

Streamlining Local Development Frameworks : Consultation

On 27th November the Department for Communities and Local Government published the above document, in response to the Planning White Paper published earlier in 2007.

The consultation paper can be viewed in full at

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/streamliningldfs>

The main areas of change to the regulations concern improved consultation arrangements, revisions to the process of plan making and in the way Supplementary Planning Documents are produced.

The consultation includes the draft amended regulations and draft replacement Planning Policy Statement 12, with responses requested by **Tuesday 19 February 2008**. A full report on the proposed changes and their implications will be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

The principal change proposed by the consultation is to retain the issues and options stage and consultation prior to the submission stage, but to remove the preferred options consultation. Therefore, three phases of public and stakeholder consultation are being replaced by two:-

Existing Regulations	Proposed Regulations
Frontloading	Frontloading
Issues and Options + consultation	Issues and Options + consultation
Preferred Options + consultation	Consultation + submission
Submission + consultation	
Examination	Examination
Adoption	Adoption

In terms of Core Strategy preparation, this is set out in the proposed revisions to Planning Policy Statement 12 and include the following:-

- greater emphasis on the role of the Core Strategy being at the heart of the Council's place shaping role;
- Ability to allocate key strategic sites;
- To repackage the nine tests of soundness to focus on two principles of justification and effectiveness
- Stressing the importance of planning for infrastructure at the outset
- Extension of the lifespan of the core strategy from 10 to 15 years from adoption.

The papers suggest that the amendments will not apply in relation to a development plan document that has been submitted to the SoS on or before the operative date to be specified in the regulations.

Whilst these draft proposals are subject consultation there is no indication in the papers of when the revised regulations and Planning Policy Statement 12 will come into effect or which elements will remain as per the consultation. However, the proposed changes may have implications for the timescales of preparing the Winchester District Local Development Framework, particularly the Core Strategy and the Development Allocations and Provision development plan document, which have commenced.

Due to the uncertainty of the new requirements in both content and timeframe, the only realistic approach will be to carry on in accordance with the Local Development Scheme. The Council must therefore proceed with the forthcoming consultation on the Core Strategy Issues and Options.