



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
Cabinet
Council

30 July 2009
3 August 2009
3 September 2009

Local Development Framework: Draft Core Strategy

Report of the Director of Planning and Economic Development

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to publish the Local Development Framework (LDF) Draft Core Strategy for public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The City Council is preparing a Core Strategy for its Local Development Framework. It is being prepared under the planning system brought in by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It sets out a long term vision for the City until 2026 and the strategic planning policies needed to deliver that vision.
- 2.2 The Draft Core Strategy incorporates the land use development elements of the One Leicester Sustainable Community Strategy and includes broad indications of the locations for housing, employment and retail land uses in a Key Diagram. When adopted, the Core Strategy will replace some of the saved policies of the City of Leicester Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Draft Core Strategy will be the subject of formal public consultation for six weeks starting mid September before being submitted to the Secretary of State. A Planning Inspector will consider any comments at an Examination in Public and assess the 'soundness' of the document before producing a report that is binding on the Council.
- 2.4 Copies of the Draft Core Strategy will be made available to Cabinet Members and in Members' Areas. A Sustainability Appraisal, an Equality Impact Assessment and a Statement of Consultation will accompany the Core Strategy and these will be available in Members Areas before Cabinet and Council.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members of Cabinet are asked to recommend Council to approve the Draft Core Strategy for public consultation before it is submitted to the Secretary of State

4. REPORT

4.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the new planning system that replaces the Local Plan. The Core Strategy will be the key document of the LDF and a land use based interpretation of the One Leicester Sustainable Community Strategy. It sets out an overarching, high level planning strategy for development of the city, within the sub-regional growth context and it has a diagrammatic plan instead of a Proposals Map. A Site Allocations and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) will be started later this year, providing more detail and a Proposals Map.

4.2 The Core Strategy has to make clear choices about the location of major strategic developments. It must be consistent with national policy, in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy and should deal with locally important issues. It should be founded on robust and credible evidence, be deliverable and be the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

Consultation

4.3 Public involvement is at the heart of the new planning system. The Council adopted a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2006 that proposes various methods of consultation and identifies hard to reach groups. The Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation in autumn 2007 focused on hard to reach groups and the results of that consultation can be viewed at www.leicester.gov.uk/corestrategy.

4.4 National planning policy stresses the need for local authorities to seek out major landowners and developers and engage them fully in the generation and consideration of options. In August 2008 we continued the process of public/stakeholder engagement by consulting on a preferred strategy; focusing on the property and development sector.

4.5 We took advantage of the new Planning Inspectorate Support Programme through which a Planning Inspector advised us on steps to take to ensure that the Core Strategy would be found 'sound'. His advice can be viewed at www.leicester.gov.uk/corestrategy.

One Leicester

4.6 The Core Strategy will be the instrument for delivering the land use implications of the 25 year vision for the city set out in the One Leicester, the Sustainable Community Strategy. Therefore the Core Strategy incorporates the One Leicester vision and this has contributed to the Core Strategy objectives. The document highlights which of the One Leicester priorities are addressed by each Core Strategy policy.

Key Issues

Housing:

- The Strategic Regeneration Area, Ashton Green and Hamilton are the key housing allocations to meet the RSS target of 26,500 new homes by 2026
- Consideration of housing needs of larger families, people needing supported accommodation, students and Gypsies and Travellers
- An approach to flat conversions that resists conversion of large houses where they are appropriate for family use
- A new threshold and targets for affordable housing
- Criteria for assessing proposals on garden land
- The Council's position on the Pennbury Ecotown

Key evidence

- Housing Market Area Assessment 2009
- Housing Land Availability Assessment 2007
- Growth Infrastructure Assessment 2009
- Affordable Housing Viability Assessment (underway)
- Gypsies and Travellers' Accommodation Needs Assessment 2007

4.8 Employment:

- The New Business Quarter (NBQ), the Science and Innovation Park at Abbey Meadows and up to 10 hectares at Ashton Green are key employment allocations
- Promoting NBQ as the location for large offices
- New employment allocations will be sought within the Principal Urban Area outside the City

Key evidence

- Employment Land Study 2006
- Growth Infrastructure Assessment 2009

4.9 Retail

- Support for a retail hierarchy of the City Centre, Beaumont Leys Town Centre, five District Centres and 67 Local Centres
- City Centre promoted as a sub –regional shopping, leisure and cultural destination

Key evidence

- Retail Capacity Study 2008

4.10 Open Space

- Maintaining a network of Open Space to give local residents easy access to good quality green space, sport and recreation and to support biodiversity

Key evidence

- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2007

4.11 Transport

- Developing and Maintaining a transport network that maximises accessibility and promotes sustainable travel
- Managing the demand for car use through parking control

Key evidence

- Local Transport Plan

4.12 Climate Change

- Progressive carbon reduction targets with the aim of achieving national and One Leicester targets for zero carbon emissions.

4.13 Waste and Minerals

- A separate Waste LDF is being produced jointly with the County Council.
- Sites to be safeguarded for Minerals in the Site Allocations and Development Control Policies DPD.

5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Costs for the Local Development Framework process, including the examination in public will be met from existing budgets.

Martin Judson; Head of Finance R&C; Ext 297390

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 The Core Strategy will be a local development document within the meaning of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It has been prepared in accordance with statutory guidance and other statutory provision.

- 5.2.2 The Core Strategy is subject to a sustainability appraisal and will now be subject to consultation. The Core Strategy will have to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in public for the purpose of determining whether or not the provisions are 'sound'. The council will be bound by the recommendations made by the inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Anthony Cross, Head of Litigation Ext 296362

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph references within the report
Equal Opportunities	Yes	The document will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment
Policy	Yes	The whole report refers to a policy document
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	The document is subject to a Sustainability Appraisal
Crime and Disorder	Yes	Design policies
Human Rights Act	Yes	There is a requirement for public consultation
Elderly/People on Low Income	Yes	Housing policies

7. RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Risk	Likelihood L/M/H	Severity Impact L/M/H	Control Actions (if necessary/appropriate)
1 That Core Strategy will not be found 'sound'.	L/M	H	Regulations for production of LDF have been followed. There has been regular dialogue with GOEM and advice from the Planning Inspectorate to reduce risk of Core Strategy being found unsound.

L – Low L – Low
M – Medium M – Medium
H - High H - High

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9. CONSULTATIONS

The Core Strategy has been the subject of extensive internal consultation

10. REPORT AUTHOR

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Key Decision	Yes
Reason	Is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward
Appeared in Forward Plan	Yes
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)