

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: 16 FEBRUARY 2023
 title: LOCAL PLAN – REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES
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1. PURPOSE

1.1 To provide an update on the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation phase.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives - The regulation 18 process took place as part of the local plan update, the purpose of the regulation 18 process is to allow public consultation, which gives relevant parties the opportunity to provide their thoughts upon the current and future state of the Ribble Valley. The regulation.18 process is an integral part of preparing a new Local Plan, as it allows public consultees to offer their opinion at an early stage during the plan making process.
- Corporate Priorities - The Regulation 18 process is an integral part of preparing a new local plan thus it is a necessary requirement for all local authorities. Doing so helps to shape the upcoming Local Plan, that when adopted will act as a development strategy that shall shape the Ribble Valley for the period to 2041. Carrying out the regulation 18 consultation, allows for the council to set out strategic development options on which it seeks to inform the next stages of the preferred plan.
- Other Considerations - None.

2. Regulation 18 Consultation

2.1 Members will be aware that in preparation of the emerging Local Plan, the Council carried out a Regulation-18 public consultation as part of the early preparation of the Local Plan. This period ran from Thursday, May 26th until 5pm on the 7th of July 2022.

2.2 This public consultation period yielded a wide variety of responses, from a range of consultees. To provide a clear and concise insight into the responses, consultees have been put into the following groups.

Statutory Consultees
 Developers/Home Builders
 Public respondents
 Businesses.

2.3 At Appendix 1 the full Regulation 18 responses have been summarised within the various groupings listed above to provide a comprehensive analysis of the responses given.

2.4 The main themes raised as part of the Regulation 18 consultation exercise are:

2.4.1 Climate Change

The emerging Local Plan must place greater emphasis on Climate Change policies and measures. All respondent groups have in some way highlighted the need to address the current climate emergency.

2.4.2 **Housing developments**

Regard to the number of new housing developments coming forward. House builders and developers have urged the Council to reconsider the application of the standard methodology housing figure. Meanwhile, members of the public have voiced concerns over the potential scale of development coming forward and the amount of development that has occurred in recent years.

- 2.5 The outcome of the regulation 18 process is that the Council must now reflect upon the responses given and address them to ensure the responses inform the next stages in the plan making process. The next step following this will be to prepare a regulation 19 statement that shall be the Council's preferred plan, which shall work to encompass the key outcomes of the Regulation 18 consultation phase. The matters raised as set out below will be sought to be addressed through careful policy considerations and through development strategies.
- 2.6 The Council's preferred plan will be reported to Members in due course in advance of the regulation 19 stage of the process.

3 **CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Members note the outcome of the Regulation 18 consultation which will feed directly into the production of the new Local Plan.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

For further information please ask for Daniel Eastwood, extension 3200.

APPENDIX 1

Regulation 18 Consultation outcomes

In this summary note the regulation-18 consultation responses shall be broken down and explored to provide a comprehensive overview of the key emergent themes from the consultation. To provide a clear and concise overview of the responses, the responses have been put into four distinct groups. These are; Businesses, statutory consultees, developers/home builders and finally public respondents. The reason for this is that by grouping respondents, individual responses can be assimilated to provide one overall consensus that has been shared amongst a group of respondents.

Businesses

The business respondents have highlighted a wide range of issues regarding the local plan. A trend was that the plan should be clear on how it will tackle a range of issues and that the plan should be conscious of future changes to the borough.

Climate Change

A key response to the local plan was that the plan was light on Climate Change content. A further concern was that RVBC had not grasped the gravity of the Climate Change issues facing the borough. As part of the greater focus on Climate Change issues the possibility of harnessing onshore wind as renewable energy on site has been raised.

Historic environment

There has been calls for the historic environment to be considered when preparing the new local plan.

Public Rights of way

Public rights of way should be considered in any upcoming developments and improved at any possible opportunity.

Health

The local plan should be prepared in a manner that adequately addresses the upcoming and future health requirements of the borough. There should be a plan to ensure that health facilities are put on the same level as public transport and education when it comes to obtaining section 106 improvements.

Later living accommodation

Policies should encourage the delivery of specialist forms of later living accommodation. This would allow those in the later stages of their life to live longer without the need to be in a care home.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL will have a major influence on the ability to meet the needs arising from development for sporting provision in the area. As such the local plan should be prepared to ensure that CIL can be used effectively.

Furthermore, the respondent felt as though the council should have an up to date playing pitch strategy, that would form a key part of the evidence base before moving forward.

