan part 2

Our emerging Development Management Local Plan has progressed to another important milestone. Earlier in the year, we submitted a draft of the Plan to the Secretary of State. An Independent Planning Inspector was then appointed to check that it met all legal and national policy requirements. The Inspector has identified some 'main modifications' to the Plan and is now consulting on them.

The consultation on these 'main modifications' will run for seven weeks, closing on Thursday 2 February 2022. The consultation will be for the modifications only and not the full plan.

At the end of the consultation, the Inspector will consider all the comments and submit recommendations to us. We will then decide whether to make the changes and formally adopt the Plan.

Lead Councillor for Planning Policy, Cllr Joss Bigmore said:

"We are at an exciting stage of the development of our Local Plan. The draft Local Plan, and all the policies that it contains, is so important. We get to set the standards that developers must meet. Our proposed policies cover topics such as heritage, biodiversity, climate change, design, infrastructure and transport.

"The Planning Inspector is seeking consultation on a limited number of changes to the Plan we submitted to Government in the summer. This is a positive step towards the adoption of our Plan. It means that we can progress with the strong requirements on new development that we had hoped for.

"We are especially pleased that the Inspector has not reduced our class-leading requirement of at least 20% Biodiversity Net Gain on development sites. This is higher than the national requirement of 10%. In fact, the vast majority of our policies are not the subject of the Inspector's proposed main modifications.

"It is our priority to adopt this plan as soon as we can."

Once adopted, our new Local Plan will become the starting point for our decision-making for planning and development, together with the Local Plan Strategy and Sites (LPSS). It will also replace the policies that remain from the existing Local Plan 2003.

