



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our ref:

Your ref:

Please ask for: Martyn Fulcher

Direct dial:

Email: martyn.fulcher@ipswich.gov.uk

Mr Tom Barker

Assistant Director Sustainable Communities

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

Grafton House

15-17 Russell Road

Ipswich Suffolk

IP1 2DE

www.ipswich.gov.uk

By email: Tom.Barker@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

25th March 2021

RE: Babergh and Mid Suffolk pre-submission Joint Local Plan (Regulation 19) consultation

I write with reference to our formal submission to you on 24th December 2021, and specifically to clarify our position on the duty to cooperate.

It has been drawn to my attention that despite the content of our submission, we incorrectly completed Part B, Section 4 point 3 of the Paper Representations Form.

I can confirm that Ipswich Borough Council raises no objection in relation to the 'duty to cooperate', and that all representations made within our formal response relate to 'soundness' matters, namely:

- i) Lack of Strategic Ipswich Strategic Planning Area policies within the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- ii) Lack of Strategic Ipswich Strategic Planning Area policies within the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- iii) The approach to the spatial strategy for development including approx. 30% of new housing at the Ipswich Fringe has not been identified with the appropriate weight as part of the vision and objectives - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- iv) Greater emphasis on the importance of Felixstowe and Ipswich as main employment hubs and service providers in the spatial strategy of the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- v) It is not clearly identified within the plan that much of the Strategic Infrastructure associated with the planned growth in the plan will need to be in Ipswich - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- vi) Much of the planned housing growth in the Ipswich Fringe area will have harmful impacts on highway capacity and air quality in Ipswich and this hasn't been identified in the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

- vii) It is not clear that the spatial strategy is being properly informed by the background evidence in the Sustainability Appraisal particularly with regards to air quality, where for many of the sites it is indicated there will be a major negative impact - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- viii) The location of significant numbers of housing within the Ipswich Fringe will have an impact on services and facilities in Ipswich and the plan should specifically identify these - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- ix) That the change in emphasis to the retail policy, raising the level of retail growth that could be undertaken without requiring an impact assessment will have a harmful impact on the vitality and viability of Ipswich town centre and does not help to promote Ipswich as the County Town and the primary retail focus for the County - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- x) The B&MS JLP does not allocate an important cross boundary site to aid housing delivery in Ipswich - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- xi) Other sites to which Ipswich Borough Council objects to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.
- xii) Non-compliance with the Regulations covering notification period - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused and trust this letter confirms the position of Ipswich Borough Council as to matters relating to your 'duty to cooperate'.

Finally, and following our conversation on 24th March 2021, I look forward to discussing with you the soundness issues raised above, prior to your Plan examination.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and allowing me to clarify.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martyn Fulcher', written in a cursive style.

Martyn Fulcher BSc(Hons) PGDip MRTPI

Head of Development

Ipswich Borough Council

our ref B&MS JLP IBC response
please ask for Martyn Fulcher
contact martyn.fulcher@ipswich.gov.uk
date 24th December 2020



Mr Tom Barker
Sent via email to: localplan@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Grafton House
15-17 Russell Road
Ipswich Suffolk
IP1 2DE

www.ipswich.gov.uk

Dear Mr Barker

RE: Babergh and Mid Suffolk pre-submission Joint Local Plan (Regulation 19) consultation

Representation on behalf of Ipswich Borough Council.

Thank you for consulting us on your Babergh & Mid Suffolk pre-submission Regulation 19 Joint Local Plan. Ipswich Borough Council has considered the Plan and have produced a response as attached focusing on key issues.

The Council acknowledges that the Babergh & Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (B&MS JLP) makes provision for housing growth, which will contribute to meeting the overall housing market area needs. Furthermore, Ipswich Borough Council has signed an Ipswich Strategic Planning Area Statement of Common Ground (Version 6 signed June 2020), with Babergh and Mid Suffolk, East Suffolk Council, and Suffolk County Council.

