

Central Lincolnshire Policy S44 Strategic Infrastructure Requirements Evidence Report

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan is being updated since the first Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire, an area covering the districts of City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey, was adopted in April 2017.
- 1.2. This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for Policy S44, which relates to the provision of infrastructure that is required to support development.

2. Policy Context

National Policy and Guidance

- 2.1. Since the Central Lincolnshire Plan was adopted the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in July 2018 with subsequent additional changes being published in February 2019.

- 2.2. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF explains that:

“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

- 2.3. Paragraph 8 goes on to state that:

“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – *to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) **a social objective** – *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and...”*

- 2.4. Paragraph 20 states that:

“Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for...”

- b) *infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
- c) *community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)...”*

- 2.5. Paragraph 22 makes reference to infrastructure, stating:

“Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure.”

2.6. Paragraph 34, in relation to development contributions states:

“Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan.”

2.7. Paragraph 81 states:

“Planning policies should:

...b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;
c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and...”

2.8. Paragraph 91 relates to healthy and safe communities and what is required to achieve them, stating:

“Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”

2.9. Paragraph 92 goes on to state:

“To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;...”

2.10. Paragraph 102 relates to transport issues, stating:

“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

... b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;...”

2.11. Paragraph 104 goes on to state:

“Planning policies should:

... b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;

c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;...

... e) provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements; and...”

2.12. The whole of chapter 10 is concerned with ensuring that high quality communications infrastructure is supported and states that *“Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections...”*

Local Policy

2.13. The adopted Local Plan includes a specific policy, LP12: Infrastructure to Support Growth, which seeks to ensure that all development is supported by the provision of, or access to all necessary infrastructure.

2.14. The policy and supporting text are informed by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which sets out what, where and how infrastructure will be needed and delivered.

3. Context and Evidence

3.1. Central Lincolnshire continues to be expected to be the focus for significant levels of development over the plan period to meet its identified need for homes, jobs, services and facilities. In order to ensure that this growth is delivered sustainably, the timely delivery of infrastructure, vital to people’s daily lives, social well-being and the creation of jobs needs to be coordinated as far as possible within the financial and other constraints that face both the public and private sectors.

- 3.2. Infrastructure requirements vary from settlement to settlement and from site to site. To set out what, where and how infrastructure will be needed and delivered, an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been prepared alongside this Local Plan. The IDP identifies the type, scale and distribution of physical, social and green infrastructure required to support the level, location and phasing of development identified in the Local Plan. The IDP identifies the cost of infrastructure required to support the growth, proposed sources of infrastructure funding, known funding gaps, proposed delivery mechanisms and proposed delivery partners.
- 3.3. Where known, infrastructure required as part of the development of specific sites is set out in the relevant site allocation policies and supporting evidence.
- 3.4. Whilst every effort has and will continue to be made to ensure the timely provision of infrastructure, national guidance makes it clear that viability implications of all policy requirements should be considered as a whole. Therefore it is important to ensure that the right balance is reached between meeting infrastructure and other needs whilst ensuring that central Lincolnshire continues to be an attractive and viable place to build and invest. To help inform this decision, a Whole Plan Viability assessment has been produced to support the Local Plan.
- 3.5. Much of the infrastructure necessary for the planned development for Central Lincolnshire is provided by partner agencies and service providers. The Central Lincolnshire Authorities through the IDP and the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), working closely with other public sector organisations, utility companies and the private sector and through development management decisions will continue to ensure that Central Lincolnshire's needs are reflected in investment cycles, strategies and investment plans and provision is coordinated. The Central Lincolnshire Authorities, working with agencies, such as the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) and Homes England, will also continue to secure direct funding and recoverable finance for infrastructure projects as appropriate.

4. Issues and Options Consultation

- 4.1. The Issues and Options consultation identified the existing policy, LP12: Infrastructure to Support Growth as a policy not intended to be changed. A very small number of comments were received on this proposal too not change the policy. These comments did not object to the proposal, but rather supported its retention.

5. Proposed Approach in Draft Local Plan

- 5.1. The Draft Local Plan includes a policy relating to Strategic Infrastructure Requirements. This policy has been carried forward from the adopted Local Plan, and also brought up to date where specific elements of the policy have been superseded and are no longer relevant or correct. The intent and expected outcomes of the policy remain the same as in the adopted Plan.

6. Reasonable Alternative Options

- 6.1. The following alternative options have been considered for this policy (option 1 being the preferred option).

Option 2: To have no policy and rely on national policy. This option was discounted, as although it may lead to some infrastructure improvements, without a locally specific policy, confusion may arise regarding provision, and what infrastructure is required where.

Option 3: to not have a specific policy, but rely on infrastructure requirements for each site through allocation policies. This policy option was acknowledged to have likely benefits, however, these would not be as wide ranging, as they would only be in relation to sites allocated for development and not all development, therefore it was discounted in favour of the preferred option, option1.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed policy as contained in the Draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan January 2021. This report will be updated following responses received during the Regulation 18 consultation prior to finalising the Local Plan for submission. This helps bring together relevant evidence that has informed this policy and how we have responded to comments received during the plan making process, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.