

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

25 March 2009

WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – RECOMMENDED
CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTION DOCUMENT

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Contact Officer: Steve Opacic; Tel No: 01962 848101; email
sopacic@winchester.gov.uk

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB 1568 – Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) - 6 December 2007

CAB 1696 – Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Initial Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) - 15 July 2008

CAB 1728 - Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 21 October 2008

CAB 1743 - - Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 12 November 2008

CAB 1772 - Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 16 December 2008

CAB 1783 - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 28 January 2009

CAB 1799 - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 6 March 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy will implement those aspects of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy which require land allocations or planning policies to be taken forward. It must set the 'spatial strategy' for the District over the next 20 years or so and provide 'strategic' policies and allocations to deliver the strategy. Once adopted, the Core Strategy sets the direction for other documents within the Local Development Framework, which are required to be 'in conformity' with the Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' document was published for consultation in January 2008, when an extensive public consultation process was carried out. This resulted in a very large number of comments being submitted on the various issues and options in the document. These have now all been assessed and further technical work, stakeholder meetings and sustainability appraisal have been undertaken. The key points have been reported to the Cabinet (LDF) Committee over a series of meetings between October 2008 and March 2009. The LDF Committee has consequently agreed its recommended approach to all the key issues which need to be included in the Core Strategy. This includes the overall 'spatial strategy', 'strategic allocations', and policy directions for the core policy areas.

Following the Cabinet (LDF) Committee's agreement to the direction to be followed on the key issues, a series of policies have been drafted to achieve this. The attached draft Core Strategy Preferred Option document sets out for the first time the complete recommended Preferred Option document, including the detailed wording of policies. It is recommended that this is agreed for a period of consultation in the early summer, following consideration by full Council on 22 April. The consultation period would start in mid-May 2009 and run until late June. Unlike earlier public engagement and consultation exercises, which concentrated on identifying and seeking comments on issues and options, the Preferred Option consultation would be seeking views on specific policy directions and wording. The consultation would therefore be undertaken primarily by publicising the proposals and seeking written comments on them, rather than workshop-based events as in the past.

The Preferred Option document is attached at Appendix D and is set out in two main parts – the 'spatial strategy' and the 'core policies'. The spatial strategy describes the overall development strategy and sub-divides the District into its 3 main spatial areas. A vision and policies for each of the sub-areas is set out, along with a number of 'strategic allocations'. The core policies are structured to ensure that new development focuses on delivery of the outcomes set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The policies are topic-based covering matters such as affordable housing, transport, etc, which will form the basis for more detailed policy guidance in the Development Management and Allocations DPD to follow.

The programme for progressing the Core Strategy anticipates Submission to the Secretary of State in mid 2010, Public Examination in late 2010, the Inspector's Report in Spring 2011, and Adoption in mid 2011.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommended to Cabinet and Council:

1. That the draft Core Strategy Preferred Option document (attached at Appendix D) be approved for publication for a public consultation period of at least 6 weeks.
2. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access, be given delegated authority to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the document prior to publication and to make arrangements for publicising and consulting on the document.

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REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a 'Local Development Framework' (LDF) setting out the spatial planning and land use policies for their area. The LDF is not a single plan, unlike the existing Local Plan Review, but a 'folder' of plans which are produced as necessary over a period of time. Currently the Local Plan Review forms part of the LDF, having been automatically 'saved' for a period of 3 years from adoption. The City Council has recently requested that the Secretary of State approves the saving of most of the Local Plan's policies for a longer period, until they are replaced by other components of the LDF.
- 1.2 Government advice is that the 'Core Strategy' is a key element of the LDF which sets the overall vision and strategic direction for the District over a 15 year period or longer. Authorities are advised to produce their Core Strategies as the first stage of their LDFs and that these should be 'strategic' documents which do not cover detailed matters. More recently, however, Government has encouraged authorities to include major development allocations or more detailed policies where these are central to achieving the vision for the area.
- 1.3 The Core Strategy will implement those aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy which require land allocations or planning policies, and sets the 'spatial strategy' for the District over the next 20 years or so. Once adopted, the Core Strategy will set the direction for other documents within the Local Development Framework, which will be required to be 'in conformity' with it. It is therefore a critical element of the LDF.
- 1.4 The production of the Core Strategy started with the 'front-loading' consultation during early 2007, under the title of 'Live for the Future'. This extensive public engagement exercise used workshops and other methods to seek views on the main issues and changes that would need to be addressed in the District over the next 20 years. The key issues were identified and options for dealing them were included in the 'Issues and Options' document, which was published for consultation during January and February 2008. At that time the next stage of the process was the 'Preferred Option' stage which

was a statutory stage. However, at the time Government were consulting on changes to the LDF system and these have now come into effect.