Ipswich Strategic Planning Area matters

i) Lack of Strategic Ipswich Strategic Planning Area policies within the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

Ipswich, B&MSDC and East Suffolk Council are constituent authorities of the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area (ISPA) with Suffolk County Council. The ISPA area covered is the area identified as the Ipswich Housing Market Area and Ipswich Functional Economic Area, supported through the joint production of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Employment Land Needs Assessment respectively.

Local Planning Authorities need to identify within their development plans the strategic priorities and have policies to address these in their development plan documents. In this regard IBC works closely with all of the surrounding authorities, namely B&MSDC, East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council through the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area board (ISPA). ISPA works together to identify these strategic priorities within the functional economic area and housing market area surrounding Ipswich.

Policy ISPA 1 in the submission Ipswich Local Plan and policy SCLP2.1 in the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan are both entitled '*Growth in the Ipswich Strategic Planning*

Area' and these policies set out the wider growth ambitions of the ISPA authorities, and how each of the authorities will contribute to that shared ambition. The B&MS JLP has no such policy.

Policy ISPA 2 in the submission Ipswich Local Plan and policy SCLP2.2 in the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan are both entitled '*Strategic Infrastructure Priorities*' which both highlight that all of the ISPA members will work collaboratively with the aim of delivery of the shared key elements of strategic infrastructure. The B&MS JLP has no such policy.

Policy ISPA3 in the submission Ipswich Local Plan and policy SCLP2.3 in the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan are both entitled '*Cross-boundary mitigation of effects on Protected Habitats and Species*'. The B&MS JLP has no such policy.

The B&MS JLP does not identify ISPA wide growth in the vision and objectives, housing need nor in economic growth chapters, or the importance in delivering the agreed ISPA objectives for growth.

Ipswich Borough Council is pleased to note reference to the ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy within the draft policy SP08 – Strategic Infrastructure Provision, but consider that the policy only makes reference to '*....supporting and enabling delivery of key strategic infrastructure projects affecting the plan area...*' (SP08 para 1). It is therefore considered that the policy lacks a direct link between the policy and the aims of the ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy which requires delivery of key infrastructure within the borough of Ipswich.

ii) Issues with how the impact from the extension 2037 for the plan period have been assessed - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

The IPSPA authority Councils have worked together to meet employment and housing needs and share a common evidence base as well as dealing with cross-boundary issues. This has allowed the alignment of the local plans for the respective authorities. The authorities have agreed through their statement of common ground (Iteration 6) to use a common base period (2018-2036) for their local plans. The BMSDC Draft Joint Local Plan covers the period to 2037.

The B&MS Pre-submission Joint Local Plan covers an extended plan period to 2037, however, the joint ISPA evidence base which supports the plan only covers the period to 2036. As such, the ISPA level evidence base does not extend the entire plan period. This also means that Babergh and Mid-Suffolk are out of step with the joint ISPA Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) and the other ISPA authorities, including Ipswich. Regrettably, this pre-submission content was not shared with the ISPA authorities prior to the formal consultation.

It is therefore unclear how the draft B&MS JLP has reflected the common evidence base to project the growth estimates necessary to extend the plan period up to 2037.

iii) The approach to the spatial strategy for development including approx. 30% of new housing at the Ipswich Fringe has not been identified with the appropriate weight as part of the vision and objectives - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

The vision and objectives do not make adequate reference to the relationship between Babergh, Mid Suffolk and the Ipswich Fringe in indicating that much of the housing development allocations within the B&MS JLP will be reliant on Ipswich for services, jobs, education, shopping and other town centre related facilities.

The approach to spatial distribution is somewhat dependent on the deliverability of sites, but also on the identified aims of balancing growth in the strategic transport corridor (A14) and ensuring other market towns and rural communities' benefit from appropriate growth. However, the approach seems to overlook that a large percentage of the growth will not be situated within either of these identified locations, but rather, on the fringes of Ipswich.

SP03 Settlement Hierarchy identifies at point 1 that the scale and nature of development will depend upon, amongst other things '*... the role of settlements within the hierarchy as defined in Table 2 and Table 3...*' and '*....the capacity of existing physical and social infrastructure or new/enhanced infrastructure....*'.

