

Strategic Policies

1. INTRODUCTION AND INFORMATION

- 1.1 Meetings of the Development Plan Working Party are being scheduled to take place each month up until April 2022. Each meeting will be introduced to different sections of the emerging draft Stockport Local Plan.
- 1.2 This report details the Local Plan's Strategic Policies – see Appendix 1. These provide a bridge from the **Error! Reference source not found.** (revised following discussion at 23rd November Development Plan Working Party meeting, see Appendix 2) and through them the priorities and ambitions of the One Stockport Borough Plan, to the topic-based policies which follow on from them and which will contain detailed considerations to be used in the determination of planning applications. The Strategic Policies might be described as providing the 'strategy hook' from which the detailed, topic-based policies hang.
- 1.3 There are three Strategic Policies currently proposed as part of the plan:
 - **Strategic Policy 1: Spatial Strategy** sets out the key factors and headline approaches for each of the detailed policy areas that follow. It includes a description of the overall approach being taken by the plan, the headline targets for elements such as the amount of development being aimed for and outlines the approach to the protection or enhancement of key assets, facilities and infrastructure.
 - **Strategic Policy 2: Sustainable Development in Stockport** focuses specifically on outlining the overall approach to achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework defines the purpose of planning to be to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; this policy seeks to frame that purpose in a Stockport-specific context.
 - **Strategic Policy 3: Equality, Impact and Opportunity** sets an overarching policy expectation that planning and development contribute positively to the Council's statutory duties to:
 - i. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - ii. advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
 - iii. foster good relations between different groups.
- 1.4 The draft Strategic Policies are set out in Appendix 1 to this report. A number of clauses within proposed Strategic Policy 1 relate to matters which are yet to be decided (such as, for example, the overall quantity of new retail floorspace being sought by the plan). For now such matters have been left incomplete with placeholder text as appropriate, subject to conclusions being reached following the further work now being undertaken and further deliberation by Members in due course.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 Member are invited to comment and provide feedback on the draft Local Plan Strategic Policies.

- 2.2 It is important to note that the draft strategic policies in Appendix 1 are set out purely to enable transparent member deliberation and discussion. No comment is sought at this stage from the public or other interested parties; the time for that will come at the next formal stage of consultation as per the schedule established in the Local Development Scheme (see www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-local-development-scheme).
- 2.3 Members are reminded that there will be opportunity to discuss and input to the detailed, topic-specific policies which sit below these Strategic Policies as they are brought in front of Development Plan Working Party meetings over the coming months.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Stockport Local Development Scheme - www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-local-development-scheme.

Anyone requiring further information should contact Richard Wood on 07800617505 or by email to richard.wood@stockport.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1 – Draft Stockport Local Plan Strategic Policies.

Strategic Policies

The Local Plan's Strategic Policies set out the broad approach we will take to delivering, and managing, new development in the borough. This broad approach will support or contribute to achieving the **Error! Reference source not found..** In turn this will help meet the priorities and ambitions of the One Stockport Borough Plan.