Developers

Through analysis of the responses provided by developer's and home builders there has been two strong emergent themes and a series of other less collective themes that have come through.

Standardised method for calculating housing need.

Firstly, all responses from developers/home builders followed the same trend that by adopting the standard methodology housing delivery figure, the council would encounter both economic and housing issues. It was a widely held belief that by adopting the standard methodology figure, the local plan could not be deemed to have been positively prepared.

It has been suggested that RVBC should adopt the housing delivery figure suggested through the SHENA carried out by Turley's, of 280 dwellings per year. Furthermore, if the council were to adopt the standard methodology figure there would be significant issues with regard to the ability to deliver affordable housing. By adopting such a low housing figure of around 130 dwellings per

year, there would be little possibility of development coming through that would be able to deliver the number of affordable homes necessary.

Overall consensus is that RVBC must accommodate a higher housing delivery figure, in order to allow for further economic growth and provide the necessary amount of affordable housing.

Developers also noted the need to include a buffer between minimum housing supply and overall land supply. If the higher housing delivery figure was to be adopted then further land would need to be released, otherwise the council would run out of available land.

Plan Period

The vast majority of responses have called for the local plan period to be extended until 2040, as adoption of the plan is unlikely until 2024, not having a plan in place for 15 years would undermine the purpose of producing a local plan. Also, by extending the plan period it would set out a clear vision for the Ribble Valley for a significant period of time.

Climate Change

Greater Climate Change measures and policies in the plan. As long as this wasn't done in a way that would inhibit development from coming forward, but rather to ensure that upcoming development was sustainable and fit for future generations.

Cyber Security Development

The local plan should take advantage of the opportunity to develop with the new cyber security development that is coming through at Samlesbury.

Tier 1 villages

To support the economic growth of the borough there must be greater allowance of development in tier 1 villages, Gisburn and Langho were lauded as potential options. This could coincide with a re-consideration of the existing settlement boundaries and hierarchy.

Statutory consultees

The responses given by statutory consultees were more widespread than much of the previous responses discussed. Despite this there are a series of overlapping themes that provide a trend in the types of responses provided by statutory consultees. It is worth noting that many statutory consultees have only commented upon issues directly affecting them rather than the borough-wide scope of the local plan. Therefore, in many cases, parish councils have only commented on parish issues and not borough-wide issues, thus these responses did not typically inform a trend in the responses.

Climate Change

Need to ensure that any upcoming development, be that housing or new employment land coming forward, must be climate friendly. This has been of particular concern to respondents in the midst of the Climate Crisis and a need to ensure that any new development is fit for many generations to come. In conjunction with this there has been a call for future developments to ensure that people do not become further reliant upon a personal car as the main means of transport.

Public Transport

To ensure that people become less car dependent, developments must be backed up by better public transport connectivity and the emerging Ribble Valley LCWIP (Local cycling and walking infrastructure plans). This would also ease congestion on the A59 and help wider carbon reduction initiatives across the Ribble Valley.

Electric Vehicles

There should be more electric vehicle (EV) charging provision across the Borough, as part of a drive towards net-zero.

Biodiversity

There has been little mention of biodiversity. Respondents are keen to see further clarity given on what RVBC will do to maintain and preserve the rich biodiversity of the Ribble Valley. There has also been calls to ensure any new developments provide biodiversity net gains.

Elderly Accommodation

Better provision of elderly accommodation in upcoming housing developments. Respondents were keen to ensure this did not simply mean more bungalows, but rather a diverse housing mix that would cater for the different needs of the elderly population. However, in line with new developments, there must be significant infrastructure improvements to coincide with this.

Public respondents

Climate Change

There must be greater attention afforded to Climate Change in the emerging local plan including increasing public transport options to remove peoples reliance on the private car.

Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure improvements should come forward on the back of large-scale development across the Ribble Valley. This would be in the form of road improvements or extra services such as the aforementioned public transport provision.

Section 106 agreements

In preparing the local plan the council must ensure a robust strategy with regard to section 106 allocations, to ensure that infrastructure is improved accordingly with new developments.

Northern Forest Initiative

Ribble Valley should look to become part of the Northern Forest initiative. This is a scheme focused solely in the North of England with the aim of planting at least 50million trees across the UK, to help fight; Climate Change, the biodiversity crisis and flooding. This could be a great cause for the Ribble Valley to be involved in and would make a great contribution towards achieving net-zero. It is something that can be fully funded through government grants and would be a great way of achieving net-zero. Further information is available via the below link.

1. [The Northern Forest: Planting 50 Million Trees | The Woodland Trust](#)