

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Gedling Local Development Plan Issues and Options Document: Consultation

Date: 10th July 2025

Author: Planning Policy Manager

Wards Affected

All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to go out for consultation on the Gedling Local Development Plan Issues and Options Document and the separate Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

Key Decision

The Aligned Core Strategy and Local Planning Document comprise the development plan for Gedling Borough and affects all wards. Reviewing these plans with the intention of ultimately replacing them with the Gedling Local Development Plan is a key decision as it is likely to have a significant impact on those living and working in two or more wards.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- 1) That Cabinet considers and agrees that the Gedling Local Development Plan Issues and Options Document (Appendix 1) and separate Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (Appendix 2) be published for a six week period of consultation**
- 2) That Cabinet authorises the Director of Place in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder to approve any drafting or minor editing changes and update the documents where necessary prior to them being published for consultation.**

1 Background

- 1.1 Cabinet at its meeting on 13th February 2025, agreed to withdraw from the preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and to commence the preparation of the Gedling Local Development Plan. Subsequently the decision was approved by Council on 5th March 2025. Prior to withdrawal, Gedling Borough Council had been preparing the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP) in conjunction with Broxtowe Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils to provide a consistent strategic planning framework for the authorities concerned. Although, Gedling Borough has withdrawn from the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan it retains its ability to align strategic planning policy with the other Greater Nottingham Councils though the aegis of the Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership and joint working.
- 1.2 Strategic policies for Gedling Borough are set out in the Greater Nottingham Aligned Core Strategies for Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham adopted in 2014 which forms Part 1 of the Local Plan and non-strategic policies are set out in the adopted Local Planning Document (2018), Part 2 of the Local Plan. The new Gedling Local Development Plan will contain both strategic and non-strategic planning policies and will replace the Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan.
- 1.3 The Gedling Local Development Plan Issues and Options is a discussion document which seeks views on the most appropriate policy approaches to address the Borough's development needs over the plan period. In drafting the Gedling Local Development Plan, the joint evidence base and policy approach taken by the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan will form the starting point and consideration will be given as to whether greater detail is needed in order to address non-strategic issues and whether the context has changed (such as through the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework) which would support a different approach. However, the intention is that the Gedling Local Development Plan will align with the GNSP as it relates to strategic matters.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 Approval is sought to consult on the Issues and Options Document which is the first stage in preparing the Gedling Local Development Plan. It asks a series of questions regarding key issues that will help narrow down the alternative options and define the content of the final document.
- 2.2 This 'Issues and Options' stage is structured around a series of topics and, for each topic, a number of issues have been identified. A number of possible options for responding to each issue are given and a series of questions are

asked in order to tease out the views of the community, business and other organisations on which they think would be the best approach.

- 2.3 The following paragraphs summarise the key content of the Issues and Options document.

Plan Period

It is proposed that the plan period runs to March 2043 to ensure a 15 year plan period on adoption of the local plan in accordance with Government policy.

Vision and Objectives

- 2.4 The document proposes that the Vision and Objectives should reflect the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan as they relate to Gedling (aside from references to the number of homes to be delivered).

Climate Change

- 2.5 Climate change is a key issue facing Gedling Borough. Based on evidence commissioned by the Greater Nottingham authorities, a policy has been formulated to achieve net zero carbon development which is set out in the Greater Nottingham Plan which includes for example setting a Target Emissions Rate (energy performance of a building measured by annual CO₂ emissions) that exceeds the current Building Regulations. Such an approach would be consistent across the Greater Nottingham Area. The Issues and Options document seeks views from consultees as to whether adoption of the GNSP Policy on Climate Change would assist Gedling Borough becoming “carbon neutral” within the Plan period.

- 2.6 Spatial Strategy

The Issues and Options document sets out a settlement hierarchy in a manner consistent with the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan which is the spatial basis for distributing development on a sequential basis with priority given to those locations that are most sustainable. The spatial hierarchy is as follows:

- a) in the main built up area of Nottingham;*
- b) adjoining the main built up area of Nottingham;*
- c) adjoining to the Sub Regional Centre of Hucknall; and*
- d) in or adjoining Key Settlements.*

- 2.7 For other settlements, development would be of a smaller scale to be defined in policy. The Issues and Options document seeks views on whether there is justification to adopt a different spatial strategy.

