

Report of the Director of City Strategy

**City of York Local Development Framework – Draft Core Strategy
Preferred Options**

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to request that Members of the LDF Working Group recommend to the Council's Executive that they approve the draft LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options document, subject to the recommendations of the group, for consultation in late Spring. The draft Core Strategy Preferred Options document is attached as Annex A to this report.
2. The Core Strategy of the LDF will be the first development plan document produced by the Council under the new planning system. It will be a written statement of the planning strategy and vision for the City of York, together with strategic policies. All other planning documents produced must fit with the Core Strategy.
3. At the LDF Working Group on the 6th April Members considered a proposed spatial strategy for inclusion in the Core Strategy for the purpose of consultation. The approach reported to that meeting has been incorporated within the draft Core Strategy attached as Annex A. However the recommendations of the 6th April LDF Working Group would lead to substantial alterations to the document. These will be considered by the Executive on 12th May; if the Executive approves the recommendations this will necessitate further changes to the document prior to its publication for consultation.

Background

4. The LDF Core Strategy is the key tool for delivering effective, strategic planning and provides the context for all subsequent LDF documents. To do this it is important that it delivers the spatial / physical elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy and it is in conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber(RSS) which constitutes part of the "statutory development plan" for the authority. It must do this in a way that provides an effective strategy for managing change and responding to York's specific planning issues. This includes responding to the future need for housing and employment land in a way that respects York's unique natural and historic environment.

5. The Core Strategy effectively involves public participation at the three stages highlighted below.
- **‘Issues & Options’ Stage** – at this point the Council highlights key issues and options for consultation to inform the content, scope and direction of the Core Strategy.
 - **‘Preferred Options’ Stage** – consultation on the Council’s intended approach.
 - **Submission Stage** - consultation on the final document which will be submitted by the Council to the Secretary of State. Any comments received at this stage will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration at a public examination into the document.
6. We are currently at the Preferred Options stage of production. This follows on from two Issues and Options stages undertaken in June 2006 (Issues and Options 1) and again in August 2007 (Issues and Options 2). This document draws on the responses that were received during the consultation events as well as feeding in the evidence base findings and higher level policy including RSS and national planning policy.

Options

7. Members have two options relating to the Core Strategy Preferred Options document:

Option 1: To approve the document, attached as Annex A, along with supporting information for public consultation;

Option 2: To seek amendments to the document through recommendations of the LDF Working Group.

Analysis of Options

8. The draft Core Strategy (attached as Annex A) reflects national and regional guidance, York’s Sustainable Community Strategy and locally produced evidence base, whilst responding to the city’s future development needs. In addition it should be noted that it has been produced for the purposes of public consultation the result of which will be reported in full to Members. Delaying its approval will delay the Core Strategy and there would be a significant risk that this would delay further stages of the LDF. This is due to the role of the Core Strategy in providing an overall planning policy framework for the LDF.
9. Following Preferred Options a Submission draft Core Strategy will be produced later in 2009, which subject to Member approval and following consultation, will be independently examined by the Planning Inspectorate whose recommendations will be binding on the authority.
10. It is clearly important that the currently emerging plan will be able to stand up to this scrutiny. Government guidance indicates that plans need to be ‘justified’, ‘effective’ and ‘consistent with national policy’. The ‘justified’ requirement covers the need for a robust evidence base and consideration of reasonable alternatives (the guidance is clear that such alternatives must be

realistic). The 'effective' requirement means that documents must be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored.

11. In addition to these tests the plan must be in general conformity with the RSS; be the subject of a sustainability appraisal; have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy; and be produced in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement. Failure to meet any of these requirements is likely to lead to a plan being found 'unsound'. This would necessitate repeating earlier stages of plan preparation.
12. It should be noted that given the lack of an up to date, adopted development plan York is under considerable pressure to advance its LDF.

LDF - Core Strategy

13. As indicated the Core Strategy will set out the overall vision and strategy for the Local Development Framework as a whole and in doing so provide the context for delivering the spatial aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy. In summary the Core Strategy covers the following broad areas.

Background & Vision

14. This includes the consideration of those factors that would influence the strategic planning of York and uses them to develop a planning vision. The role of the LDF as a proactive tool to help deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy is considered paramount. These are summarised in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Key Influence on the LDF vision.



The document includes a descriptive vision supported by a vision statement. This is then linked to a series of objectives which are addressed in subsequent chapters by strategic policies and targets.