- 1.5 There is now no longer a requirement to undertake a Preferred Option consultation and the next statutory stage of the process for adopting the Core Strategy is the 'Pre-Submission' stage. However, although the Government calls the Pre-Submission a 'consultation' stage, the Council would have to withdraw the Plan and resubmit it if it wished to make any significant changes. In view of the fact that the Council has not announced or consulted on its preferred option or the detailed wording of policies, it was felt to be inappropriate to proceed straight to the Pre-Submission stage.
- 1.6 Therefore, this Committee has agreed that the Preferred Option stage should be retained, as a non-statutory stage. This would give stakeholders and the community a chance to respond to the preferred options set out and the associated policy wording and provide the Council with the opportunity to make changes before the statutory Pre-Submission stage, should it consider this appropriate. It is also consistent with the approach recommended by Government of on-going consultation and involvement before the plan is finalised. More details of the proposed consultation are set out in Section 4 below.
- 1.7 There will be a need for further work in some areas following the Preferred Option stage, before the Core Strategy is ready to be submitted to the Secretary of State. These relate particularly to work on the delivery plan, as deliverability of the strategy is an increasingly important aspect of the testing of LDF documents. Clearly, the delivery of strategic sites, which is a key requirement, can only be done once those sites are identified. Similarly, it has been difficult to undertake detailed studies of infrastructure requirements previously in the absence of proposed strategic allocations.
- 1.8 The revised LDF regulations (June 2008) further emphasise the requirement for DPDs to be 'sound' on the basis that they meet the key tests of :-
 - a) Justified – to be founded on robust and credible evidence; is the strategy the most appropriate when considered against reasonable alternatives;
 - b) Effective – is the plan deliverable; how and by whom and when will the strategy be delivered; is it flexible - can it cope with changing circumstances and can it be monitored;
 - c) Legal requirements – has it complied with all the necessary regulations and had regard to national policy and conform to the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 1.9 The evolution of the Core Strategy must therefore reflect these matters to ensure that, when the more formal stages of preparation are reached, these can proceed seamlessly without incurring significant slippage in the timetable. Due to the scale and complexity of the Core Strategy, there is likely to be a

need for minor editorial changes and corrections prior to the publication of the Preferred Option. Delegated authority is sought for this to be undertaken by officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access.

2 Consultation on the Core Strategy Issues and Options

- 2.1 Extensive public consultation was carried out on the Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' document when it was published for consultation during January and February 2008. This resulted in comments from nearly 3,000 individuals and organisations, covering over 47,000 points concerning the various issues and options in the document. The scale of this response resulted in the logging, analysis and reporting of the responses taking considerably longer than originally expected. This coincided with changes to LDF procedures resulting from a new Planning Policy Statement and Regulations, which led to further delays due to uncertainty and changed requirements. Accordingly the Preferred Option stage has been delayed and, as a result of the changed procedures, is now a non-statutory stage.
- 2.2 All the comments received have now been summarised and these summaries are on the Council's web site. In addition to the public consultation, there has been on-going discussion with key stakeholders such as the statutory consultees (e.g. Highways Agency, Environment Agency, Natural England). As part of this, a series of stakeholder meetings were set up in autumn 2008 for each of the 'key hubs' identified in the Issues and Options document, along with a meeting for representatives of all the 'local hubs'. These meetings were very useful in clarifying local concerns and aspirations and have been taken into account in developing the Preferred Option document.
- 2.3 The key points arising from the consultations and the numbers of people supporting the various options in the Issues and Options document have now all been reported to the LDF Committee, over a series of meetings between October 2008 and March 2009. As well as the results of the public and stakeholder consultations, some further evidence studies have been undertaken and reported to the Committee. Also, the Council's consultants who are retained to undertake Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Core Strategy have undertaken an assessment of the various options and the results of this have been taken into account.
- 2.4 The Core Strategy will be required to be in general conformity with the South East Plan, which is expected to be adopted shortly. It will also need to have regard to, and be consistent with, the strategies adopted by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), neighbouring authorities, the City Council itself, and other members of the Local Strategic Partnership.
- 2.5 Comments were sought from Principal Scrutiny Committee and all the Scrutiny Panels on the Issues and Options document. The Minutes of the various meetings are attached at Appendix A. The Scrutiny Panels raised comments which were relevant to their areas of interest and Principal Scrutiny Committee commented on the Issues and Options consultation exercise more

generally. All of these points have been taken into account in developing the Preferred Option, which reflects most of the relevant points made. Comments on the Issues and Options were also made by Winchester Town Forum and these are attached at Appendix B. These too have been taken into account in developing the Preferred Option.

- 2.6 In January 2009 the Save Barton Farm Group presented a petition of approximately 1350 signatures, requesting that the Council should not include Barton Farm in the Preferred Option document (the Prayer is attached at Appendix C). Subsequently on 28 January 2009 the LDF Committee considered the options for strategic allocations in Winchester Town and resolved that Barton Farm was the preferred location, notwithstanding the objections of the Save Barton Farm Group.
- 2.7 The LDF Committee has now agreed its recommended approach to all the key issues which need to be included in the Core Strategy. This includes the overall 'spatial strategy', the 'strategic allocations' in the main urban areas, the settlement hierarchy and associated levels of development, and the policy directions for the core policy areas.

