

CAB2258(LDF)
FOR DECISION
WARD(S): ALL

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

28 November 2011

PUBLICATION OF WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 1 – JOINT CORE STRATEGY

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[CAB 2243\(LDF\)](#) – Consideration of Responses to Plans for Places Relating to Winchester Town – 10 November 2011

[CAB 2231\(LDF\)](#) – Consideration of Responses to Plans for Places After Blueprint – 28 September 2011

[CAB 2177\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Publication of Plans for Places after Blueprint – 6 June 2011

[CAB 2148\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework - Feedback on remainder of Blueprint responses - 1 April 2011

[CAB2115\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework - feedback on Blueprint responses and Core Strategy next steps 23 February 2011

[CAB2091\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Local Development Framework Update 6 December 2010.

[CAB2060\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Consultation – 6 October 2010

[CAB2040\(LDF\)](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Local Development Framework Update – 22 July 2010

[CAB 1983](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Option – Feedback on Consultation (Chapters 7-16) – 12 March 2010

[CAB 1944](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Option – Feedback on Consultation (Chapters 4-6) – 15 December 2009

[CAB 1908](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Option – Feedback on Consultation (Chapters 1-3) - 20 October 2009

[CAB 1823](#) – Winchester District Development Framework – Recommended Core Strategy Preferred Option Document (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 25 March 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy has been produced over several years and this process has included the production of various evidence studies and completion of several public engagement exercises. This report summarises the main stages of the work and changes to the way the plan has been developed and consulted on, resulting from alterations to government policies.

The Core Strategy process to date has all formed part of the non-statutory ‘front-loading’, consultation and sustainability appraisal processes. The Council now needs to progress the Plan to the ‘Pre-submission’ (or publication) version of the document. This is the start of the statutory process leading to submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State, examination by an independent Inspector, and adoption.

Reflecting the references in the recently-published draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the fact that the document will be adopted jointly with the South Downs National Park Authority, the Plan is now referred to as the ‘Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy’. It remains a strategic document, retaining the work carried out so far on public engagement, evidence collection, etc. The importance of quickly putting in place an up to date Local Plan has previously been reported to Members, given the situation regarding housing land supply and the emerging NPPF.

This report summarises the content of the recommended Local Plan (attached at Appendix 2), recommends its approval for publication and sets out the process which the relevant Regulations require to be followed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the recommended responses to previously-omitted comments on *Plans for Places...after Blueprint* (set out at Appendix 1) be noted and taken into account in considering the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy.

To Council:

2. That the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy be approved for publication (Pre-submission) and subsequent Submission to the Secretary of State in accordance with the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.
3. That the South Downs National Park Authority be requested to approve the Plan for publication (Pre-submission) and subsequent Submission to the Secretary of State, in so far as relevant to the Authority as local planning authority for that part of Winchester District lying within the National Park.
4. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, be given delegated authority to approve any minor changes requested by the National Park Authority prior to publication of the Plan.

To Cabinet:

5. That authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, to add the appendices to the Local Plan and make minor amendments to the Plan and accompanying documents prior to publication, in order to correct errors and format text without altering the meaning of the Plan;
6. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, be authorised to submit the Plan and accompanying documents to the Secretary of State following the publication period, in accordance with the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements;
7. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, be authorised to make editorial amendments to the Local Plan and accompanying documents prior to submission to the Secretary of State, to correct errors and format text without altering the meaning of the Plan;
8. That the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement/Leader, be authorised to make suggested changes to the Plan before and during the public examination process.
9. That approval be given to appoint a Programme Officer and undertake other

work as necessary to prepare for and undertake the public examination (including meeting the Planning Inspectorate's fees), provided this is within the allocated LDF budget/Reserve.