Green Belt

- 2.8 The Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan retains the Nottingham Derby Green Belt but accepts that the boundary of the Green Belt should be recast to accommodate larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions. The Issues and Options document sets out the considerations that should direct development towards Green Belt areas rather than non-Green Belt areas (including safeguarded land); and the improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt areas that could be considered and how these improvements could be achieved. The NPPF introduced the concept of Grey Belt which should be prioritised over other Green Belt locations in circumstances where Green Belt land is needed for development. The Issues and Options document seeks views on definitions relating to Grey Belt as they apply to Gedling Borough.

Housing target

- 2.9 The NPPF makes it clear that the standard methodology should be used to establish a minimum housing requirement but this requirement could be higher if, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. The standard method calculates the annual housing target for Gedling Borough to be 631 houses per annum. The Issues and Options document poses the question of whether there is any justification to exceed the housing need figure based on the standard method bearing in mind Gedling Borough is a Green Belt authority. Other questions on the housing topic include, amongst others, the type and mix of housing to be provided including specialist housing.
- 2.10 Appendix A to the Issues and Options document comprises a series of plans for each part of the Borough, identifying areas where land has been put forward for development and landowners through the annual Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and a 'call for sites' undertaken in February/March 2025. Further assessment will be needed to understand which of these sites are suitable to be allocated for development and at this stage no decisions have been made.

Employment

- 2.11 The Nottingham Core and Outer Housing Market Employment Land Study sets out recommendations for meeting the need for industrial/warehousing and office floor space. The Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan makes

provision for minimum requirements for industrial land and separately for office floorspace. This is based on the “regeneration scenario” set out in the Employment Land Study where the number of jobs estimated in this scenario was subject to an “uplift” to reflect implementation of the D2N2 Local Economic Partnership’s policy interventions set out in the Local Economic Strategy. Under this scenario Gedling Borough would need to provide about 20 hectares of industrial and warehousing land and approximately 13,500 sq m of office space. The Issues and Options document seeks views on whether the Employment Land Study is sufficiently robust and whether the quantity of floorspace for industrial/warehousing and separately for office is about right. Other questions seek views on whether there is any particular needs for employment land for specific sectors and/or need in specific locations.

- 2.12 The Employment Land Study recommended that a separate study should be undertaken to assess the need for large scale strategic warehousing logistics facilities given that growth in this sector was a relatively recent phenomenon, and technological change was driving the market particularly towards large scale distribution parks. A further study was commissioned, and resultant study findings were that there was a significant demand for large scale distribution facilities in the study area and a number of broad opportunity areas identified based on accessibility and operational criteria for these large scale facilities. However, given Gedling Borough’s more limited accessibility to the M1 and A1 corridors than locations further west and to the south, opportunities for locating such large scale logistics facilities in the Borough are considered remote. However, it is considered prudent to seek views on whether consultees think provision for a large distribution site should be considered in Gedling Borough.

Blue and Green Infrastructure

- 2.13 The strategic approach is based on a framework of sub-regional and city-wide Green Infrastructure networks. These have been identified within the Greater Nottingham Blue-Green Infrastructure Strategy (January 2022) and comprise a network of strategic waterways, open spaces and accessible natural greenspaces. Of most strategic significance are the river valleys, including the River Trent, River Leen, River Soar and River Erewash which are of sub-regional significance. Canals and river tributaries, pedestrian and cycle routes, link open and natural green spaces across the Greater Nottingham area and comprise city-wide networks. The strategy is to protect and enhance these blue and green assets and to improve their connectivity and to integrate them with the development strategy. The Issues and Options document seeks views on this approach.
- 2.14 The importance of protecting existing and providing new open space and local greenspace is set out and consultees are asked whether there are any types of open space not adequately covered by policy and to make suggestions for

new greenspace. The Issues and Options document confirms that designated wildlife sites would continue to be protected.

Transport

- 2.15 The Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan transport strategy is based on hierarchy comprising of three pillars – to avoid (reducing the need to travel), to shift (towards more sustainable modes of transport) and finally to manage and mitigate the impacts of development through targeted investment in the highway network. Gedling Borough Council jointly commissioned transport modelling along with the other Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan authorities to understand the likely impacts of future growth on the transport network across Greater Nottingham. Further transport modelling will be undertaken to assess the impacts of the proposed development in the Gedling Local Development Plan and in order to mitigate highway impacts a range of mitigation measures, such as bus lanes will be modelled to determine the degree of mitigation achievable. These measures will follow the transport hierarchy set out above – avoid – shift – manage and mitigate. The Issues and Options document proposes to continue with this hierarchical approach as the most sustainable option and the need to address transport impacts in a consistent manner across the Greater Nottingham conurbation.