3 Core Strategy Preferred Option Document – Content and Structure

- 3.1 Following the Cabinet (LDF) Committee's agreement to the direction to be followed on the key issues, the Preferred Option document has been drafted to achieve this. The recommended Preferred Option document is appended and is set out in two main parts – the 'spatial strategy' and the 'core policies'.
- 3.2 The spatial strategy describes the overall development strategy and sub-divides the District into its 3 main spatial areas. As in the Issues and Options document, the three spatial areas include Winchester Town and the Market Towns and Rural Areas. However, the third sub-area in the Issues and Options document was the PUSH sub-area and there were many objections to the option of distributing the growth required in the PUSH area between the main settlements in the south of the District.
- 3.3 In assessing the options it has been concluded that it would be most sustainable and consistent with the PUSH objectives to concentrate growth on the urban areas around the fringes of the District, at Whiteley, Waterlooville and the proposed Strategic Development Areas. Therefore a new third sub-area of the 'South Hampshire Urban Areas' has been defined. Although the southern part of the District will remain within PUSH, this being defined in the South East Plan, most of it relates more to the Market Towns and Rural Areas sub-area and is defined as such.
- 3.4 For Winchester Town, the strategy develops the Town Forum's vision document 'Winchester - Towards Our Future'. Winchester is recognised as the most sustainable location for major development in the non-PUSH part of the District and it is concluded that a large development of about 2,000 dwellings will be needed to meet the housing requirements of the South East Plan. This conclusion takes account of the amount of land likely to be

developed within existing built-up areas, as assessed in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The option suggested by many respondents, of concentrating development within the built-up area of Winchester or directing it to other locations, was found to be a less sustainable alternative and one which could result in considerable harm to the character of Winchester and loss of non-housing uses. Various options for the nature and location of the required level of greenfield development have been tested and it has been concluded that Barton Farm is the most suitable.

- 3.5 Promoting the economic role of Winchester is also an important part of the strategy, but at the same time measures need to be taken to attempt to reduce the levels of commuting into and out of the town. Major housing development, especially affordable housing provision, can help to reduce in-commuting. In relation to out-commuting, the aim is to provide employment that will help to retain some of the workers who currently commute out, particularly to London or Basingstoke. The Economic and Employment Land Study identified the potential within Winchester for the development of knowledge-based and creative industries, which may provide the high-quality jobs needed to attract current out-commuters. Therefore a 'knowledge park' of about 20 hectares, providing for this type of business development, is proposed at Bushfield Camp.
- 3.6 Within the South Hampshire Urban Areas sub-area there will also need to be substantial greenfield development to meet housing requirements. The option of spreading this development between Bishops Waltham, Wickham and Knowle was put forward as a possibility in the Issues and Options document. This option has been rejected as it would not be the most sustainable or consistent with the PUSH objectives, as well as being subject to substantial public objections. Instead it has been concluded that concentrating development in large allocations of at least 2000 dwellings, as extensions to the urban areas of Whiteley and Waterlooville, would be the most appropriate. This is also consistent with the location of the major employment commitments in the area and the concept of concentrating other PUSH growth within the Strategic Development Areas at Fareham and Hedge End.
- 3.7 The potential sites around Whiteley and Waterlooville have been assessed and it has been concluded that the main allocations should be to the North of Whiteley (about 3,000 dwellings) and confirmation of the reserve allocation at West of Waterlooville (bringing the capacity of the whole Major Development Area up to 3,200 dwellings). Policies are promoted to make these allocations, along with policies for the Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) at North Fareham and North/North-East Hedge End, insofar as these need to be provided for in the Winchester Core Strategy.
- 3.8 The Market Towns and Rural Areas sub-area consists of smaller settlements and countryside, as the name suggests. For this area a hierarchy has been developed to identify those settlements which are most suitable for various scales of development. Two 'Level 1' settlements are defined (New Alresford and Bishops Waltham) where the strategy would seek the provision of about

500 dwellings in each location over the 20-year Plan period, along with scope for economic growth and retention/improvement of facilities and services. This level of development is comparable to rates over the last 20 years or so and may include greenfield development for either housing, employment or services. However, this would not be of a 'strategic' scale and any sites would be identified, if needed, through the Development Allocations and Management document.

