



Policy LP31 Lincoln's Economy Evidence Report

**Proposed Submission
April 2016**

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1. Introduction and Policy Context

Introduction

- 1.1 A joint Local Plan for the Central Lincolnshire area is being produced which will set the framework for how development will be considered across the districts of the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey to 2036.
- 1.2 This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for policy LP31, which relates to Lincoln's economy.

National policy

- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was introduced in 2014 which offers 'live' government guidance.
- 1.4 The NPPF states that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development with its economic role contribution towards building a strong, responsive and competitive economy (paragraph 7).
- 1.5 Section 1 requires the planning process to build "a strong, competitive economy" and paragraph 21 states that, in drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should "set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth", "set criteria... for local and inward investment" and "support existing business sectors".
- 1.6 The above NPPF policy has been taken into account in preparing the Local Plan as a whole, and policy LP31 in particular.
- 1.7 At the time of writing this report, the NPPG did not include any specific guidance on meeting the needs of the local economy.

2 Central Lincolnshire Context in Relation to Policy LP31

- 2.1 Lincoln serves a wide area and the need for continued and varied employment development opportunities to enhance competitiveness, prosperity and increase investment whilst providing for the day to day needs of the people who live in the area is noted and the important role of tourism, education and cultural development to Lincoln's economy if fully recognised and promoted.
- 2.2 Lincoln's national and international reputation as a major tourist attraction has a considerable beneficial and growing impact on the local economy, although there is scope for the further expansion and diversification of this role, not only in relation to the traditional 'uphill' tourist area centred on the Cathedral and castle, but also in relation to the Brayford Pool area and emerging Cultural Quarter centred on The Collection museum and Usher Art Gallery.
- 2.3 The Brayford Pool has become the focus for significant investment in recent years but also remains an important waterway and focus for boating and boating activities and it is felt that

its essential open character should be protected as a valuable public, ecological and townscape asset.

- 2.4 Whilst policies seek to facilitate the future development of Lincoln's economy, it should not be at the expense of either local amenity or the City's unique heritage and environment which should continue to be protected and enhanced as an integral part of the Lincoln experience. Similarly, it is felt that new development should not exacerbate the City's traffic problems and as such should be accessible by a range of transport modes.
- 2.5 For a more comprehensive evidence base and action plan on Lincoln's economy, reference should be made to the latest Lincoln Growth Strategy: "Building our future on strong foundations - A Growth Strategy for Lincoln 2014-2034" (2014), an economic action plan that has been produced to compliment the City Masterplan. The Growth Strategy has informed the development of Policy LP31.

3 Local Plan Policy: Preliminary Draft

- 3.1 The Preliminary Draft version of the Local Plan (published for consultation in October – November 2014) included policy LP31 on Lincoln's economy.
- 3.2 Most comments received in response to the consultation on the Preliminary Draft version of the Local Plan were positive and welcomed the policy. However, some felt that it ignored development in the towns and villages and made no reference to the conversion of farm buildings and the LN6 business area off Doddington Road.
- 3.3 In response, Policy LP31 is deliberately focussed on issues for the Lincoln urban area within the Lincoln chapter with policies for development in other areas being covered elsewhere in the Local Plan, particularly LP5: Delivering Prosperity and Jobs. LN6 as well as other specific employment areas in Lincoln, and elsewhere in Central Lincolnshire, are now also specifically mentioned in LP5: Delivering Prosperity and Jobs.
- 3.4 Comments were also received on the need to reference the cultural quarter and the need not to preclude appropriate waterway-dependent development on the Brayford.
- 3.5 One comment welcomed reference to the Lincoln Townscape Assessment, but felt that it should be referenced in a bullet point, whilst another felt that it was not relevant and, on balance, it is felt that it is more appropriately referenced in the overarching Protecting Lincoln's Setting and Character policy (LP29), which covers all forms of development and not just economic.
- 3.6 Lincoln University commented on their connection to the Lincoln Science and Innovation Park (LSIP) and felt that this needed to be referenced in policy LP31.
- 3.7 However, in response, the LSIP is now specifically referenced in policy LP5: Delivering Prosperity and Jobs along with other strategic employment sites in Central Lincolnshire. Independent of any involvement with LSIP, Lincoln University, as well as Bishop Grosseteste University and Lincoln College play an important role in Lincoln's economy and whilst previously incorporated within the Lincoln's Economy policy and supporting text, it was felt that they required a policy and section of their own within the Lincoln Area chapter.

4 Local Plan Policy: Further Draft

- 4.1 The policy and text in the Further Draft version of the Local Plan was amended in response to comments received. The Further Draft Local Plan was published for consultation in October – November 2015.
- 4.2 Various comments were received as part of the Further Draft Local Plan consultation expressing support for or broadly supporting the policy. It was felt by some however, that the City's role as a major regional shopping centre should be recognised and acknowledged as a growth sector of equal importance to, or of greater importance than, tourism and education, whilst Lincoln University felt that they should be afforded greater status as a key economic driver.
- 4.3 In response, it is felt that Lincoln's universities and college have been given a separate section and policy, that the status of all three have been appropriately and proportionately acknowledged.
- 4.4 Other comments identified the importance of improved transport choice and locating development where it is not reliant on the private car and suggesting a formal and rigorous sequential test. Evidence of limited suitable employment land in the City was questioned as was evidence to support reference to the Bailgate area.
- 4.5 In response, adequate and varied employment land to meet projected needs and offer choice have been accounted for, the details of which are provided elsewhere in the local Plan and in relevant supporting documentation.
- 4.6 It was also suggested that the Lincoln Signage and Visitor Management Strategy be referenced, that similar terminology for quarters be used and that reference is made to the latest Lincoln Growth Strategy.

5 Local Plan Policy: Proposed Submission

- 5.1 The importance of the retail sector to Lincoln's economy is acknowledged and added to policy wording and supporting text. It is agreed that specific reference to the Bailgate area of the City is no longer required and reference has been removed. Reference has been added to the Growth Strategy for Lincoln which will reference the latest additional guidance and advice as appropriate.
- 5.2 The policy is particularly supported by the policies and supporting documents referenced above and by other policies in the Local Plan including:
- Policy LP5 - Delivering Prosperity and Jobs;
 - Policy LP6 - Retail and Town Centres in Central Lincolnshire;
 - Policy LP7 - A Sustainable Visitor Economy;
 - Policy LP29 - Protecting Lincoln's Setting and Character;
 - Policy LP32 - Lincoln's Universities and Colleges;
 - Policy LP33 - Lincoln City Centre Primary Shopping Area and Central Mixed Use Area;

- Policy LP34 - Lincoln's District and Local Shopping Centres; and
- Policy LP35 - Lincoln's Regeneration and Opportunity Areas.

6 Alternative Reasonable Options

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been considered for this policy (**Option 1** is the preferred policy approach which has been included in the Proposed Submission version of the Local plan).
- 6.2 **Option 2:** To have no local Lincoln economy policy and rely on the generic prosperity and jobs policy (LP5) in the Local Plan. However, whilst the generic policy was considered to adequately cover many of the employment issues that applied equally to Lincoln as well as the rest of Central Lincolnshire, it was not felt to adequately capture issues and uses unique to Lincoln or to reference or reflect the actions set out in the Lincoln Growth Strategy.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed policy as contained in the Proposed Submission Local Plan April 2016. We hope this helps demonstrate how we have responded to comments received during the Preliminary Draft and Further Draft consultation, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.