Strategic Policy 1: Spatial Strategy

1. New development will be concentrated in the most sustainable locations and will make the most efficient use of land possible. There will be a focus on prioritising opportunities to use previously developed ("brownfield") land as far as possible in balance with meeting our development needs. Land which has not been developed previously ("greenfield") will only be developed where it is necessary to ensure that our development needs are met.
2. New development will be expected to facilitate equality and create age friendly, healthy communities. It will provide all residents with the opportunity to benefit from the borough's enhanced economic prosperity.
3. Active and vibrant communities will be created and provided with the social and green infrastructure necessary to allow everyone to lead healthy and happy lives and play their part in the future of Stockport.
4. Development must play a significant role in addressing the crises faced by our natural environment. Opportunities to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide will be taken, with a 100% reduction in total emissions produced in the Borough by 2038 (from 1990 levels). Opportunities for a net gain in biodiversity through new development will be taken, with relevant developments required to achieve a minimum gain of 10%.
5. Development will enable existing and new communities to become more resilient to challenges such as our changing climate.
6. The borough's best environmental assets, including vital areas of urban open space serving local communities, will be protected and enhanced. Measures will be taken to safeguard against potentially harmful impacts of development. The extensive areas of open land which make up the borough's Green Belt (as shown on the policies map) will be protected for the role they play in:
 - a) checking unrestricted urban sprawl;
 - b) preventing neighbouring towns merging;
 - c) safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; and
 - d) assisting in urban regeneration.
7. A wide variety of homes will be provided for people who want to live in Stockport. It will also be recognised that homes play a central role in our resilience to climate change and in creating and shaping our neighbourhoods and communities of the future. A total of at least [XX,XXX] new homes will be provided in the period up to 2038 including the provision of a significant proportion of affordable housing. The Local Plan strategic affordable housing target is [XX]%. Within established built-up area at least [XX]% of new homes will be on previously developed ("brownfield") land. [XX]% of new housing will be delivered within the existing built-up area, however, to achieve the required number of dwellings it will also be necessary to build in a number of new locations. These have been identified because of their ability to deliver sustainable development. These new development allocations are identified on the policies map.

8. Alongside the important role played by our local communities and neighbourhoods, Stockport Town Centre is the most significant key location for the future success of the borough. The town centre's role and appeal are expanded sub-regionally as the heart of Greater Manchester's Southern Growth Corridor and as a local community hub for all ages. The town centre is a major sub-regional location for town centre living and has the potential to deliver around XX% of the borough's new housing up to 2038. It is a sustainable location, close to transport links, jobs, shops and services. The town centre can deliver the infrastructure required to meet the demands of the new urban community which will be created. The town centre will be a healthy and attractive place where people want to live, work and play. The Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation area will lead the way in achievement of our aspirations for the town centre as a whole.
9. Development will take advantage of our well-educated and skilled workforce, ensuring that new and existing residents are able to take advantage of new employment opportunities. This will also support the growth and development of new employment sectors. A strong and diverse supply of employment sites, with appropriate supporting infrastructure, will be maintained and protected. This will ensure that existing and new business are enabled to start, grow and flourish. New employment floorspace totalling [XX,XXX] m² will be provided in the period up to 2038. This will comprise of [XX,XXX] m² of office floorspace and [XX,XXX] m² of industrial and warehousing floorspace.
10. In addition to Stockport Town Centre's key role the borough has more than 30 other centres. The smallest of these ("Other Local Centres" and "Large Local Centres") provide important services and facilities to the neighbourhoods that surround them. Larger "District Centres" form key focal points for local communities and often have a far wider catchment for the services and opportunities they provide. Development of new retail and leisure floorspace will be expected to follow a town centres first approach by applying a sequential test to ensure sustainable patterns of development are achieved. An impact assessment will be required where proposals for retail or leisure outside of these locations could threaten their vitality and viability. Following this approach, new retail floorspace capacity totalling up to [XX,XXX] m² will be created in the period up to 2038.
11. In line with Climate Action Now commitments, walking and cycling will be prioritised as the preferred modes of travel. This will make sure that core services and facilities are within easy reach of homes and workspaces, with sustainable travel encouraged to, from and beyond our centres. All centres will become welcoming and inclusive places to visit. Centres will offer opportunities for diversification and welcome a wider range of uses that increase dwell time, attract footfall and enable prosperity for people and businesses. Proposals to develop new or improve existing arts and cultural facilities will be supported as will the retention or provision of new markets.
12. Physical infrastructure will be delivered alongside development to ensure that our communities are connected, we are climate friendly and our economy can thrive. This will include digital, renewable and low carbon energy, utilities, and transport infrastructure. There is an expectation that new development contributes towards the provision of such infrastructure at a level commensurate with its scale and impact.