- 3.9 Six 'Level 2' settlements are proposed where a more modest scale of development would be sought (about 300 dwellings each), along with a corresponding level of economic development (again, comparable to previous rates). This level includes settlements such as Denmead, Wickham and Colden Common, which are distinct local service centres, but not of the 'market town' scale of Alresford or Bishops Waltham. Below this are about 25 'Level 3' settlements which have a much more limited range of facilities and services and are not, therefore, suitable locations for growth to be directed, or for significant housing. They are nevertheless, appropriate for small-scale development or redevelopment within their existing settlement boundaries or through infilling. In all the Level 1 to Level 3 settlements it is proposed that 40% of housing should be affordable.
- 3.10 A Level 4 category of settlements is also proposed, also containing some 25 settlements. These settlements have very limited facilities, such that housing development should only be permitted here if it would meet a demonstrated local need. However, these are identifiable settlements and it is proposed that 'Local Connections Homes' should be encouraged here by promoting affordable housing with a limited amount of 'enabling' market housing. The market housing would be limited to 20% of the total proposed and would only be permitted so as to help bring forward affordable housing provision. These would not be 'traditional' exceptions housing sites (which must be for 100% affordable housing and would be allowed on the edge of any settlement), hence the term 'enabling' development.
- 3.11 Elsewhere in the rural area, development would be limited to uses which require a countryside location or reuse existing buildings, in line with national and regional policy.
- 3.12 The 'core policies' are structured to ensure that new development focuses on delivery of the outcomes set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The policies are topic-based covering matters such as open space provision, transport, economic development, environmental assets, design, etc. There are some changes to current policy directions which are particularly notable and are described below.
- 3.13 Policy CP1 on open space and recreation proposes a standard for the provision of built recreational facilities for the first time, as well as a wider range of open space categories. Policy CP3 promotes economic growth to support the District's five main economic sectors and CP4 identifies major establishments which are important to the local economy and should be

retained and helped to evolve (e.g. IBM, Ministry of Defence sites, Sparsholt College). A new policy is proposed (CP9) relating to the South Downs National Park, which may be designated shortly. It is also proposed that existing gaps between settlements should be retained and new ones designated around the proposed Strategic Development Areas at Fareham and Hedge End.

- 3.14 A new policy on 'green infrastructure' is included (CP5). This covers a range of open uses and facilities which are important to quality of life and can help meet various objectives. New Policies (CP13 and C14) on low/zero carbon development and renewable energy are recommended. These set out requirements for compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes, renewable energy and energy efficiency. A hierarchy is proposed for the use of renewable and decentralised energy systems, which favours connection to district heating systems where possible, followed by renewable energy generation and contributions to a carbon reduction fund.
- 3.15 Policy CP15 commits the Council to meeting the South East Plan's housing requirements. Policy CP17 on the mix and type of housing to be provided moves towards the provision of family housing (2 and 3 bed units) rather than 1 and 2 bed units. With regard to affordable housing, the aim is that 40% of units on market housing sites should be made available as affordable housing, of which 70% should be social rented. This will not in itself meet identified needs but is the most that would be viable in most schemes. Therefore Policy CP20 deals with 'Local Connection Homes', including normal exceptions housing sites in locations where housing would not normally be permitted, and 'enabling' development in Level 4 settlements where housing should only be permitted to meet local needs, included very limited market housing. A target of 600 Local Connection Homes is set, which may require the City Council to allocate 'exceptions' sites in the future, through the Development Allocations and Management document. With regard to gypsies and travellers, Policy CP22 sets out criteria for the allocation of sites. This is likely to be required once a partial review of the South East Plan has set District targets.
- 3.16 In relation to infrastructure provision, Policy CP24 enables standardised charges or levies to be developed and implemented. This will require a more detailed document to establish these charges, which will have to undergo independent examination. This may be through the implementation of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or, if the Council decides not to adopt this method, by another form of levy.

4 Consultation Arrangements

- 4.1 As noted in Section 2 above, the Preferred Option is a non-statutory stage of the process. In fact it is no longer a requirement for the Council to have a Preferred Option stage at all, although the requirement for there to be ongoing consultation before the Council agrees and submits its plan remains. Nevertheless, it has been concluded that moving straight to the Pre-

Submission stage would not result in a meaningful consultation, given the more formal processes, stricter timescale and lack of ability for the Council to make significant changes.

- 4.2 The Preferred Option consultation is effectively the last opportunity for people to comment and for the Council to revise its strategy before the more formal statutory stages. Changes at these later stages may require withdrawal of the document and repeating earlier stages. It is therefore important to undertake the Preferred Option stage and to give people an adequate opportunity to comment.
- 4.3 The previous stages of the process have been concerned mainly with generating discussion, options and issues and with seeking views on them. The workshop format adopted for these stages was well-suited to this purpose, but the Preferred Option stage is aimed at presenting the Council's proposed strategy, raising awareness of it and seeking comments on specific policies. It is, therefore, proposed that consultation on the Preferred Option should be aimed at publicising the published document and the associated opportunity to comment, including press releases, leaflets, posters and exhibitions. The precise detail of these has yet to be arranged and delegated authority is sought for this to be decided by the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Planning and Access Portfolio Holder.
- 4.4 Assuming the Preferred Option document is approved for consultation at full Council on 22 April, it is anticipated that it would be published for consultation in early/mid May. This is within the 'purdah' period for the County Council elections (although there are no District Council elections), which is another reason for avoiding workshop or public meeting events. It is not proposed that the City Council will organise such events, but other organisations may invite officers or Members to attend their meetings. This would not be possible until after the County Council elections on 4 June. As this is a non-statutory consultation, the consultation period can be extended to late June to give plenty of time between the end of the 'purdah' period and the closing date for comments.