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

28 November 2011

PUBLICATION OF WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 1 – JOINT CORE STRATEGY

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has been developing its Local Development Framework 'Core Strategy' for the last 5 years during which time there have been numerous evidence studies and public engagement exercises. The main stages of the work are summarised below, but the process has been characterised by various changes in Government advice and procedures. These have necessitated changes to the way the Plan has been developed and consulted on, although the basic requirements for core strategies to be broad strategic documents based on evidence and subject to testing of their 'soundness' have remained constant.
- 1.2 Initially Government expected that all local authorities would start their Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) with the production of core strategies, which would be adopted within 3 years. However, it made provision for 'old-style' local plans to be 'saved' beyond 3 years from their adoption in case they had not already been replaced. The City Council therefore started work on its Core Strategy following adoption of the District Local Plan Review in 2006. This also fitted well with the emerging regional spatial strategy (the South East Plan).
- 1.3 In practice, changes in the requirements and advice relating to the scale of the 'evidence base', consultation/procedural arrangements and expectations of the Planning Inspectorate meant that the process took considerably longer than expected (a problem nationally, not just in Winchester). The Coalition Government proposed to simplify the system and give more power to local communities through its 'localism' agenda and by scrapping regional strategies and the housing targets they imposed. However, this has also proved a protracted process, although it has given the Council the opportunity to re-consult on development needs and develop its own targets.
- 1.4 All of the stages of the Core Strategy so far have been part of the non-statutory 'front-loading', consultation and sustainability appraisal processes. The Council now needs to agree the 'Pre-submission' (or publication) version of the document, which is the start of the statutory process leading to submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State, for examination by an independent Inspector, and adoption.

- 1.5 The recently published draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) now refers to components of the LDF as 'Local Plans' and the Cabinet (LDF) Committee agreed at its last meeting that the Core Strategy should now be referred to as the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1. This would remain a strategic document, retaining the work carried out so far on public engagement, evidence collection, etc. The Committee has noted and discussed at its recent meetings the importance of putting in place an up to date Local Plan, given the situation regarding housing land supply and the emerging NPPF.

2 Summary of the Core Strategy Process

- 2.1 Preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework commenced in 2007 with initial work on the Core Strategy. Many technical/evidence studies have been undertaken to inform the Core Strategy and there has been engagement on an ongoing basis with residents, businesses and other stakeholders during its formulation, as summarised below.
- 2.2 During early 2007 the 'Live for the Future' campaign was launched and encouraged community participation to investigate and discuss the concept of sustainable communities. A range of techniques were used including community and stakeholder workshops, a young person's event and an online questionnaire to explore the views, aspirations and concerns of the people that live, work and play in the Winchester District.
- 2.3 The outcomes fed into the 'Issues and Options' version of the Core Strategy, which was published for consultation during early 2008, with a series of workshops across the District. Several thousand responses were received commenting on the options and suggesting alternatives. This was followed with a number of stakeholder workshops to engage more fully with the key service providers, and to discuss community representatives' views on the options presented and ways forward, given the evidence base and community feedback.
- 2.4 The Core Strategy 'Preferred Option' was published in May 2009 for consultation and during late 2009/early 2010 the Council considered responses to the Preferred Option and agreed a way forward to reflect the comments and evidence base. An advisory visit by the Planning inspectorate was also held during the summer of 2009, which resulted in some useful suggestions.
- 2.5 The new Coalition Government announced its 'localism' agenda and this was followed with a number of statements in relation to the status of Regional Strategies and proposed changes to the spatial planning system. In response, the Council developed and launched its 'Blueprint' consultation toolkit to engage with local communities to allow a proactive debate as to the amount of growth and change that should be planned for at a local level. 'Plans for Places ...after *Blueprint*' was published for consultation during July/August 2011. This expressed the spatial development strategies for the District, incorporating the views and aspirations revealed during Blueprint, together

with updated technical evidence, including locally-derived housing and population projections.

