



# **Leeds Site Allocations Plan**

**Leeds Local Plan**

**Remitted Part of the Leeds Site Allocation Plan –  
Addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal  
Adoption Statement of July 2019**

**Development Plan Document**

**January 2024**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Adoption Statement was published to accompany the Leeds Site Allocations Plan (SAP) which was adopted on the 10th July 2019 by Leeds City Council. This is the Addendum to the SA Adoption Statement which addresses the Remitted part of the SAP (SAPR).
- 1.2. The SAP is a development plan document within the Local Plan for Leeds. As such it forms part of the statutory development plan alongside the Leeds Core Strategy, saved UDP Policies, the Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan, the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan and made Neighbourhood Plans. The SAP and all adoption documents can be viewed online at [www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk).
- 1.3. The SAP provides site allocations, designations and requirements that will help to deliver the Core Strategy policies, ensuring that sufficient land is available in appropriate locations to meet the targets set out in the Core Strategy and achieve the Council's ambitions. It covers housing, employment, retail and green space allocations for the whole of the Leeds district (except for the area within the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan).
- 1.4. Following the adoption of the SAP in July 2019, a legal challenge was made in August 2019. The case was heard at the High Court in February 2020 with the Judgment being handed down on Monday 8th June 2020. The Judge allowed the claim on three out of the seven grounds raised. An Order of Relief was handed down on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2020, whereby the Judge concluded that it was appropriate to remit parts of the SAP to the Secretary of State, through the Planning Inspectorate, and that in relation to those parts, the SAP process should be taken back to the stage where the error of law occurred. To that end, other than the 37 Green Belt sites subject to the High Court judgement the remainder of the SAP remains Adopted. The effect of this is that all parts of the SAP which allocate sites for housing (including 1 mixed use site for housing and employment) that, immediately before the adoption of the SAP were in the Green Belt, were remitted back to the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate for further examination.
- 1.5. The SAP Remittal has been subject to examination by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State with examination hearings held in September 2021 and May 2022. The Inspector's Report is dated 2nd January 2024. In terms of the legal requirements for Sustainability Appraisal (SA) the Inspector concluded that "*The extent of the reasonable alternatives has been considered within the context of the scope of the Remittal and the SA has sufficiently evaluated the reasonable alternatives*".
- 1.6. This Addendum has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). As part of this, Regulation 16(3) and (4) require the preparation of a statement outlining: -
  - i. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan (that is, the Remitted part of the Site Allocations Plan) (See Section 2 of this statement);

- ii. How the Sustainability Appraisal has been taken into account (See Section 2 of this statement);
- iii. How the opinions in response to the consultations on the Sustainability Appraisal have been taken into account (See Section 3 of this statement);
- iv. The reason for choosing the Remitted part of the SAP as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives (See Section 4 of this statement);
- v. The measures agreed to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the SAP (See Section 5 and Appendix 1 of this statement);

**2. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the SAPR; and How the Sustainability Appraisal has been taken into account**

- 2.1 When preparing planning documents, such as the SAPR, local planning authorities must conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the '2004 Regulations'. This is the preparation of a sustainability appraisal incorporating environmental, social and economic effects of plans.
- 2.2 The SA of the Remitted part of the SAP commenced in 2019 and has been carried out as an iterative and ongoing process throughout each stage of the remittal and was undertaken in accordance with the 2004 Regulations. The stages of the plan process are set out as follows:

Council's Proposed Main Modifications to the SAP (January 2021)

- 2.3 As a result of the High Court Judgement, the Council was required to review its position in relation to the 37 Green Belt sites. This principally involved taking account of revised local plan policies in relation to the Leeds housing requirement and updating the housing evidence-base. The 2004 Regulations requires an assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of "*..reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan..*"(Part 2 of 148 3 12(2)(b)). The objective of the Plan was to have a fully adopted SAP up to 2028 covering the whole of the Leeds metropolitan district. Taking account of the evidence and policy framework, 3 reasonable alternatives were identified:-

Option 1: Propose all 37 Green Belt sites as allocations in the SAP

Option 2: Propose none of the 37 Green Belt sites as allocations in the SAP and retain them all as Green Belt