5 Next Steps/Programme

- 5.1 The LDF Committee has recently agreed the submission of the Council's Local Development Scheme to the Government Office for the South East. This proposes the following future stages and programme for the Core Strategy:
- May – Nov 2009: Ongoing public and stakeholder participation, including the Preferred Option stage (under Local Development Regulation 25).
 - Dec 2009 – June 2010: Consultation on Pre-Submission document, assessment of comments and preparation of Submission document (under Local Development Regulations 27 & 28).

- July 2010 – Sept 2010: Submission of Core Strategy to Secretary of State and appointment of Inspector (under Local Development Regulation 30).
- Sept 2010 – March 2011: Inspector's Pre-Examination Meeting, Examination in Public, report writing.
- March 2011 – June 2011: Council receives draft Inspector's Report for fact-checking, final Inspector's Report, consideration of Report.
- July 2011: Core Strategy is adopted.

5.2 The programme above is still subject to approval by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State is likely to want more rapid progress, but this is not considered realistic in the circumstances of the District. The programme assumes a lesser volume of responses to the Preferred Option consultation than was received on the Issues and Options, and makes assumptions about the likely length of the Public Examination. At this stage these assumptions are considered realistic, but there may be a need for future changes to the programme.

6 Conclusions

6.1 There has been extensive consultation leading to the drafting of the Preferred Option document, which is attached at Appendix D. There has also been further work to produce relevant evidence, sustainability appraisal of the options, discussion with stakeholders, and consideration of compliance with other strategies and policies. The LDF Committee has considered all of this in deciding a way forward on the key issues and the Preferred Options document sets out the recommended strategy and associated policy wording which has been produced.

6.2 As this will be the first time the Council's proposed strategy has been produced it is necessary to consult on it before the more formal Pre-Submission stage at the end of 2009 and Submission to the Secretary of State in 2010. Although it would be possible to move straight to the Pre-Submission stage, this may risk having to withdraw the document at a future stage and repeat earlier stages. It is recommended that the Preferred Option document be published for consultation in May 2009 and that delegated authority be given for officers to work up the details of consultation in discussion with the Portfolio Holder.

7 RELEVANCE TO CORPORATE STRATEGY

The LDF is a key corporate priority and will contribute to achieving the Council's vision through the outcomes set out under various Corporate Strategy headings.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Meetings of the LDF Committee can be serviced from within existing resources in the Democratic Services Division. The resources for undertaking work on the LDF have been approved as part of the budget process.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Questionnaires and comments received in response to the Issues and Options consultation, held within the Strategic Planning Team. Summaries of the detailed responses received are displayed on the Council's web site: www.winchester.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planning/localdevelopmentframework

APPENDIX:

Appendix A: Minutes of Principal Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panels

Appendix B: Winchester Town Forum Comments on the Issues and Options Document

Appendix C: Prayer of Save Barton Farm Group Petition to Council 7 January 2009

Appendix D: Recommended Core Strategy Preferred Option Document

Appendix A**EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SCRUTINY PANELS****Social Issues Scrutiny Panel - 23 Jan 2008 (Report SO54 refers)**

The Head of Performance and Scrutiny explained that each of the Scrutiny Panels had been asked to consider the Local Development Framework's "Issues and Options" paper as a critical friend. In relation to this Panel, Members were asked to focus on issues and options relating to affordable housing, housing 'mix' and provision of homes for specific communities. These were set out at Appendix 1 to the report. The Head of Strategic Planning also answered a number of detailed questions on the LDF process in general and provided clarification of definitions on some of the text.

At the conclusion of debate, Members agreed that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be asked to consider the Panel's preferred Options on those issues relevant to its area of scrutiny, as set out in the resolution below.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be asked to consider the Panel's preferred Options on issues relevant to its area of scrutiny, as follows:

- (i) Affordable Housing - 'To require contributions for Affordable Housing from all developments' (additional new option, as it was considered that the three Options as set out were not adequate to deliver the Council's aims with regard to Affordable Housing)
- (ii) Housing Mix - Option 2, as set out
- (iii) Housing for Specific Communities - Option 2, as set out, subject to the need for stringent conditions to apply being noted and included in subsequent, more detailed documentation.

Environment Scrutiny Panel – 28 Jan 2008 (Report EN50 refers)

The Head of Strategic Planning explained that each of the Scrutiny Panels had been asked to consider the Local Development Framework's "Issues and Options" paper as a critical friend. In relation to this Panel, Members were asked to express a preference regarding the options issues relating to climate change, transport, high quality environment and infrastructure as set out in Appendix 1.