At point 2 the policy references Ipswich fringe settlements as being the '*...focus for development...*'

This is carried through into policy dictating the Housing Spatial Distribution (SP04), which shows 32% (1,757) of new homes in Babergh, and 14% (1,192) of new homes in Mid Suffolk will be within the Ipswich Fringe area. This is a significant amount of new housing to be located in close proximity to Ipswich. Policy SP03 is clear that planned development, such as those within the Ipswich fringe, is reliant on the capacity of existing physical and social infrastructure.

However, the vision and objectives of the plan make no reference to Ipswich, nor to the reliance that the B&MS JLP has on the Ipswich fringe for delivery of 2,949 of the proposed homes. The level of housing proposed for the Ipswich Fringe is significant, and reference must be made to this in paragraph 5 of the Vision for Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

iv) Greater emphasis on the importance of Felixstowe and Ipswich as main employment hubs and service providers in the spatial strategy of the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

Ipswich Borough Council notes that the draft B&MS JLP makes reference to the ISPA Statement of Common Ground (version 6, signed 04/06/20), and that within Table 1 – Duty to Cooperate Key, Issue 7) it refers to '*Acknowledgement of the role of Ipswich town centre within the Functional Economic Area.*' However, the plan does not go far enough in linking the importance of the regional role of Ipswich as the 'County Town' as a focus for retail and commercial leisure activity in accordance with the NPPF, particularly given the clear reliance of much of the proposed housing on Ipswich town centre and the borough generally. It would be appropriate to make reference to the importance of supporting communities, including Ipswich for its town centre and services etc. within the objectives of the B&MS JLP.

Infrastructure matters

- v) **It is not clearly identified within the plan that much of the Strategic Infrastructure associated with the planned growth in the plan will need to be in Ipswich - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.**

With regard to chapter 11 Strategic Infrastructure of the plan, it is noted that the plan acknowledges (at para 11.03), that there is a package of transport measures identified in ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy. However, it is considered that specific reference should be made to what those measures are, and the fact that the predicted growth will have a harmful impact on transport capacity and air quality within Ipswich if the measures are not introduced.

The joint transport modelling undertaken by WSP on behalf of the ISPA authorities identifies that a significant amount of car related journeys i.e. 55%, derive from outside the borough.

Policy SP08 does identify the joint work that has been ongoing for many months between the ISPA authorities and SCC (as the relevant Highway Authority) on the delivery of the ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy *'to mitigate cumulative transport and air quality impacts.'* However, many of the growth associated impacts on the transport network are felt most acutely by Ipswich as an authority, being the main centre for economy, services and employment in the ISPA area, and owing to the proximity of much of the predicted housing growth.

The Transport Modelling and Air Quality Modelling commissioned through ISPA using a 2016 base, has identified that only 45% of trips within Ipswich are generated by Ipswich residents. This modelling looks at two scenarios (2026 and 2036). It seeks to reduce the traffic impact in and around Ipswich of local plan growth. This together with the ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy seeks modal shift and over mechanisms to reduce traffic impact in Ipswich.

LPA	% trips
Ipswich Borough Council	45
Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area	28
Babergh District Council	14
Mid Suffolk District Council	13

The significant level of growth indicated in the respective Ipswich (well advanced), Suffolk Coastal area (adopted), and B&MS (Reg.19) local plans will put significant pressure on the highway network of Ipswich. Consequently, SCC have progressed an ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy (TMS), which outlines a number of ways to mitigate development related transport impacts in Ipswich, including: transport infrastructure and junction improvements; sustainable transport use; a quality bus partnership; smarter choices; and review of car parking and park and ride.

Ipswich currently contains 5 AQMAs, all of which are directly affected by transport capacity and congestion, and as such, the mitigation measures identified in the ISPA TMS will need additional site-specific assessment to ensure air quality in Ipswich is not adversely affected.

