

Nottingham City Council

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Station Street, NG2 3NG, on 20 November 2024 from 2.00 pm - 2.44 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Leslie Ayoola (Chair)
Councillor Kirsty L Jones (Vice Chair)
Councillor Graham Chapman
Councillor Imran Jalil
Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Zafran Khan
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis
Councillor Sam Lux
Councillor Samina Riaz

Absent

Councillor Kevin Clarke
Councillor Sam Harris
Councillor Faith Gakanje-Ajala

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Laura Alvarez - Senior Principal Heritage and Urban Designer
Mike Carey - Governance Officer
Jennifer Curry - Senior Planning Officer
Matt Gregory - Greater Nottingham Planning Manager
Matt Ralfe - Interim Head of Development Management
Tamazin Wilson - Solicitor

29 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Kevin Clarke - work commitments.

30 Declarations of Interests

None.

31 Minutes

The Committee requested corrections to Minute 25 for the meeting held on 23 October 2024.

32 Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Publication Draft 2024

Matt Gregory, Head of Planning, Strategy and Building Control, presented the report on the Greater Nottingham Publication Draft Strategic Plan (the plan') which has already been presented to Executive Board and is open for consultation until 16 December 2024. The following points were highlighted:

- (a) Executive Board is responsible for adopting the plan, but as part of the consultation stage it is presented to the Planning Committee for comments.

The plan has been produced through a partnership between Nottingham City, Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, and Rushcliffe Borough Councils. After several rounds of consultation, the process for agreeing the plan is at the Regulation 19 pre-submission stage, the formal consultation before the plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination along with all representations made;

- (a) policies in the plan are presented according to four themes: Sustainable Growth, Places for People, Our Environment, and Making It Happen;
- (b) compared to the Greater Nottingham Aligned Core Strategies document from 2014, the plan has a stronger focus on urban living and urban development, but not at the expense of quality of life. There is a stronger promotion of blue-green infrastructure, alongside or enhanced through new development, and more emphasis on climate change. In terms of spatial strategy, the plan aims to build on existing infrastructure rather than providing new settlements requiring a new range of infrastructure. The plan promotes 'compact development', which enables people to access services and facilities locally, within walking distance;
- (c) for the first time, as part of Policy 1 related to climate change and carbon neutral development, the plan sets a standard for improving emissions rates in new developments above current building regulations;
- (d) the spatial strategy shows where development is anticipated. There are not a lot of new sites in the plan, and none in the city boundary. However, the plan for Broad Marsh has changed substantially since there is no prospect of the site returning to its previous retail use;
- (e) the plan sets a housing target of nearly 55,000 new homes across the four authority areas up to 2041, with 26,690 of those to be delivered in the city. That is a challenging target, and is in the upper regions of what has been achieved in recent years, but is right for the city to address housing issues and drive regeneration;
- (f) in terms of employment, the plan is informed by the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan and plans to meet the most ambitious scenario outlined by the LEP. The function has now been taken over by the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), but they have not yet produced a new economic strategy. Significant new office space is planned for (particularly in the city), as well as industrial and warehousing space (mainly in Rushcliffe), and logistics and strategic distribution space. The plan identifies important strategic development sites to strengthen and diversify the local economy, building particularly on the science and knowledge-based sectors;
- (g) the Places for People and Our Environment sections include policies on the natural environment, enhancing biodiversity, protecting and enhancing heritage assets, and making the best of environmental assets. These are an important strand of policy to sit alongside the growth elements of the plan, to

ensure sustainable development and good growth rather than just growth, creating places that people will enjoy living in;

- (h) the Making It Happen section looks at infrastructure developments through S106 contributions and particular strategic allocations, with 500 homes being used as a benchmark for what is identified as a strategic site. For Nottingham City these are the former Stanton Tip, Broad Marsh, and the Boots site. Other sites will be developed through the subsequent Local Plan;
- (i) the consultation closes on the 16 December 2024 at 5pm. Committee Members and members of the public are urged to access the plan through the Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership website and to contribute to the consultation.