In relation to climate change, Members raised concerns regarding the Council's ability to measure its success against the more ambitious targets set out in Option 2 and whether those targets would financially deter developers' from delivering new housing or reduce their contributions towards infrastructure. Whereas other Members suggested that the Council should do all it could regarding climate change and, in addition, Option 2 would better protect areas, such as Otterbourne, from unsuitable development.

In recommending that the Panel adopt targets at least as ambitious as those in Option 2, Councillor Pearson explained that these needed to be considered in the context of increasingly stringent Government and European legislation regarding Climate Change. He added that the likely cost to the developer of building a new home to Level 6 BREEAM standard was approximately £36,000 per dwelling and that this was small compared to the average house price in the District of £380,000. He added that these costs were likely to be reduced in future, due to economies of scale.

Following debate, the Panel agreed to recommend Option 1 as a minimum baseline, but that the Council should work towards the more ambitious targets set out in Option 2, possibly to an agreed timeframe.

In relation to Transport and Connectivity, the Panel discussed the present problems regarding public transport, especially in rural areas and during the weekends and evenings. Consequently, the majority of the Panel considered that car-ownership was often essential for many residents. Members also discussed the difficulties of designing-out car parking in new developments in sustainable locations.

Members raised concerns about the practicalities of encouraging cycling in Winchester, given its hilly topography and the dangers stemming from a lack of road space, which also limited the introduction of bus lanes. However, the Panel welcomed the “shared space” principles for roads and noted that this would form part of the discussion on the Winchester Access Plan, following a survey by the Council’s consultants.

In relation to Strategic and Local Gaps, the Panel agreed Option 1, to retain all the strategic and local as defined in the adopted Local Plan. During discussion, Members noted the need to explain why the Council would seek to preserve these gaps and the need to ease the process for exception sites.

In relation to Open Space and Green Infrastructure, the Panel agreed both Option 2s, to extend matters covered by the standards and to introduce a new standard.

In relation to Infrastructure and Implementation, the Panel agreed to recommend Option 3, to create a hybrid system and Option 2, to allow some land uses to contribute less or nothing (for example, in the development of affordable housing).

At the conclusion of debate, the Panel thanked the officers and Portfolio Holder for their hard work in the consultation of the Local Development Framework.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be recommended to give further consideration opinions of the Panel as set out above.

Local Economy Scrutiny Panel – 29 Jan 2008 (Report [LE55](#) refers)

The Head of Performance and Scrutiny explained that each of the Scrutiny Panels had been asked to consider the Local Development Framework’s “Issues and

Options” paper as a critical friend. In relation to this Panel, Members were asked to focus on issues and options relating to economic prosperity, in particular matters relating to tourism and ‘green credentials’ for business development. These were set out at Appendix 1 to the report. The Corporate Director (Policy) and Councillor Beckett also answered a number of detailed questions on the LDF process in general and provided clarification of definitions on some of the text.

The Corporate Director (Policy) reported that there had been a successful series of workshops held over the past few weeks that had engaged a large number of the public on the issues at hand.

At the conclusion of debate, Members agreed that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be asked to consider the Panel’s preferred Options on those issues relevant to its area of scrutiny, as set out in the resolution below. The changes in wording were agreed as it was considered the current wording was too restrictive and potentially unobtainable.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be asked to consider the Panel’s preferred Options on issues relevant to its area of scrutiny, as follows:

- (i) Tourism - Strong favour was shown for Option 2, provided it was operated in a flexible manner. The document should also encourage business relating to scientific research, defence research and recycling of materials.
- (ii) ‘Green’ Commerce - Option 1, as set out, subject to additional words in bold as follows: ‘Only allocate sites for businesses which offer/can demonstrate 3 or more of the following:-
 - **Gives preference to using** sustainable construction techniques and local materials and labour (during the construction phase)
 - Has a green travel plan that **gives preference to** a substantial proportion of staff to travel to work by public transport’.

Resources Scrutiny Panel – 30 Jan 2008 (Report [RE54](#) refers)

The Head of Performance and Scrutiny explained that each of the Scrutiny Panels had been asked to consider the Local Development Framework’s “Issues and Options” paper as a critical friend. In relation to this Panel, Members were asked to focus on issues and options relating to infrastructure and implementation, particularly matters relating to developer contributions. These were set out at Appendix 1 to the report. The Corporate Director (Policy) also answered a number of detailed questions on the LDF process in general and provided clarification of definitions on some of the text.

During debate the Panel discussed whether ‘affordable housing’ should be allowed to make reduced contributions for infrastructure and concluded that this would probably be supported by the Council, but required further, more detailed consideration before a final decision was reached.

