

MIDLOTHIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PROPOSED PLAN

Report by Head of Communities and Economy

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the progress of the proposed Midlothian Local Development Plan (MLDP).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting of 16 December 2014 the Council approved the content of the proposed MLDP.
- 2.2 The MLDP: Proposed Plan was published in May 2015 with the period to make representations expiring 26 June 2015.

3 REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 In response to the publishing of the proposed plan, 834 representations have been received comprising 2,628 separate comments for consideration.
- 3.2 502 comments were received electronically via the Council's online local plan system (Objective) with a further 2,099 comments being input into the online system. The remaining 27 comments were ineligible and as such could not be recorded or considered. The comments received have not been published to date.
- 3.3 As of the 10 November 2015 the Planning team have considered and drafted a provisional response to 70% of the comments. The responses have been entered into the online local plan system, but are not publically available. The responses are based on the following options:
- Propose no change to the plan at this stage – no modifications/changes specified.
 - Propose no change to the plan at this stage – acknowledge the matters raised but consider issues have been satisfactorily addressed in preparing the plan and submission does not raise any new issues that are of a material nature to consider modifying the plan.
 - Propose no change to the plan at this stage – acknowledge the matters raised but do not agree with the modification proposed.
 - Propose no change to the plan at this stage – acknowledge the matters raised but do not consider they affect the underlying aims or strategy of the proposed plan. Modification at this stage would delay the Examination and adoption process. Consider merit in suggested change and content to allow Reporter to determine through Examination.

- Propose no change to the plan at this stage – issue is a matter for consideration via planning application process.
- 3.4 The comments received and the Council’s responses will be made publically available online once a response has been drafted for all comments received (so all interested parties receive a response at the same time) and only when elected members have approved the publication of the responses.
- 3.5 A breakdown of the comments by category is attached as Appendix A. Appendix B is a further breakdown of the comments received relating to the housing allocations by settlement (30.20% of the overall comments).
- 3.6 The issues raised in formal representations will be summarised in schedules as required by the Scottish Government’s Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) as part of the Council’s submission of its proposed plan in advance of a Local Plan Examination.

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 It is proposed to hold a series of workshops to provide elected members with more detail with regard the scale and nature of representations received. It is proposed that these workshops are held in January 2016, at which point the Planning team would have completed its provisional drafting of responses and progressed the summarising of representations in preparation of submission to the DPEA . Following the elected member workshops it is proposed to report to Council to seek approval for the submission of the proposed MLDP to the Scottish Government.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that an examination by a Scottish Government Reporter will commence in Spring 2016. Officers are in liaison with the DPEA regarding the submission and anticipated examination process. The Reporters findings are, in all but exceptional cases, binding on the Council. Adoption of the Plan is expected in the Autumn of 2016.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The Committee is recommended to:
- a) note the MLDP update; and
 - b) agree to the holding of elected member workshops in January 2016.

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Background Papers: Council Report entitled ‘Midlothian Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan’ 16 December 2014.