

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive Member for Economic Growth & Prosperity.
Date: 14 April 2011
Report for: Decision
Draft Report of: Head of Strategic Planning & Housing Services

Report Title

Trafford Core Strategy: Proposed Changes and Further Consultation

Summary

The Council has undertaken further work to address matters raised by the Inspector during the Core Strategy Examination Hearing sessions. This work is to be published for a period of consultation and relates to:

- The Regional Centre and Inner Areas Boundaries;
- Policy L5 – Climate Change; and
- The proposed inclusion of the Unitary Development Plan High Amenity Strategic Development Site, at Davenport Green, within the Green Belt.

This report provides the Executive Member with the draft documentation for approval, prior to it being published for a period of consultation.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Executive Member approves the documentation detailed at Appendix A, B & C for consultation.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Dennis Smith (Head of Strategic Planning & Housing Services). Ext. 4557.
Rob Haslam (Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Planning)). Ext. 4788.

Background Papers:

- Trafford Publication Core Strategy (September 2010)
- Trafford Submission Core Strategy (December 2010)

1.0 Background

1.1 The report to Executive on the 21 March 2011 detailed that the Council was undertaking additional work in relation to three areas of the Core Strategy. These were:

- The Regional Centre and Inner Areas Boundaries;
- Policy L5 – Climate Change; and

- The proposed inclusion of the Unitary Development Plan High Amenity Strategic Development Site, at Davenport Green, within the Green Belt.

1.2 At the meeting on the 21 March 2011, the Executive delegated authority for approving the contents of the further consultation documentation to the Executive Member for Economic Growth and Prosperity.

2.0 Documentation for consultation

2.1 The work detailed in the 21 March Executive report has now been completed and officers are now seeking Executive Member approval to consult on this additional work, ahead of the recommencement of the Hearing sessions at the end of May. The outcomes of this additional work are detailed below.

The Regional Centre and Inner Areas Boundaries:

2.2 Appendix A details the proposed document relating to further work on the Regional Centre and the Inner Area Boundaries. In this document, the Council has set out 2 options for the boundary of the Regional Centre and 4 Options for the boundary of the Inner Areas, for consultation.

2.3 Following consideration of evidence base documents, the definition of the boundaries as defined by the RSS, the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal and the outcome of discussion at the Examination Hearing sessions the Council has identified and indicated a single Preferred Option for each of these.

2.4 The Preferred Option for the boundary of the Regional Centre is Option 1 RC1. This is the same as that detailed within the submitted Core Strategy. It is considered that this option best reflects the definitions provided within RSS and recognises the important role that the Manchester United Stadium Area provides to the sub-region in terms of leisure, culture and tourism. Additionally this boundary provides the best physical alignment with the Core Strategies of Manchester and Salford.

2.5 The Preferred Option for the boundary of the Inner Areas is detailed as Option 2 – IO2. This option is a change to the position submitted by the Council to the Core Strategy Examination. This change is in light of consideration of matters raised at the Examination Hearing sessions, a review of Policy MCR2 detailed in the RSS and the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal. This revised option can be demonstrated to support the growth of the Regional Centre and the delivery of residential development at the Trafford Centre Rectangle, close to two key sources of economic development, the Regional Centre and Trafford Park.

Policy L5 – Climate Change

2.6 Appendix B provides a re-drafted Policy L5 for consultation. The Policy has been reworked to address the concerns raised by the Inspector at the Hearing Sessions. The main changes are as follows:

- The policy text relating to the national timeline to achieve zero carbon new buildings has been removed;
- It is now proposed to apply only the CO2 reduction targets within the Trafford Low Carbon Study, with the baseline for the targets being national Building Regulations Part L 2006;
- The Policy has been simplified to detail two CO2 reduction targets:

- 40% for major development, located in the Low Carbon Growth Areas; and
- 30% for all major development outside of these areas.
- A CO2 reduction target is no longer required for minor developments; and
- The policy has been revised to acknowledge the impact of all required planning obligations on scheme viability, and the need to demonstrate flexibility.

2.7 Text relating to the Pollution and Water sections of the Policy has not been altered.

The proposed inclusion of the Unitary Development Plan High Amenity Strategic Development Site, at Davenport Green, within the Green Belt.

2.8 Appendix C to this report details the work that has been undertaken relating to the further Sustainability Appraisal of Davenport Green. This work has been completed, using information supplied to the Council by the land owners of the site in November 2010. This reappraisal details a more positive sustainability score and effects than the previous SA undertaken in 2009. In 2009 there were many uncertainties due to the limited information submitted by the site promoters and this further information has allowed for more certainty to be given to the new scores.

2.9 The reappraisal still shows a negative score against Sustainability Objective E6 as development will result in the permanent loss of green field land. Davenport Green's situation away from Trafford's residential communities and areas of regeneration also mean that it can not score as highly as the other Strategic Locations in terms of certainty of improving accessibility to services and facilities. Additionally, although the proposal identified public transport improvements as part of the development, the sites proximity to the motorway, a lack of a direct Metrolink connection and its distance from Trafford's areas in need of jobs mean there is a possibility of unsustainable commuting patterns, therefore certainty against reducing the effect of traffic on the environment has been identified as being low.