Whilst the BMSDC JLP does identify the ISPA TMS, it does not make the link between the Ipswich fringe allocations and potential for air quality deterioration in Ipswich, which is considered to be a significant failure. It is essential that these measures form an integral element of the allocations in the BMS Joint Local Plan. Policy LP17 identifies that development must take account of the broad range of environmental issues such as air quality, and that contributions towards the cost of air quality mitigation measures. It is not clear that this could be within Ipswich.

It is clear, given the amount of housing proposed within the Ipswich fringe area, that many of the services and facilities within Ipswich will bear the burden of increased use from new occupiers, and, this has not been recognised within the spatial strategy of the BMSDC JLP, nor has the Sustainability Appraisal fully evaluated the strategic approach. It is therefore considered that the B&MS JLP should also make specific reference to the potential for development related improvements and financial contributions towards:- health care provision; education provision and improvements in Ipswich; parks and open spaces; sports and leisure facilities - with particular reference to those facilities in the most immediate areas, namely Bourne Park, Chantry Park, Whitehouse Park and Whitton Sports Centre etc.

Policy SP08 – Strategic Infrastructure Provision – should make reference to the need to achieve at least 10% modal shift, which is required in order to effectively deliver the measures contained within the ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy. The policy fails to do this and the plan as a whole makes little reference to the importance of modal shift.

- vi) **Much of the planned housing growth in the Ipswich Fringe area will have harmful impacts on highway capacity and air quality in Ipswich and this hasn't been identified in the plan - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.**

There is not a clear pathway between the mitigation identified within the IPSPA Transport Mitigation Strategy and the delivery through sites, particularly those at the Ipswich Fringe. Whilst the TMS is identified in the B&MS Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the JLP provides scant confidence that measures will be delivered through the allocated sites as and when they come forward. The link between the site sheets and the requirements of the TMS needs to be more explicit and identify that measures will be required to mitigate highway and air quality impacts within the borough of Ipswich.

- vii) **It is not clear that the spatial strategy is being properly informed by the background evidence in the Sustainability Appraisal particularly with regards to air quality, where for many of the sites it is indicated there will be a major negative impact - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.**

The Sustainability Appraisal identifies all of the sites at the Ipswich fringe as having major negative impacts on Air Quality, and no mitigation measures are provided to resolve this. The plan is not explicit in how air quality impacts will be resolved. Policy LP17 identifies that *'Development proposals must take into account a broad range of environmental issues such as air quality....'*, however the policy or supporting text does

not identify that a significant level of growth is proposed in the Ipswich Fringe area and that the growth will result in harmful impacts on the air quality, as identified in the SA. Without precise mitigation identified within the site allocation policies it is considered that the overarching Environmental Protection policy LP17 should be more explicit regarding that harm there may be, and that air quality assessments should consider AQMAs within Ipswich.

- viii) **The location of significant numbers of housing within the Ipswich Fringe will have an impact on services and facilities in Ipswich and the plan should specifically identify these - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.**

Policy SP03 Settlement Hierarchy identifies at point 1 the scale and nature of development will depend upon, inter alia '*... the role of settlements within the hierarchy as defined in Table 2 and Table...*' and '*....the capacity of existing physical and social infrastructure or new/enhanced infrastructure....*'.

The site allocations within the Ipswich Fringe do not identify the respective services within Ipswich that will experience increased pressure through increased use, such as Chantry Park, schools, medical facilities, public transport and shopping facilities.

Retail and Economy

- ix) **That the change in emphasis to the retail policy, raising the level of retail growth that could be undertaken without requiring an impact assessment will have a harmful impact on the vitality and viability of Ipswich town centre and does not help to promote Ipswich as the County Town and the primary retail focus for the County - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.**

The Joint Local Plan significantly increases the 'trigger' threshold for out of town retail impact assessment from 400m² to 2,500m². This means that a much larger level of floorspace can be accommodated before the need for an impact assessment is triggered. This will undoubtedly have a significant impact on Ipswich Town Centre and is strongly objected to, as it will create a serious threat to the vitality and viability of Ipswich Town Centre and nearby district and local centres.