Spatial Strategy

15. In line with national and regional planning guidance and following the consideration of the local derived evidence base an approach to directing the

future location of development is presented. This is essentially based on three sequential components:

- (i) firstly, prioritising development within York's main urban area;
- (ii) secondly, brownfield or infill development within the most sustainable larger villages; and
- (iii) thirdly, extensions to the main urban area.

16. This part of the document also considers the role of the York Northwest and City Centre Area Action Plans and York's Green Belt.
17. As highlighted in paragraph 3 above the Spatial Strategy was previously considered by Members at the LDF Working Group on 6th April. It should be noted that the recommendations of that Working Group would lead to substantial alterations. These will be considered by the Executive 12th May; if the Executive approves the recommendations this will necessitate further changes to the document prior to its publication for consultation.

Strategic Policies

18. The document contains a range of strategic policies grouped under the following headings:
 - York's Special Historic & Built Environment
 - Building Confident, Creative & Inclusive Communities
 - A Prosperous & Thriving Economy
 - A Leading Environmentally Friendly City

The section relating to 'Building Confident, Creative & Inclusive Communities' comprises policies relating to housing. This section includes policies specifically on Affordable Housing; a topic paper explaining the proposed approach is attached as Annex B to this report.

Delivery & Review

19. It is important that the LDF contains deliverable policies and that there are appropriate mechanisms in place to monitor their success. These factors are addressed in the final section of the draft Core Strategy document.

Consultation

20. The present document follows on from two previous stages of consultation undertaken in June 2006 (Issues and Options 1) and again in August 2007 (Issues and Options 2). The second consultation was carried out in conjunction with consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy. The responses received from both the initial consultations have been taken into account in developing the draft Core Strategy Preferred Options document.
21. In addition the views raised during both previous consultation exercises are summarised in a document called 'Core Strategy Consultation Statement' (April 2009). This document, subject to the agreement of Members, will be made available along side the Core Strategy Preferred Options document

during the consultation process. Copies of this document are available in the Members Library and from the author of the report.

Sustainability Appraisal

22. When producing LDFs local authorities are required to consider, at each stage of production, the impacts their proposals are likely to have on sustainable development. This is done through undertaking a sustainability appraisal of the document concerned and the publication of the appraisal so that those responding to any consultation are aware of the economic, social and environmental implications of certain approaches. A summary of the sustainability appraisal is provided as Annex B of the draft Core Strategy document. A full sustainability appraisal will be produced following Members approval of the draft Core Strategy.

Next Steps

23. The final version of the draft Preferred Options document accompanied by a sustainability appraisal, a summary leaflet and the 'Core Strategy Consultation Statement' (April 2009) document will be used as the basis of a City wide consultation due to start in May / June. The results of this consultation process will be reported back to Members along with recommendations on the form and scope of the Core Strategy at its 'Submission Stage'.

Corporate Priorities

24. The option outlined above accords with the following Corporate Strategy Priorities highlighted below.
 - Decrease the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill.
 - Reduce the environmental impact of council activities and encourage, empower and promote others to do the same.
 - Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport.
 - Improve the actual & perceived condition and appearance of city's streets, housing estates & publicly accessible spaces.
 - Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
 - Improve the economic prosperity of the people of York with a focus on minimising income differentials.
 - Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest.
 - Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city.
 - Improve the quality and availability of decent, affordable homes in the city.

Implications

25. The following implications have been assessed.

- **Financial** – *None*.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – *None*.
- **Equalities** - *None*
- **Legal** - *None*
- **Crime and Disorder** - *None*
- **Information Technology (IT)** - *None*
- **Property** - *None*
- **Other** – *None*

Risk Management

26. There are no identified risks in this proposal

Recommendations

27. That Members recommend the Executive to:

- i) approve, subject to the recommendations of this Working Group, the proposed draft LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options (attached as Annex A) for the purpose of public consultation.

Reason: So that the Local Development Framework Core Strategy can be progressed to its next stage of development.

- ii) delegate to the Director of City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy the making of any incidental changes to the draft document that are necessary as a result of the recommendations of the LDF Working Group.

Reason: So that changes recommended as a result of discussions at this meeting can be made.

- iii) delegate to the Director of City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy the approval of the full sustainability appraisal to accompany the Issues and Options document consultation.

Reason: So that the report and accompanying document can progress through to the Executive.

- iv) delegate to the Director of City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy the approval of a Consultation Strategy and associated documents.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed methods of consultation are satisfactory to members.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



Date 8th April 2009

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

N/A

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annex A: Draft Core Strategy Preferred Options

Annex B: Topic Paper 2: Affordable Housing