

DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

11 July 2007

AGENDA ITEM 7

Subject:	NORTH CHELMSFORD AREA ACTION PLAN – ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION (REG25)
Report by:	DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES

Enquiries contact:	Paul MacBride, Telephone 01245 606237 Email pmacbride@chelmsford.gov.uk
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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's authorisation for the publication for public consultation of the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan Issues and Options document. The Plan will be used to deliver the major Greenfield element of the Borough's planned growth up to 2021, together with key infrastructure provision of the Borough Council's spatial strategy as set out in the Core Strategy.

Recommendation(s)

1. That Members agree the document for formal consultation under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, and that the Director of Planning and Building Control Services be authorised to undertake the necessary work to prepare the document for consultation.

Corporate Implications

Legal:	The document will ultimately provide the spatial dimension of the Borough Council's Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Submission Document.
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities and Diversity:	None
Health and Safety:	None
IT:	None
Other:	
Consultees:	CBC - Strategic Housing & Environment
	ECC – Highways and Transportation

Policies and Strategies

The report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the Council:

Emerging Local Development Framework Documents

Core Strategy and Development Control Policies - Submission DPD
Chelmsford Town Centre Area Action Plan – Submission DPD

The Chelmsford Borough Local Development Framework takes into account all published strategies of the Borough Council, together with the Community Plan published by The Chelmsford Partnership.

Corporate Priorities

The report relates to the following corporate priority/priorities [tick the relevant box]

Social Inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellent Customer Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Value for Money	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. Introduction

The initial structure of the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan Issues and Options consultation document was considered at the meetings of the Development Policy Working Group on 21 June and 5 July 2007.

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the contents of the Issues and Options Consultation Document prior to the commencement of the formal consultation under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. It is presently anticipated the document will be published for an 8 week consultation period commencing on the 23 July 2007.

- 2 The document has been produced in conjunction with Kevin Murray Associates who have been commissioned by the Borough Council to assist in the preparation of the Plan. Kevin Murray will attend the meeting in order to make a presentation on the scope and content of the document.
- 3 The responses to the Reg 25 consultation will be used to inform the preparation of the Preferred Options consultation document (Reg 26) that is anticipated will be published for public consultation in Spring 2008.

4 Context

5 The key element of the Plan will be the development of two new neighbourhoods to the North of Chelmsford with necessary infrastructure to support the new communities and to enhance provision in existing communities. The Plan will also identify major transport infrastructure proposals including the NE Chelmsford bypass, new rail station, Park and Ride locations and a potential cross valley link. It will also be used as a catalyst to assist wider regeneration objectives in North Chelmsford and to provide new employment sites.

6 Status

7 When adopted the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan will form part of the statutory development plan and one of the suite of Development Plan Documents that comprise the Borough Council's Local Development Framework

8 The Issues and Options Consultation (Reg 25)

9 The purpose of the Issues and Options consultation is to enable the Borough Council to consult widely with the community and stakeholders to assist with the preparation of preferred options to be included in the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan.

10 The Issues and Options consultation document sets out the range of issues that have been identified during the plan making process so far and presents, three appropriate, options that could help deliver the Borough Council's preferred Spatial Strategy.

11 The options indicate potential locations for "Greenfield" development, the location of key transport and other infrastructure, the extent of the Green Wedge, Broomfield Hospital Special Policy Area and the extent of villages (defined settlements).

12 Key issues

13 Extensive consultation already undertaken with the community and stakeholders during the preparation of the Core Strategy has shown a high level of support for the Council's preferred spatial option of creating two new neighbourhoods to the North of Chelmsford.

14 Over the last year Kevin Murray Associates have already undertaken some initial pre-consultation work with a range of key stakeholders to help identify issues that will need to be considered by this Plan. This is in accordance with the principles of frontloading the plan making process, as set out in Government guidance.

15 Key issues identified include the following:

- The need to protect the Chelmer Valley through the designation of a Green Wedge and the character of Broomfield village. The Green Wedges should form part of a network of Green Infrastructure.
- The development should seek to minimise the need to travel and address existing traffic congestion by exploring a range of alternative transport modes including guided bus, trams, and cycle routes. Consideration should be given to prioritising transport provision and to phase development as appropriate.
- Consideration should be given to whether the provision of a NE bypass and Park and Ride facilities negates the need for the cross-valley route.
- The provision of community facilities should be based on future trends e.g., expanding GP surgeries to provide more direct care, clinics, treatment centres in communities/neighbourhoods.
- Education provision should include early years and childcare, Primary and Secondary schools, post sixteen and Adult education provision.
- Within the new neighbourhoods the opportunity of incorporating renewable energy projects should be explored.
- Foul water sewerage capacity and water supply will need to be addressed in the Plan.

16 The Spatial Options

17 The main focus of the consultation will be to seek views on potential locations to accommodate the new neighbourhoods described in the Core Strategy. Three options are presented as follows:

Option 1) Most growth at N Springfield (4500-5000 dwellings), some growth around Broomfield Hospital (up to 800 dwellings).

Option 2) Most growth at N Springfield (4500-5000 dwellings), some growth distributed west of Broomfield (up to 800 dwellings).

Option 3) Most growth at N Springfield (4500-5000 dwellings), some growth to the west of Broomfield and around Broomfield Hospital (up to 800 dwellings).

18 These options have been derived following discussions with stakeholders at workshop events and by the consultants appraisal of the various topographical, environmental, transportation and other constraints that occur in the area.

19 Further work is being undertaken to consider the phasing and delivery of the “Greenfield” sites linked to the provision of the necessary infrastructure.

20 Relationship to Site Allocations Document

21 The North Chelmsford Area Action Plan is being produced at the same time as the Site Allocations Document. The Site Allocations Document will address how land is allocated for specific uses, outside the areas covered by the North Chelmsford and Chelmsford Town Centre Area Action Plans, in accordance with the principles set out in the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD. There will be some common themes and issues considered by both documents.

22 Timetable

- 23 Early discussions have already been held with key stakeholders to inform the preparation of the NCAAP. This includes meetings with those who provide local services such as education and health as well as utilities companies who will supply the new developments with gas, electricity, water and sewerage. These will help ensure that the services needed to support the new neighbourhoods can be identified and planned well in advance.
- 24 Through the current Issues and Options consultation responses will help inform the Borough Council's approach to formally identifying sites for future types of development both in the new North Chelmsford neighbourhoods (through the NCAAP) and the rest of the Borough (through SAD).
- 25 The next stage in the process will be to analyse all the responses and prepare the 'Preferred Options' Plans, which are due for publication in spring 2008.

Stage	Date
Preliminary consultation with key stakeholders on the NCAAP	Since mid 2006
Issues and Options Plans published for early community involvement	July- September 2007
Formal public consultation on Preferred Options Plans	Spring 2008
Submission of Plans to Secretary of State	Autumn 2008
Public consultation on Submission Plans	Autumn 2008
Independent Examinations in Public (estimated)	Early 2009
Adoption of Plans into the Borough's LDF	Mid 2009

14 Conclusion

- 15 It is recommended that the attached Issues and Options consultation document be approved by the Committee of the 11 July 2007, for the purposes of public consultation under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – North Chelmsford Area Action Plan – Issues and Options Consultation Document (Reg 25)

Background Papers