In the discussion which followed, and in response to questions from the Committee, the following points were made:

- (j) individual members complimented numerous aspects of the plan, including:
 - i. the focus on creating balanced communities, with appropriate balance between the transient and the permanent, to create communities that are stable but not fixed;
 - ii. the strength of the plan on sustainability, biodiversity and ecology;
 - iii. the ambition to set the housing target above the government assessment, as a crucial factor in economic development;
 - iv. setting building emissions standards higher than current building regulations;
 - v. the strong focus on local centres and particularly Nottingham City centre, as sites of economic development, leisure, and culture;
 - vi. the approach to transport, and developer contributions to infrastructure;
 - vii. the strategic allocation sites, particularly the plans for Broad Marsh;
 - viii. securing cooperation among the involved local authorities to create a cohesive plan;
- (k) there are references to affordable housing for older residents and other specialist housing for residents with particular needs and disabilities, including in Policy 8 and Policy 19. This could be strengthened to reflect the pressure to secure housing that accommodates a rising older population. The plan could make links to the Market Position Statement developed by Nottingham City's Adult Social Care department, and Priority 4 in Nottingham's Housing Strategy, 'Homes fit for the future';
- (l) in line with the ambition to increase the housing stock in the city given the constricted space, there could be more attention to tall buildings in the plan. 'Tall buildings' are referenced in Policy 6, but there are other opportunities throughout the document to use and explain the term;
- (m) there are potential risks in the plan for the City Council, including:
 - i. having lots of family housing situated on the outskirts may promote the drift of families out of the city;

- ii. potential lack of transport links to new developments like the Stanton site by junction 25. Without strong transport links, the city may miss retail trade and job opportunities;
- iii. there is a concern that development might be hampered by tight green conditions, which would impact on developer contributions and may put other aspirations at risk.

In light of these and other potential risks, a City Council-specific risk analysis would be welcome; similarly, it would be useful to establish a City-specific set of priorities, which could be achieved through the Local Plan or through side policies;

- (n) the plan may be presented to the Committee a further two times before implementation: firstly, if changes are made before the examination in response to this consultation period, and secondly, to report on main modifications that are proposed during the examination period. A City-specific risk assessment and analysis of the City's priorities will be presented to the Committee alongside one of these reports, to ensure the Committee retains oversight of the risk assessment process;
- (o) in Nottingham, the Local Plan currently includes the Aligned Core Strategies (Part 1), which sets the high level strategy for the Greater Nottingham area, the Nottingham Local Plan (Part 2), Land and Planning Policies Development Plan (LAPP), which sets out site allocations and Development Management policies, the Waste Core Strategy, which is currently being updated in cooperation with Nottinghamshire County Council, and other supplementary documents. Planning decisions are made considering all documents comprising the Local Plan. When finalised, the plan will replace the Aligned Core Strategies document as part of the Local Plan;
- (p) at the moment, the authority does not have any policy basis to refuse development which does not have desired sustainability credentials, as there is no policy in the Aligned Core Strategies document or the LAPP which enables this. The plan does include a specific policy on sustainability so, if adopted without amendment, this may be given weight in decisions once in force, taking the Development Plan as a whole and other material considerations into account which may balance against the policy;
- (q) 'value engineering' to promote objectives like flood resilience and a stronger green policy through development can be complex. Sometimes, permission is granted for plans that include these elements and later the developers will argue that they have become unviable. These arguments must be assessed on their merits and sometimes scaling back must be accepted pragmatically, but the existence of specific policies in the plan does give more weight to these objectives in negotiations with developers;
- (r) as well as encouraging high standards, it is important to ensure the city has future-resistant homes, which can be adaptable as residents age and needs change. The plan promotes resilience through climate change policies which mean developments are operationally carbon neutral and which will significantly reduce bills, and the plan stipulates that all new dwellings should

not only meet national space standards but be adaptable to meet future needs. There are three recognised levels of accessibility – visitable dwellings M4(1), accessible and adaptable dwellings M4(2), and wheelchair user dwelling M4(3). Currently most dwellings are M4(1) standard, but the Policy 8 determines that all new dwellings should comply with M4(2);

- (s) modern methods of construction (MMC) may become more important over time, depending on how the housing market develops. The decision to use MMC cannot be set in planning policy. When using modern methods, factory sites are needed close to the development sites, and while the city does not have much land available for industrial use, there is land available for this purpose in the boroughs;
- (t) there are no plans to alter the green belt boundary in Nottingham City, but there are limited proposals to alter it in the boroughs. The majority of the land included in the plan already has planning permission or is being brought forward from previous plans, so those decisions have largely already been taken.

Resolved to note the Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (as appended to the report) and for members to submit any further comments through the consultation.