The draft plan Spatial Strategy does not properly acknowledge Ipswich as the main economic centre for the county (as detailed above (iv)), nor the importance of the retail function of Ipswich town centre or the local and district centres near to the Copdock interchange out of town retail area or unallocated sites (such as the former Fred Olsen site on London Road), that could potentially come forward, with large scale retail without requiring the necessary assessment of impact. Such out of town retail developments will attract – and are designed to attract – customers from Ipswich itself, thereby increasing car journeys around and across the town and congestion/ air quality issues within the town itself

The likely impact on retail centres such as those at Hawthorn Drive, Dickens Road, Lavender Hill, Cambridge Drive and Ellenbrook Green are of significant concern, particularly as the plan does not allocate the Fred Olsen site for any particular use, or importantly, protect it for non-retail use. This, in combination with the change in the retail policy thresholds for impact assessment, is considered to be a serious and harmful oversight of the plan.

It is suggested that reference to the “*strengthening of Ipswich and the surrounding area as the key economic driver of the County*” from the regulation 18 version of the Plan should be reinstated in order that the plan reflects the agreed position of the ISPA SoCG.

It is recommended that a greater strategic emphasis needs to be placed on the wider importance of Felixstowe to the ISPA area and in particular the need to support sustainable transport and modal shift. New developments in B&MS must be well-served by rail to Ipswich, and improvements to east-west rail connections in terms of capacity and frequency can be facilitated, together with other sustainable mitigation measures including improved cycle networks.

Sites

x) The B&MS JLP does not allocate an important cross boundary site to aid housing delivery in Ipswich - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

The Ipswich Borough Council draft Local Plan is currently under examination, having just completed the Hearings sessions. There is clearly a need to meet the councils own identified housing need within the borough boundaries, and the Ipswich Local Plan seeks to do this by allocating numerous sites across the borough. A number of these sites set particular challenges owing to their brownfield status and importance of archaeology in the town centre areas, where a number of the development sites are located. These challenges are not insurmountable, however, the delivery of housing to meet the identified need requires a combination of other greenfield sites that would be easier to deliver. Ipswich is allocating strategic sites at Ipswich Garden Suburb and Humber Doucy Lane, having worked jointly with East Suffolk Council on sites which straddle the boundary between the two authorities.

Delivery of housing on these greenfield sites pose their own challenges with phasing and delivery of infrastructure, however, this authority is confident that these sites will help to boost the housing supply at the right time in the plan period.

Other sites such as at King George V Field, Bury Road (Our ref IP032) rely on the need for replacement pitches in order to deliver the 100 homes that it is allocated for.

The plan does not include land at Walnut Tree Farm in Whitton, which borders the borough boundary to the north of Whitton and is identified as ‘*Land east of Old Norwich Road*’. The site has been discounted in the Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) as not being ‘*consistent with the settlement pattern*’.

Through the ISPA board, IBC are working with the other authorities to deliver housing against the evidenced housing need. At this stage IBC (and others) have not identified any unmet housing need. However, given the acute need to deliver housing within Ipswich, and the limited potential for greenfield sites, it is easier to deliver sites within Ipswich such as King George V (IP032 for 99 dwellings), subject to the need for replacement pitch provision.

Walnut Tree Farm in Whitton (land East of Old Norwich Road) straddles the boundary between the two authorities of Ipswich and Mid Suffolk. This land is available for housing delivery and would be able to accommodate the necessary replacement pitches, in order to aid the overall housing delivery within Ipswich. The omission of this site therefore should be reconsidered.

xi) Other sites to which Ipswich Borough Council objects to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

The reference to how ISPA deals with identified unmet housing need is now reflected in the SoCG between the parties.

Both the Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts have altered their net housing requirement over the plan period. In total, the two authorities will provide 18,069 dwellings across the plan period. This involves 7,904 new dwellings in Babergh (up from 7,560 at Regulation 18) and 10,165 in Mid Suffolk (up from 10,008 at Regulation 18). This number is significantly higher than the current housing delivery (approximately 30-40%) and is a result of the change in the government's standard methodology for calculating housing need.