Other topics

- 2.16 In terms of shopping centres, questions are posed about the inclusion of new local centres at Teal Close and Top Wighay Farm. Views on the proposed changes to shopping centre boundaries are also sought.
- 2.17 Design is also covered with a key issue being how best to incorporate the recently adopted Gedling Borough Design Code Framework into local plan policy.
- 2.18 The importance of Gedling Borough's heritage is also recognised and whether the approach in the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan towards protecting and enhancing local heritage is sufficient or whether more detailed policy is needed.
- 2.19 Access to culture, tourism and sport alongside healthy lifestyles including access to local services are considered and views sought on whether there are any issues that are not addressed in the document.
- 2.20 Lastly, the document stresses the importance of development being supported by necessary infrastructure for example, education and health services and asks for views on any barriers to future housing or economic development that would prevent or stymie growth.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.21 As part of the preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, a Sustainability Appraisal commencing with a Scoping report was undertaken. Views on whether the Scoping Report prepared for the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan remains an appropriate basis to set the scope for the new local plan for Gedling are invited. In particular, responses are requested as to whether the identification of the economic, social and environmental objectives and the site and policy criteria questions remain appropriate.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option would be not to review the Aligned Core Strategy and Local Planning Document but there is a statutory requirement to prepare a Local Plan and to review it every five years. An out of date plan and policies would make the Council vulnerable to speculative planning applications as applications would be determined in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and its default presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.2 Another alternative would be not to align strategic planning policy contained in the new local plan but there are significant advantages of a comprehensive approach to strategic planning across the whole of the Greater Nottingham area, ensuring a consistent planning policy approach across the wider area.
- 3.3 In relation to the second recommendation, an alternative option would be not to delegate minor editing changes. However, this would put an unnecessary operational burden on the executive.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of the preparation of a single local plan for Gedling Borough will be met from existing resources and budgets.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 It is a legal requirement of local planning authorities that they exercise their plan making functions (under s.39(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). There is also a legal requirement to review local plans every five years (Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) and this is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Consideration will be given at the next stage of plan preparation to the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Flora and Fauna 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) which requires that an Appropriate Assessment is made of the effects of land use plans on sites of European for nature conservation.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 The preparation of a local plan is subject to consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and the Council will consult with groups representing people with protected characteristics. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be progressed in tandem with the emerging local plan as part of an iterative process that assesses more comprehensive and detailed policies and recommends changes through the Plan's preparation.
- 6.2 Consultation on the local plan will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Appendix 1 of the Statement of Community Involvement sets out stages of preparation of a development plan document and states that the Council will engage with stakeholders and the community through the pre-submission stage using a variety of methods. A key factor is ensuring that the consultation is accessible to all and that equalities implications are given full consideration.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 Sustainability Appraisal is a legal requirement of plan preparation in order to consider economic, social and environmental objectives. A Sustainability Appraisal Report will be prepared to fulfil the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and the requirements of the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive transposed in the UK by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

8 Climate Impact Assessment

- 8.1 A Climate Impact Assessment will be prepared to consider each stage of the emerging local plan to consider the impact of the draft plan on addressing climate change issues and in support of the Council having taken the ambitious path of becoming net zero by 2030.

9 Health Impact Assessment

- 9.1 A Health Impact Assessment will be prepared to consider each stage of the emerging draft plan to identify and consider the potential health and equality impacts. Health impacts of the Plan are also considered through the Sustainability Appraisal process, Equality Impact Assessment and Climate Impact Assessment. Reference will also be made to the County's health and wellbeing checklist.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 Gedling Borough Local Development Plan: Issues and Options Document

Appendix 2 Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

11 Background Papers

Background Paper 1: Equalities Impact Assessment

Background Paper 2: Climate Impact Assessment

The following documents are available at

<https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/planningandbuildingcontrol/planningpolicy>

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- Aligned Core Strategy (September 2014)
- Gedling Borough Council Local Planning Document, July 2018
- Statement of Community Involvement, September 2019

The Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (2024) is available at

<https://www.gnplan.org.uk/media/qfihjw32/gnsp-reg-19-publication-draft-digital.pdf>

12 Reasons for Recommendations

- 12.1 To seek agreement to consult on the Gedling Borough Local Development Plan Issues and Options and Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Legislation requires that the Council consults at an early stage in the preparation of a local plan (Regulation 18).
- 12.2 The production of the Local Plan is a statutory requirement for the Borough Council and must be reviewed every five years. The Gedling Local Development Plan will, when adopted, replace the Aligned Core Strategy and Local Planning Document.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer

