

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

**16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2009**

**DRAFT CORE STRATEGY**

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs J Dyer
Responsible Head of Service	Dave Hammond, Head of Planning & Environment Services
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress regarding the Draft Core Strategy.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members note progress on the development of the Draft Core Strategy.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members will recall that at your last meeting it was reported that once the implications of the RSS EiP Panel Report have been fully assimilated, another version of the Draft Core Strategy would be prepared and consulted upon as soon as possible.
- 3.2 The next version of the Draft Core Strategy will include Strategic Site Allocations<sup>1</sup>, incorporate any changes as appropriate as a result of the consultation and changes arising from any new evidence.
- 3.2 Receipt of the Proposed Changes Report of the Secretary of State is anticipated on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009 and the document will then undergo a formal period of consultation of 12 weeks duration. A verbal update on the current situation regarding this matter will be provided at your meeting.

**4.0 UPDATE**

**4.1 Strategic Site Allocations**

The final version of the Core Strategy will include strategic housing and employment allocations, which will clearly identify where the significant housing and employment growth will take place over the period up to and potentially beyond 2026. A background report is being prepared which sets out the national and regional planning policy context and discusses the planning history on the potential strategic sites at Perryfields Road, Whitford Road and Norton Farm. The history section reflects on their designation as ADRs through the Local Plan process and Inspectors opinions of the sites

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<sup>1</sup> Strategic Site Allocation- those sites considered central to achievement of the strategy

- after the two Public Inquiries. This is a key document which will help inform and be informed by both the Green Infrastructure Study and also the work on accessibility and highways as outlined below. Relevant evidence such as future water supply, flooding and landscape character are also being fed into this document.
- 4.2 Meetings are ongoing with developers and stakeholders to discuss the provision of evidence and address any infrastructure issues as detailed below:
- 4.3 Developer meetings
- 4.4 The land to the western edge of Bromsgrove Town offers potential to provide a substantial new housing and employment development . This site is largely controlled by volume house builders, Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). It is important to be able to prove that these sites are deliverable for the Core Strategy to be judged sound. We are continuing to work closely with the developers in a coordinated manner to masterplan the sites to ensure a cohesive overall development. The advice of the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) who are part of the HCA and have considerable experience in delivering large scale growth is currently being sought.
- 4.5 Infrastructure meetings
- 4.6 Similarly to meeting with the developers we also have to ensure any proposals within the Core Strategy can be serviced by sufficient physical and social infrastructure in a viable manner. Discussions are ongoing to ensure the submission version of the Core Strategy deals sufficiently with delivering growth. Meetings have therefore been held with organisations such as the Learning Skills Council, WCC education, Worcestershire PCT, BT Openreach, Severn Trent Water, HW Fire and Rescue, West Mercia Police, National Grid, Highways Agency and so on.
- 4.7 **Green Infrastructure<sup>2</sup> (GI)**
- 4.8 The requirements of new national planning guidance on sustainability, biodiversity, climate change, flood risk, and renewable energy all highlight the importance of the natural environment in strategic planning. Whilst much of the evidence already exists to support the current Draft Core Strategy policies on green issues, it is now best practice to bring all these elements into a single report which examines their inter-relationships and opportunities for improvement. This is stressed in responses to the Draft Core Strategy consultation from bodies such as Worcestershire County Council and Natural England. A Green Infrastructure Study is now being carried out to strengthen the evidence base in this respect.

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<sup>2</sup> Green Infrastructure- *Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. Green Infrastructure provides multiple benefits for the economy, the environment and people.*

#### 4.9 **Highways Accessibility modelling**

The delivery of policies within the Core Strategy, especially those which allocate new land uses will be significantly affected by the ability of the current physical infrastructure to support them or the creation of new infrastructure. Without proof that the policies can actually be delivered the Core Strategy is likely to be found unsound.