However, due to the plan period being extended, the proposed number of new dwellings per year has reduced. In Babergh, 416 dwellings are required per year (down from 420 per year at Regulation 18) and in Mid Suffolk 535 dwellings are required per year (down from 556 per year at Regulation 18). This has a limited impact on Ipswich.

In the Regulation 18 Plan, the number of houses on the Ipswich fringe was overestimated, incorrectly adding an additional 300 dwellings to the Sroughton site, which has now been corrected within this consultation. In reality this means an overall net increase of 80 dwellings being proposed within the Ipswich fringe. The plan proposes 1,757 new dwellings for Babergh and 1,192 new dwellings for Mid Suffolk in the Ipswich fringe.

LA016 - The allocation of 8.25ha on land west of Bourne Hill, Wherstead for 75 dwellings has not changed. Although it acknowledges the requirement for a sustainable transport contribution, which is welcomed, the policy should contain reference to highway improvements and the close relationship to Ipswich, and any Reserved Matters (RM) applications should assess impacts on Ipswich Air Quality. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the site as having a major negative impact on AQMAs and no mitigation has been identified.

LA008 - The land southeast of Back Lane Copdock and Washbrook for 226 dwellings has changed in the light of the Council's comments relating to the impact on existing congestion around the A12 junction. Criteria now includes the provision of a transport assessment to determine existing and projected capacity and mitigation required; improvements onto old London Road, including pedestrian work and contributions for a new pedestrian and cycle link between Chapel St Mary, Copdock and Wolsey Grange. However, the improved links extend beyond the Babergh boundary into Ipswich. Air quality impacts in Ipswich should be referenced as the Sustainability Appraisal identifies the site as having a major negative impact on AQMAs and no

mitigation has been identified. Provision of financial contributions towards education, healthcare provision, household waste should be identified for where they are required in Ipswich.

LA013 - The land north of A1071 Sproughton sites have corrected the housing numbers as referred to above from 1,100 to 800 dwellings and now require a transport assessment. However, improvements relating to the strategic road network, as referred to 'as may be required', is not adequate and cannot be supported. Furthermore, implications on air quality are not included. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the site as having a major negative impact on AQMAs and no mitigation has been identified. Provision of financial contributions towards education, healthcare provision, household waste, and towards improvements to Chantry Park should be identified for where they are required in Ipswich.

LA116 - There is a new allocation at Poplar Lane (east of Loraine Way, Sproughton) for 50 dwellings. Sustainable transport mitigation, impacts on Ipswich air quality, and a transport assessment should be explicitly referenced as in the case of other fringe allocations. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the site as having a major negative impact on AQMAs and no mitigation has been identified. Provision of financial contributions towards education, healthcare provision, household waste, and towards improvements to Chantry Park should be identified for where they are required in Ipswich.

The former Sugar Beet Factory Allocation has changed to reflect the new Planning 'E' Use Class. This increases the range of uses for the site and means that the use of the site can change to a wider range of uses without the requirement for prior planning permission. Class E includes for example retail, office, financial and professional services, medical facilities, nurseries etc. This means there is far greater flexibility for site uses reflecting the economy at the time. This allocation is strongly supported.

The large Bramford allocations LA007, LA006, LA107, and those at Sproughton LA116, LA012 adjacent to the Ipswich borough will add significant impact on the local highway network and the improvements to the strategic road network is noted as "may be required". There is no reference to transport mitigation measures in the policy or impacts on air quality, and densities appear higher than what would be expected. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the site as having a major negative impact on AQMAs and no mitigation has been identified. Provision of financial contributions towards education, healthcare provision, household waste, and towards improvements to Chantry Park should be identified for where they are required in Ipswich.