[INSERT SPATIAL STRATEGY IN DIAGRAMMATIC FORM]

Strategic Policy 2: Sustainable Development in Stockport

1. Stockport Climate Action Now Strategy aims to reduce carbon and improve nature in order to , the council requires that all new development :
 - a) address the GM Net Zero carbon target by 2038;, and

- b) adapt to climate change whilst delivering biodiversity net gain and addressing sustainable drainage.
 - 2. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development laid out in national policy. The Council will work with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, in order to secure development that improves the social, environmental and economic conditions in the area.
 - 3. Unless material considerations indicate otherwise, planning applications will be approved without delay where:
 - a) they accord with the policies in this Local Plan; and
 - b) they accord with policies in neighbourhood plans where relevant.
 - 4. If there are no up-to-date policies relevant to the application then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This will take into account whether:
 - a) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
 - b) specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework indicate that development should be restricted.
 - 5. Applicants are required to ensure that design and construction of projects are achieved in such a way to amplify the achievement of sustainable development in the Borough. Subject to site specific circumstances, all development should:
 - a) facilitate equality;
 - b) create age friendly, healthy communities;
 - c) make efficient use of land and address risks of flooding;
 - d) maximise carbon reduction, with a 100% reduction in total carbon emissions produced in the Borough by 2038 from 1990 levels to limit climate change
 - e) maximise biodiversity net gain, with a minimum gain of 10% expected through all developments; and
 - f) enhance economic prosperity for communities.
 - 6. Stockport's unique culture, places and spaces should be preserved and enhanced, whilst embracing opportunities to innovate.
 - 7. These requirements should be achieved by addressing all relevant policies in the plan and associated guidance to deliver quality development. Evidence of achievements should be demonstrated in the appropriate submission documentation as relevant policies require.
 - 8. The Council will work with applicants of all scales of development to ensure Stockport continues to be a place where people of all ages and backgrounds are happy to live and thrive.
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Strategic Policy 3: Equality, Impact and Opportunity

- 1. It is expected that all development will contribute positively to:
 - a) enabling access for all groups of society with particular regard for older people and those with disabilities or reduced mobility;
 - b) not adversely discriminating against people, directly or indirectly, on account of their:
 - i. race;
 - ii. sex;
 - iii. disability;
 - iv. age;
 - v. sexual orientation;
 - vi. religion or belief;

- vii. gender reassignment;
 - viii. pregnancy;
 - ix. maternity; or
 - x. status of marriage or civil partnership.
- c) providing opportunity for delivering inclusive wealth and addressing issues of economic hardship;
- d) addressing issues of health inequality and polarisation; and
- e) addressing the Council's duties to:
 - i. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - ii. advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
 - iii. foster good relations between different groups.

APPENDIX 2 – Revised Stockport Local Plan draft Strategic Objectives

Objective 1: To ensure a resilient and healthy Borough which delivers zero carbon development by 2038, whilst adapting to the impacts of climate change and increasing biodiversity through sustainable development.

Objective 2: To tackle inequalities across Stockport, particularly in relation to housing, employment, and health.

Objective 3: To provide the social infrastructure required to address existing issues and support the delivery of new development and to meet the needs of existing and expanding communities. This will help develop mixed, strong and cohesive communities; ensuring access for all to education, health, community and cultural facilities.

Objective 4: To conserve and enhance our landscapes and natural environment, and improve the quality of and access to our open spaces.

Objective 5: To deliver of high quality and locally distinctive design that responds to local character to create inclusive, well-connected and safe neighbourhoods. This will reflect the borough's historic and built environment, including our industrial heritage, and will protect and enhance quality and distinctiveness whilst accommodating change.

Objective 6: To provide a range of different types and tenures of quality new homes that meet aspirations and needs, reflecting an ageing population and a growth in the number of households.

Objective 7: To help create and accommodate employment whilst making Stockport a place of improving inclusive wealth, taking advantage of our town centre's economic and locational opportunities and ensuring all our centres perform their key role at the heart of our local communities and neighbourhoods.

Objective 8: To provide everyone in Stockport with access to schools and other appropriate educational facilities.

Objective 9: To provide the necessary transport infrastructure, whilst reducing the need to travel and improve connectivity, ensuring that sustainable modes become a realistic default option for journeys.