At the conclusion of debate, Members agreed that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be asked to consider the Panel's preferred Options on those issues relevant to its area of scrutiny, as set out in the resolution below. The Panel also asked the Portfolio Holder to look at mechanisms for ensuring that infrastructure was provided 'up front', at the earliest stage of development as was possible.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation be asked to consider the Panel's preferred Options on issues relevant to its area of scrutiny, as follows:

(i) That the title of Appendix 1 be amended to read (changes in bold):

Infrastructure and Implementation **Factors and Drivers**

(ii) Developer Contributions - That a new option be suggested in light of concerns that where developers have the option to make direct provision of infrastructure this can at times be inappropriate to the overall needs of an area: That tariffs be introduced, linked to firm strategies based on community aspirations for infrastructure, with developers being given the option of providing designated elements identified in that strategy.

Principal Scrutiny Committee – 18 Feb 2008 (Report PS323 Refers)

The Head of Strategic Planning updated the Committee that, at the end of the consultation period, approximately 400 online questionnaires had been returned to the Council. In addition to this, although yet to be logged and acknowledged, there had been around 4000 letters and emails received.

During discussion, he reported on the processes to engage with as many sectors of the community as possible throughout the consultation. He acknowledged that the comments received might not be totally representative, for example, they were likely to include many opposed to new build development within their communities and not necessarily about issues related to their long term sustainable development. Further to this, many responses had been generated from the signing of standard letters and /or questionnaires. The Chairman suggested that due weight should therefore be applied to the consultation results. In response to some concerns about the length of the questionnaire deterring some respondents, the Head of Strategic Planning highlighted that those wishing to submit comments could do so by alternative means. He also reported that officers had been made aware of some technical problems with the downloading and returning of some questionnaires, however this had been resolved as a matter of priority and the period for returning on-line questionnaires extended slightly.

The Head of Strategic Planning also reported that there had been no plans to hold 'wash-up' sessions after the workshop events, although a database of contact details had been compiled from those attending, so that feedback could be given in due course. Email address contacts had also been utilised for the LDF 'E-Bulletin' system.

Further to a request for clarification, the Corporate Director (Governance) advised that he had issued advice to all Members with regard to exercising care about the

comments they made during the various consultation stages, in order to avoid the perception of pre-determination of the various options. This was important advice because all Members would be 'decision makers', as the final adoption of the 'Core Strategy' was a matter for full Council. Members who wished to strongly campaign for or against particular proposals could do so, but depending on the actual content of their statements, they did risk potentially excluded themselves from taking part in the final decision.

The Committee discussed the South East Plan process and promotion of strategic development areas that had previously been identified as 'unsustainable'. The Head of Strategic Planning advised that the regional spatial strategy coming forward was separate to the LDF process, although he acknowledged that it could substantially impact upon it. He also advised that any proposal for an 'Eco-Town' development at Micheldever was also likely to be dealt with on a regional basis via the South East Plan, and would probably be in addition to any of the Council's 'preferred options'. At the conclusion of debate, the Committee noted the success of the consultation on the Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' Paper, in particular on arrangements for the roadshow events. They congratulated the Head of Strategic Planning and his team for their hard work in its organisation. Whilst there was some lack of capacity at the events in some areas due to their overwhelming success, this could be largely attributed to the active community in the some areas of the District.

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Strategic Planning and his team be congratulated for their hard work in the organisation of the consultation on the Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' Paper, in particular on the workshop events.

Appendix B**WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM COMMENTS ON THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS DOCUMENT**

The Town Forum welcomes the Issues and Options paper and was very complimentary about the care and consideration that has gone into its preparation. It also noted that an extensive consultation process that has been undertaken to seek public views.

The Town Forum welcomes the fact that land use issues are being led by thinking about what kind of place we want Winchester to be in the future. The Forum draws attention to the document 'One Vision One Place' in which it set out its views on the evolution of the town and the important characteristics which must be retained.

There were three issues on which the Town Forum wished me to communicate a specific response.

Affordable Housing

The Forum is very concerned about the shortage of affordable housing in the town area (indeed in the District as a whole) as demonstrated by the growing size of the Council's housing list. The shortage of affordable housing is believed to have an adverse effect both on the social welfare of residents and on the economic performance of the town.

Recognising that open market housing in and around Winchester will attract a premium price even if supply is increased it is therefore vital that new development contains the largest possible affordable element, i.e. of housing that is subsidised in some way. It is also important that where possible this provision targets existing housing need and provides homes which are large enough for families. The Forum hopes that the City Council will use the LDF process to secure both the highest percentage of affordable housing that is economically viable, and will look carefully at the threshold for the provision of affordable housing as part of the Core Strategy.

Economic Prosperity

The Forum recognised the important of ensuring economic vitality and prosperity as an aim of spatial planning for Winchester. It is concerned that Winchester might suffer a decline in retail and employment opportunities and that this would have a negative impact on well-being for residents.

Individual Members had different views on whether agreeing to the 'step change' option was necessary to address the current scale of the problem.