The significant increase in housing at Claydon in allocations LA001, LA002, LA003 is of significant concern, given the significant deviation to the settlement boundary and the lack of reference to the IPSA transport Mitigation Strategy or Air Quality impacts within the respective policies. The Sustainability Appraisal states relating to objective 6 and sites LA001 and LA003 there would be *'...a significant negative effect is still expected in relation to SA Objective 6 (To maintain and where possible improve air quality and reduce noise pollution), due to the proximity of the site to an AQMA.'* Provision of financial contributions towards education, healthcare provision, household

waste, and towards improvements to Chantry Park should be identified for where they are required in Ipswich.

Following the grant of an outline planning permission (on appeal), the 10ha allocating 190 dwellings on land west of Old Norwich Road Whitton (Ashfield Land site) ref LA102 has been significantly weakened in the regulation 19 Pre-submission Joint Local Plan. There is significantly less information around necessary contributions and constraints. The policy should include reference to the need for a transport assessment and suitable transport mitigation and air quality mitigation at Reserved Matters stage, given the proximity and impacts on Ipswich.

All ISPA authorities are in support of the ISPA transport mitigation strategy prepared by the County Council on their behalf. It is clear that little reference to the impacts on highway capacity and air quality are attached to Ipswich fringe allocations, as can be ascertained from the above commentary. The inclusion to reference to the need to contribute to the ISPA Transport Mitigation Strategy and Air Quality improvements, and the fact that some associated infrastructure will be required within Ipswich should be referenced in all Ipswich Fringe site allocations.

Procedural Soundness

xii) Non-compliance with the Regulations covering notification period - Object to soundness of the Joint Local Plan.

The BMSDC Draft Joint Local Plan consultation is subject to statutory requirements under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 where there are certain minimum requirements for the consultation phase of local plan preparation, which in this case relates to Regulation 19 whereby the LPA must *(a) make a copy of each of the proposed submission documents and a statement of representations procedure available in accordance with regulation 35.* Regulation 35 (b) states that the period a local plan document should be available is 6 weeks.

The B&MS Statement of Community Involvement gives broad direction regarding the level for community engagement at the different stages of the plan making process and commits the council to involve the community in preparing the Local Plan or to consult the community by meeting *'the legislative requirements for community engagement as a minimum, whilst considering proactive opportunities to involve the community...'*

Given the extraordinary circumstances that have beset communities and the functions of local government in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, central government have issued various revisions to the regulations dictating how, amongst other things, local plans should be progressed in the interest of protecting public safety. New legislation that temporarily amends regulations 35 and 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, removes the requirement to make certain documents available for inspection at premises and to provide hard copies on request. The documents must be made available for inspection online. The amendments to the regulations do not however change the necessity to have these advertised for a minimum of 6 weeks.

Both Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council have formally expressed concern over the manner in which B&MS have undertaken the consultation, particularly as the period covers the lead up to Christmas (finishing on Christmas Eve)

and at a time when society is experiencing a further set of strict restrictions as a result of the pandemic. These extraordinary times clearly need to be taken into account.

This timescale also coincided with the IBC Local Plan Hearings, with a number of statutory consultees heavily committed in appearing at the Hearings during this time. Having regard to these facts, an extended period of consultation would have been expected, ideally into early 2021 so that the public and other consultees had a reasonable and realistic timescale for meaningful comment. As a comparison, IBC has allowed an 8-week period for SPD consultation responses to reflect the fact that more, rather than less time, is in order at this time and given the unprecedented events we all face.

It appears that no formal exhibitions or public engagement have been undertaken, most probably owing to the restrictions in place relating to the coronavirus, but despite the ability to do so, no alternative online provisions were made.

Due to the specific timings of notification to Ipswich Borough Council, the BMSDC Regulation 19 consultation does not represent the full six-week notification period, as required by the regulations for statutory consultees, and as such the plan has not been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation.

As a result of the above, Ipswich Borough Council considers that the B&MS Draft Joint Local Plan has not been positively prepared and that it is not in accordance with Regulation 35 (1) (b) of The Town and country Planning (Local Planning) (England) regulations 2012 and is therefore unsound.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martyn Fulcher', with a stylized, cursive script.

Martyn Fulcher BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI
Head of Development
Ipswich Borough Council