- 4.10 One issue which has so far been largely untested is the ability of the current highways infrastructure to support varying levels of new development. Since publication of the Panel Report progress on this matter has been significant. WCC have prepared project briefs for an accessibility assessment, examining the potential of development sites and a traffic modelling assessment. The briefs are drafted in such a way as to allow further work to be commissioned to support the Redditch cross boundary growth when required. It is hoped that the work will be part funded by both WCC and BDC. A further brief is being prepared to commission work to look at the possibility of building a new link road around the western side of Bromsgrove Town. Detailed modelling of new road proposals could be lengthy and also very expensive. If this work is required the developers in control of the expansion sites will be approached for funding.

#### 4.11 **Redditch Growth**

Officers from both authorities have continued to meet with the aim of progressing this complex issue. Meetings have also taken place with GOWM to inform and obtain feedback on ideas being explored. Meetings are also scheduled at Member level with representatives from both Authorities.

- 4.12 Subject to Member's approval it is intended to conduct a joint consultation event detailing various options for the location of potential Redditch growth, both within the Borough and adjacent to its boundary within Bromsgrove. It is intended that this joint consultation will take place early in the New Year. It is envisaged a leaflet will be prepared and consulted upon via the normal communication routes including drop in sessions at appropriate locations throughout Redditch.

### 5. **NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 Subject to advice from Government Office it is anticipated that the next version of the Draft Core Strategy, which will incorporate strategic site allocations will be prepared for consultation purposes by Summer 2010, with submission scheduled for late 2010 and Examination In Public early in 2011.

### 6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of receiving this report. However the transport modelling work will require funding which may be allocated within the existing LDF budget.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Development Plan for the District required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Amendment Regulations 2008.

## **8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

### **8.1 Objective 1 Regeneration**

The Draft Core Strategy identifies the long term spatial vision for the district this includes key areas such as the regeneration of the town centre.

### **8.2 Objective 3 Sense of Community and Wellbeing**

Extensive consultation has been carried out at various stages during the preparation of the Draft Core Strategy and in the course of the preparation of the supporting evidence base. The Draft Core Strategy is a publicly available document that identifies the vision for the District up to 2026.

Furthermore, proposed policies within the Draft Core Strategy direct where and when new housing should be built across the district up to 2026. It examines affordable housing, to be supplemented by an Affordable Housing SPD which will aim to maximise affordable housing provision across the district.

### **8.3 Objective 4 Environment**

The Draft Core Strategy sets out the long term spatial vision for the district and the strategic policies required in delivering that vision. It attempts to tackle social, economic and environmental issues affected by the implementation of various policies. Climate change is a central theme of the Draft Core Strategy and it contains specific policies which address this issue in terms of both adaptation and mitigation.

## **9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Inability to produce development plan document which is judged to be sound by the planning inspectorate and therefore resulting in non legally compliant Strategic planning service

- 9.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment

Key Objective Ref No: 6

Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

## **10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The Core Strategy is likely to have an impact on many different aspects of people's lives including living, working, shopping, leisure and education. Public

consultation has been and will be extensively undertaken throughout the process.

## **11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 An equalities impact assessment will be carried out on the final submission version of the strategy, although attempts will be made to consult with all sections of society as the plan progresses towards completion.

## **12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 Whilst there are no direct value for money implications connected with this report, methods to provide value for money are continuously being explored, for instance via joint procurement for external consultancy work identified as a requirement to provide a robust evidence base for the Core Strategy and striving to carry out consultation on various documents concurrently thereby achieving cost savings.

## **13. CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The issue of climate change is a central theme in the Core Strategy. Many of the policies have the potential to have a significant impact on mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change and contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions.

## **14. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	The core strategy forms an essential part of the LDF and the policies contained within the core strategy will shape future development.
Environmental	Draft Core strategy contains policies which directly impact on the environment.

## **15. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	No

Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

**16. WARDS AFFECTED**

All wards.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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