There was also concern as to whether there was robust evidence that the step change option would actually have a discernable impact in creating higher value jobs, reducing levels of commuting or broadening the economic base of the town away from over reliance on the public sector. If this could be assured, at least in the long run, then the case for the step change would be considered stronger. Some Members however supported the principle of the step change as a way of repositioning Winchester's economy over the plan period.

Quality of Life Issues

Members of the Forum recognised that growth in housing numbers is determined largely by national and regional planning requirements and that the City Council must plan for this growth by some means. They are concerned that the special characteristics of Winchester, with distinct areas which have a cohesive local identity – even where they lack special architectural merit – should not be lost if large scale development takes place.

The Forum considers one of the great qualities of Winchester to be the sense of 'belonging' that exists within the areas which make up the town. This is then reflected in the contribution they make to the town. There is concern that large scale development could undermine this if that new development does not itself have a distinct identity and/or it does not form an organic part of Winchester as it has developed over previous decades. It will be a challenge to produce substantial new development which is both sufficiently self contained not to place an unsustainable burden on existing infra structure and which relates well to other areas of Winchester town.

Consideration should therefore be given on how the impact of new development will be felt throughout the town, with special regard to infra structure issues which are unlikely to be dealt with on site. The quality of life of existing residents should not be compromised by new development.

Appendix C**PRAYER OF SAVE BARTON FARM GROUP PETITION TO COUNCIL 7
JANUARY 2009**

Mr Mayor and Councillors

The Save Barton Farm Group petitions Winchester City Council to protect Barton Farm from massive development, by omitting Barton Farm from the sites in the 2009 Preferred Options proposals for housing.

We were at the Buttercross last Saturday to inform the public and collect signatures for this petition. From the comments we received, it is obvious that the people of Winchester City and the surrounding District do not want this proposed massive development. On a freezing morning the warm support from the community added over 1,000 signatures to the petition. They cited the following concerns:

- Current and future economic climate
- Lack of infrastructure, particularly for traffic
- The impact any infrastructure solution of itself will have on Winchester
- Pollution and environmental issues, especially flooding
- Population and immigration issues
and the most recurring theme
- Annihilation of the Winchester we know and love today

They realise the issue is much more complicated than merely acquiescing to a numbers game imposed by Central Government which I fear is currently the case.

However, to play that game for a moment, we have various facts and figures that support comments made on Saturday and make it crystal-clear to us that it is grossly premature to even be contemplating Barton Farm as a Preferred Option, because (just some examples):

- Planning Policy Statement 3 requires prioritisation of brownfield land for development
- Barton Farm was designated as a reserve strategic development area for the period of the Structure Plan (ie to 2011) after which it would be protected by Countryside Policy designation
- In 2007 the City Road/Andover Road junction was deemed by the Transport Assessment for HCC to be at capacity. Gridlock would result if the application for developing Barton Farm was accepted
- Winchester District has a history of Windfall sites exceeding identified sites – this rose to 75% in 2007-8. There is therefore a risk of vastly exceeding Regional housing requirement unless Windfalls are factored in
- Last month, the Annual Monitoring Report stated that "...completions are expected to exceed the Regional Spatial Strategy(RSS) housing requirement until the later stages of the plan" and that "The RSS requirement can be

exceeded by the end of the Plan period".

Therefore, if the percentage of Windfalls historically achieved from 2000-2008 is factored in there can be no justification for the inclusion of this greenfield site in your Preferred Options Proposals.

There are lots more where this came from – but don't just take my word for it – nationally respected groups such as CPRE are 100% behind us on this very issue and have just issued a Press Release to this effect.

However, let's put the numbers game to one side now. The Local Development Framework covers 20 years – it is a short-term document. Do we really want to take the step change route for Winchester so it grows into an industrial powerhouse in the South?

I know from the numerous Council meetings I have attended, that some of you will shake your heads and say "this is all very well but we need to act responsibly" because we need to conform to the LDF process.

I beg to differ. Winchester is different and special and therefore has to be dealt with individually, without blanket planning proposals. Winchester needs and deserves a long term pro-active strategy to provide the Winchester that residents and the people of this country want.

We propose a long-term plan for Winchester to take full advantage of the things that make Winchester special – its history, culture, arts and unrivalled landscape setting. Of course this would need to address issues such as housing and employment but this should be done holistically as part of the long term, pro-active strategy.

Winchester is THE jewel in this Council's Crown and it is your privileged responsibility to ensure this jewel is not tarnished. We would welcome the opportunity to work with all political parties on the Council so any decisions you make is informed, based on true local responsibility, not expediency and half-truths.

We propose the Council set up a working party of interested groups to debate, plan and take pro-active action for the long-term future of Winchester and in the meantime omit Barton Farm from the Preferred Options proposed sites.

Thank you.

Gavin Blackman, Chairman – Save Barton Farm Group

Appendix D**RECOMMENDED CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTION DOCUMENT**

Due to its size, Appendix D circulated as a separate document.