Option 3: Propose some of the Green Belt sites as allocations in the SAP on the basis that they would help address housing shortfalls within individual Housing Market Characteristic Areas (This option would retain some of the allocations, namely those in Aireborough, East, North, Outer North East, Outer South, Outer South East and Outer South West)

- 2.4 Each of these alternatives were subject to Sustainability Appraisal, using a systematic approach developed for all Local Development Documents to describe, assess and compare. Responding to updated housing land supply evidence, the Council considered that the 37 sites subject to the SAPR should be retained as Green Belt land (Option 2). A 6 week consultation on the Council's Proposed Main Modifications to reflect this was undertaken from the 5<sup>th</sup> January to 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

#### Council's Proposed Main Modifications to the SAP (March 2021)

- 2.5 Following consideration of consultation responses to the Proposed Main Modifications and a representation from the landowner of site MX2-38 Barrowby Lane, Manston a review of employment land supply was undertaken (including assessing the effects of the sterilisation of allocated employment land by safeguarding directions for rail projects). This identified that there was insufficient land outside the Green Belt to meet employment needs, which warranted the release of one of the Green Belt sites (Barrowby Lane, Manston) for employment use only (this site had previously a mixed use housing and employment allocation). This change of circumstances led to the Council identifying a fourth reasonable alternative for assessment:

Option 4: Propose none of the 37 Green Belt sites as housing allocations in the SAP and retain 36 of them as Green Belt. Propose 1 site for general employment use ('EG2-37 Barrowby Lane, Manston LS15') replacing the original allocation for mixed uses at MX2-38.

- 2.6 This option was subject to SA. Taking account of the updated employment land evidence and the SA, it was considered that exceptional circumstances existed to justify the allocation of the land at Barrowby Lane wholly for general employment (reference EG2-37). Following the submission of the SAPR on the 26<sup>th</sup> March, a consultation on the Council's Proposed Main Modifications to the SAP reflecting the inclusion of EG2-37 Barrowby Lane, Manston as an employment allocation took place from the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021 to 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021. No changes to the SA were identified through this consultation.

#### How the SA was taken into account

- 2.7 As with the original SAP process, the preparation of the SAPR has been an iterative process with the SA being an important informative in the decision-making process. The identification of reasonable alternatives was discussed as a collective process and the 4 options were subject to SA which identified the positive and negative effects for each option.

### **3. How the opinions in response to the consultations on the Sustainability Appraisal have been taken into account**

- 3.1 As highlighted in Section 2, the SAPR and accompanying SA process have been subject to public consultation. The comments submitted on the SA Addenda were considered and assessed as to the need for any further revisions to the SA process.

3.2 The statutory SA consultees (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) were consulted and made limited comments. Where a revision was requested, the SA Addendum was revised accordingly.

**4. The reason for choosing the SAPR as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives**

4.1 The SEA Regulations require assessment of the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and “reasonable alternatives” taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan, and the reasons for selecting alternatives should be outlined in the SA Report.

4.2 As stated in Section 2, four reasonable alternatives were identified for the SAPR each of which were subject to SA. Option 4 was the preferred reasonable alternative (Propose none of the 37 Green Belt sites as housing allocations in the SAP and retain 36 of them as Green Belt. Propose 1 site for general employment use (‘EG2-37 Barrowby Lane, Manston LS15’) replacing the original allocation for mixed uses at MX2-38).

4.3 The reason for choosing Option 4 as the preferred reasonable alternative was that having considered up to date housing land evidence the Council concluded there was sufficient land outside of Green Belt to avoid releasing any of the 37 sites for housing from the Green Belt to meet needs in the 2012 to 2028 plan period. However, the up to date employment land evidence showed insufficient land outside of the Green Belt to meet employment needs, which warranted release from the Green Belt of one of the sites (Barrowby Lane, Manston) for employment use in order to ensure the objectives of the Plan were met.

**5. The measures agreed to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the SAP**

5.1 The SEA Directive requires the monitoring of significant environmental effects arising from the implementation of the SAP following adoption of the remitted parts. The Adopted Core Strategy established a monitoring framework which will be used to assess the effects of the SAP. The monitoring framework is provided as Appendix 1 to the SA Adoption Statement (2019).