2.10 The further SA of Core Strategy Policy R4 (Green Belt and other Protected Open Land) was carried out to include examination of the impact on the sustainability appraisal objectives of returning the site to green belt, in line with the Submitted Core Strategy. In terms of social and environmental objectives this work demonstrates that the impacts of returning the land to Green Belt are positive particularly in terms of protecting the diversity and distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character of nearby conservation areas in Trafford, and preventing urban sprawl. This approach is detailed to provide a high quality environment in this location as well as assisting in focussing development towards the key regeneration areas of Trafford.

2.11 However, the SA did acknowledge that the policy would restrict economic development opportunities and as such would result in Trafford's supply of available employment land being reduced by c.10ha. This reduction has been taken into account in Policy W1 of the Core Strategy, which details that there is still sufficient land available to meet the requirements of economic growth in the borough over the plan period, and beyond.

2.12 Having considered the outcomes of the SA officers have also reviewed the chronology of decisions made relating to Davenport Green and its evolution

through the Core Strategy. This work still details that the economic case for the UDP allocation at Davenport Green is not supported for this particular employment land over the plan period. The review detail that the economic needs and priorities for Trafford and Greater Manchester have moved on since Davenport Green was first considered and supports the economic proposals set out in the Core Strategy. The conclusion of this work is that it is not considered necessary to amend the Core Strategy in relation to the land at Davenport Green.

3.0 Consultation Arrangements

- 3.1 The Inspector has set the Council a clear timetable for completing this work and has detailed that the postponed Hearing sessions will resume on Wednesday 25th May 2011. The Hearings are set to last for 3 days.
- 3.2 Ahead of these sessions the Council is consulting on this further work between 18th April and noon on 9th May 2011. Although this is a reduced period of consultation to that normally undertaken in relation to development plans, this consultation is not a statutorily prescribed consultation period and has been agreed with the Planning Inspector to meet her timetable. It is therefore not incumbent upon the Council to undertake a six week consultation period. All representors involved in these sessions have been notified in advance by the Programme Officer that the Council intends to carry out this consultation. In this way all interested parties will have had approximately four weeks notice of the forthcoming consultation.
- 3.3 In addition to contacting all those who made representation on the Publication version of the Plan, a number of our recognised consultation methods will be used to reach as wide an audience as possible, including:
- details available in libraries and Trafford Direct offices;
 - publicity in the local media;
 - details available on the Council's website;
- 3.4 A special Executive meeting will be convened in May to agree any changes to the Core Strategy that will be necessary as a result of this consultation, prior to the reconvened Hearing Sessions of the Examination.

4.0 "Planning for Growth" 2011 Budget Statement

- 4.1 In addition to the above, the Inspector has written to the Council (within her Note 5 (CD12.67)) inviting comments as to how the planning policy changes that were announced in the 2011 Budget statement might affect the Council's representations and the Soundness of the Core Strategy.
- 4.2 The Council will respond separately to the Inspector on this matter but the response will include a view on the implications of the Greater Manchester Enterprise Zone at Airport City within Manchester on the Trafford Core Strategy.

5.0 Other Options

- 5.1 The Core Strategy is a key document within the Local Development Framework, setting the spatial vision and development strategy until 2026. It is a document that is specifically required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).
- 5.2 Upon adoption, the Core Strategy and forthcoming Development Plan Documents (DPD) will replace parts of the Council's adopted Unitary

Development Plan. A full list of the Unitary Development Plan policies to be replaced by the Core Strategy will be detailed in the adopted Core Strategy.

5.3 If we do not consult on this additional work that has been identified as necessary by the Inspector, there is a risk that the Core Strategy would be found unsound and the Council would not be able to adopt it as programmed in the Local Development Scheme. In turn this likely to result in implications for the management of new development within the Borough and the securing of, for example affordable housing contributions.

6.0 Consultation

6.1 Consultation arrangements have been outlined in section 3, above.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendation

7.1 To approve documentation for consultation ahead of the revised Hearing Sessions.

Key Decision

This is a key decision currently on the Forward Plan: No

Finance Officer Clearance: PH
 Legal Officer Clearance: JF
CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE



To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The document has been developed to be the Spatial representation of the Trafford Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy.
Financial	The preparation of the Core Strategy is being funded from the existing Strategic Planning & Developments budget within the EGP Directorate's overall budget.
Legal Implications:	The Core Strategy is being developed in line with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and subsequent amendments.
Equality/Diversity Implications	The Core Strategy has been subjected to EIA assessment to ensure that equality issues have been considered as part of the preparation.
Sustainability Implications	The Core Strategy has been subjected to independent sustainability appraisal throughout its preparation.
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	Consultees will be able to make electronic submissions to the Core Strategy consultation on line and all the documents are available to access through the Local Development Framework web page.
Risk Management Implications	The timetable for producing the Core Strategy is set out in the Local Development Scheme.
Health and Safety Implications	None.