

DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

11 July 2007

AGENDA ITEM 6

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| Subject: | SITE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT – ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION (REG25) |
| Report by: | DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES |

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| Enquiries contact: | David Cookson, Telephone 01245 6066739 Email dave.cookson@chelmsford.gov.uk |
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| Purpose | |
| The purpose of this report is to seek Members authorisation for the publication for public consultation of the Site Allocations Document. | |
| 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. |

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| 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]

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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"/> |

Introduction

1. The initial structure of the Site Allocations Document Issues and Options consultation document was considered by the Development Policy Working Group at its meetings on the 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 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 23 July 2007.

- 3 It is proposed that the responses to the consultation will be used to inform the preparation of the Site Allocations Preferred Options consultation document (Reg 26) that is anticipated will be published for public consultation in Spring 2008.

4 Context

- 5 The Site Allocations DPD is a key document within the LDF, and in conjunction with the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan (NCAAP), will be instrumental in the delivery of the Borough Council's Spatial Strategy up to 2021. It will set out in detail, mainly by means of the Proposals Map, how and where the policies set out in the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD will be applied across the Borough. It will also, in conjunction with the NCAAP, assist in the delivery of the Borough Council's "Chelmsford Tomorrow" vision that seeks to use the opportunities for growth positively to ensure the town becomes the economic, cultural, leisure and shopping capital of Essex as well as a leading regional centre in the East of England. As the Site Allocations DPD is dealing with development beyond the 'growth area' of North Chelmsford and Chelmsford Town Centre, the role of the DPD is fundamentally one of restraint.

6 Status

7 When adopted, the Site Allocations DPD 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 with the community and stakeholders to assist with the preparation of Preferred Options to be included in the Reg. 26 document (presently scheduled for Spring 2008).

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, where appropriate, a range of options or choices that could help deliver and implement the Borough Council's submitted Spatial Strategy. At this initial stage these are likely to take the form of questions and/or topics where specific input from stakeholders and the public would be helpful.

11 Unlike the NCAAP, the Site Allocations DPD is predominately concerned with the protection and enhancement of key environmental assets, the control of development outside defined settlement areas, the definition of Special Policy Areas and the designation of areas such as Employment Areas, rather than facilitating the delivery of major new growth (which is the primary purpose of the NCAAP). However, both documents must of course conform to the principles and policies already set out in the submitted Core Strategy and Key Diagram. Whilst the Council must consider all alternatives submitted at this early stage, it can, and indeed must, reject those that fall outside the scope of the Borough-wide Core Strategy DPD.

12 Key issues

13 The key issues for this document to consider are :-

- the definition of precise policy boundaries for (amongst others) the Green Belt, proposed Green Wedges, the Coastal Protection Belt, Defined Settlements and Special Policy Areas – including the proposed new Defined Settlements of Good Easter, Chatham Green and Edney Common..
- specific site allocations for housing (including affordable housing) in the main urban areas of Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers and Key Defined Settlements (following their identification in the Urban Capacity Study work)
- the identification of sites for specific local needs housing in villages
- the designation of Employment Areas (for example, Widford Industrial Estate)
- the designation of Neighbourhood Centres (for example, The Vineyards, Great Baddow)
- the identification of other sites where specific policy guidance is desirable for example Morelands Industrial Estate, Rettendon
- the identification of sites for new community facilities, Park and Ride facilities and sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

- 14 Many other policy designations to be ultimately shown on the Proposals Map are already determined by legislation outside the LDF process, for example Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Ancient Monuments. The Plan will therefore be simply identifying and repeating these designations.
- 15 The Proposals Map is also required to show minerals and waste disposal sites designated by the County Council through their plans. It will therefore need to be made clear in the consultation that these are matters outside the direct responsibility of this Council.
- 16 Relationship to North Chelmsford Area Action Plan
- 17 The SAD is being produced in parallel to the NCAAP. The NCAAP will deal solely with the growth areas and related matters, but the NCAAP inset boundary has been drawn to include a wider area than will ultimately be developed for the growth area needs, mainly to take account of the transport infrastructure issues. There will therefore be some common themes and issues across both documents. In particular the villages to the north of Chelmsford within the NCAAP area (Broomfield and The Walthams) will need to be subject to consideration of settlement boundaries etc in the same way as those in the rest of the Borough. This will need to be made explicit during the consultation. Similar issues arise within urban Chelmsford in the relationship between the SAD and the Town Centre Area Action Plan, and to a lesser extent within South Woodham Ferrers in the relationship with "A Plan for South Woodham Ferrers" SPD.
- 18 Timetable
- 19 The Issues and Options consultation process, and the responses received, will help inform the Borough Council's approach to formally identifying sites for future types of development and defining policy areas across the Borough, both through this document and the NCAAP.
- 20 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 Plan, 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.
- 21 The next stage in the process will be to analyse all the responses and prepare the 'Preferred Options' document, which is due for publication in mid-2008.

| Stage | Date |
|---|----------------------|
| Issues and Options document published for early community involvement (Reg. 25) | July- September 2007 |
| Formal public consultation on Preferred Options document (Reg. 26) | Spring 2008 |
| Submission of DPD to Secretary of State (Reg. 28) | Autumn 2008 |
| Public consultation on Submission DPD | Autumn 2008 |
| Independent Examination | Early 2009 |
| Adoption of Plan into the Borough's LDF | Mid 2009 |

22 Conclusion

- 23 It is recommended that the attached Issues and Options consultation document be approved by the Committee 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 – Site Allocations Document – Issues and Options Consultation Document (Reg 25)

Background Papers