



Subject:	<i>Local Development Plan – Update</i>
Date:	<i>15 August 2017</i>
Reporting Officer:	<i>Keith Sutherland</i>
Contact Officer:	<i>Dermot O’Kane</i>

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress of the new Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) and outline the next steps in the plan development process.
2.0	Recommendations It is recommended that Members note the progress on the LDP. The main issues to report include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Preferred Options Paper (POP) Consultation Report and now been completed and has been published on our website.• Note progress on a number of commissioned research studies including the Strategic Housing Needs Assessment (SHNA), Urban Capacity Study for residential and employment land, a Retail and Leisure Capacity Study, the Open Spaces Strategy and the Blue and Green Infrastructure masterplan• Work is ongoing on the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy and members will be invited to workshops in the Autumn as policy is being composed
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Background and Context</u> Draft POP Consultation report was presented to Committee in June. Work on this report has now been completed at was published on our website on Wednesday 26 July. The feedback from this consultation process will now feed into the development of the draft plan strategy.
3.2	It is necessary to continue to build upon this extensive evidence base as we work towards the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy – the first of the two development plan

documents that will form the final LDP. In accordance with regional policy and best practice in plan preparation, a need has been identified for a further three inter-related pieces of research. These can be summarised as follows:

- **Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)** – Whilst the Housing Growth Options report considered the overall number of housing units required in Belfast to 2035, the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) requires the completion of a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and Housing Market Analysis (HMA) to consider the right mix and balance of housing required in terms of tenures, types and sizes. Whilst much of the HMA work was undertaken to inform the Housing Growth Options Study, this will now be built upon to provide a detailed assessment of need. This will provide robust evidence in relation to the mix of houses of different sizes required and the balance of tenures, such as open market housing, social housing, and other affordable housing types. It will also consider needs associated specialist housing types, such as homes for older people, private rented accommodation, student housing and needs associated with the Traveller community.
- **Urban Capacity Study (UCS)** – The SPPS for Northern Ireland requires that an UCS be completed to “assess the potential for future housing growth within the urban footprint and the capacity for different types and densities of housing.” In addition, the SPPS requires that “LDPs should identify previously developed land within settlements for potential economic development” with the need to “offer a range and choice of sites in terms of size and location.” An UCS has been commissioned to assess in detail the development potential, suitability, availability and achievability of different forms of residential and economic development across the City. The study comprises six key components including:-
 1. Methodology Report
 2. Site Identification
 3. Windfall Assessment
 4. Site Assessment
 5. Assessment Review
 6. UCS Report

To date a draft Methodology Report prepared and work is ongoing on data sharing. An assessment of existing densities ongoing and the initial site identification has been completed. Preparation for site assessment has also begun.

- **Retail and Leisure Capacity Study** – The SPPS requires councils to “undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses across the plan area” when preparing LDPs. The Retail and Leisure Capacity Study will therefore provide an assessment of retail and leisure needs and capacity in the period up to 2035, reviewing the current performance of Belfast City Centre and other neighbourhood/local centres across the Council area and will provide the evidence to guide the detailed planning policies for Town Centre retail and leisure developments.
- The remit of the consultant is to review and analyse existing floorspace, diversity of uses and extent of activity across the council area; define a network and hierarchy of centres; define the mix and proportion of uses; identify and appraise future retail and leisure development sites and undertake a review of existing policies and advise on the plan strategy. The consultant will work collaboratively with Council staff, attend workshops and present to senior management and will attend future examinations of the plan.
- The consultant met with council staff on 28th July discussing the diversity of use survey and has completed a householder’s survey as of the 7th August. The study is expected to be completed by the end of September 2017.

- **Green and Blue Infrastructure Masterplan** establishes principles guiding the continued protection, management and expansion of our green and blue network. It includes all green and blue spaces in and around the city and enables the consideration of the collective value of all of these spaces together. Constituent elements of green and blue infrastructure include parks, private gardens, agricultural fields, hedges, trees, woodland, green roofs, green walls, rivers and ponds regardless of its ownership, condition or size. The **Open Spaces Strategy** is one of the key components of the masterplan and is required by the SPPS as a constituent part of the LDP. Work has commenced on the preparation of the Green and Blue Masterplan. A draft of the study is expected to be completed by the end of September 2017. A workshop for key stakeholders of the open space strategy is scheduled for the 14 Sept with a view to completion towards the end of this year.

3.3

Financial & Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implication arising from the reports.

3.4

Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no direct equality and good relations implications associated with this report. However, it should be noted that the Housing Needs Assessment work will consider the need for specialist housing types, such as homes for older people and traveller accommodation, helping to provide the evidence required to ensure the LDP fulfils its obligation to such groups. The Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, which will make up the final LDP and which will be informed by this research, will also be subject to Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) processes.