- 2.6 Comments on Plans for Places have been reported to the Cabinet (LDF) Committee in September and November 2011 ([CAB 2243\(LDF\)](#) and [CAB 2231\(LDF\)](#)). Responses have also been agreed at these meetings and these have been taken into account in developing the Pre-submission version of the Core Strategy. It has been found that one set of responses (on behalf of Bovis Homes and Heron Land Developments) was omitted from these reports. These comments have now been added to the web site and Appendix 1 to this report summarises these comments and recommends a response to them. The comments raise matters which have generally been addressed already in the above reports and no change to the emerging Plan is proposed as a result.
- 2.7 During autumn 2011, the Pre-submission version of the Core Strategy has been developed, following more detailed discussions with those communities where additional development is to be planned and with technical experts in relation to the delivery and implementation of the range of District-wide policies to be included. During this time the Government consulted on a draft National Planning Policy Framework, which would replace all current Planning Policy Guidance Notes/Statements, and which refers to 'Local Plans' rather than Core Strategies.
- 2.8 In view of this, the Cabinet (LDF) Committee agreed at its meeting on 10 November that the Core Strategy should now be known as the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1. The document remains a strategic plan, enabling previous public engagement and evidence work to be retained and avoiding the need for the delays which would be caused if smaller site allocations and development management policies were to be included. These matters would continue to be covered in subsequent Development Plan documents, which would be known as Local Plan Part 2, etc.
- 2.9 It is recommended that the Local Plan should be considered by Cabinet (7 December) and full Council (8 December) with a view to agreeing the Pre-submission version. Although this is termed a consultation stage, the consultation is purely on the issue of whether the Plan is 'sound'. The Council must be satisfied that the Plan is sound when it publishes it and any comments made are, therefore, made primarily to identify the key issues that will need to be considered by the Inspector who will hold a public examination.
- 2.10 Any comments made on the soundness of the Plan at the publication stage are collated and forwarded to the Inspector and the Plan is then submitted for examination. There is no need for the Council to respond to the comments, as it already considers the Plan to be sound and cannot make any significant changes at this stage. The published programme for the Local Plan/Core Strategy anticipates publication in December 2011. While the Plan should proceed through the Council's approval procedures by 8 December, it then needs to be considered by the South Downs National Park's Planning

Committee (12 Dec) and full Authority (13 Dec), as it would be a joint Plan due to 40% of the District falling within the South Downs National Park.

- 2.11 This means that in practice publication would take place in January 2012, with submission in April and the start of the public examination in July. The Inspector's Report would be received in the autumn of 2012, allowing statutory adoption in December 2012.

3 Content of the Local Plan

- 3.1 The Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy has evolved over a number of years and draws on the results of numerous evidence studies, consultation exercises and discussions with stakeholders. It follows the same broad structure as the Preferred Option version of the Core Strategy, with the introductory sections followed by two main parts – the 'development strategy' for the spatial areas, and the District-wide topic policies. The content of these sections is highlighted briefly below, with particular attention drawn to key issues or changes from previous approaches.

Introductory Sections

- 3.2 The initial sections of the Local Plan describe its purpose and summarise the process that has been followed to produce it, including the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment. These assessments have been undertaken at key stages of the Plan's production, including the current proposed version. As this is an iterative process, if any further minor changes are needed as a result of ongoing assessments they will be reported to the meeting.
- 3.3 The links to the Winchester District Community Strategy are highlighted, as the Local Plan needs to align with the Community Strategy and enable those elements with land use implications to be delivered. Reference is also made to other relevant plans and strategies.
- 3.4 A District profile is set out, giving a broad overview of the nature of the District and identifying the three 'spatial areas' into which the District has been divided. These have been developed through consultation on the Core Strategy and reflect the particular characteristics, issues and challenges of each area. The three areas are:
- Winchester Town
 - The South Hampshire Urban Areas
 - The Market Towns and Rural Area
- 3.5 A brief portrait of each area is set out, followed by the 'spatial planning vision'. This is translated into a series of Spatial Planning Objectives, following the headings of the Community Strategy (Active Communities, Prosperous Economy and High Quality Environment) which together set out the

objectives, which aim to ensure that the District achieves sustainable development over the Plan period.

Development/Spatial Strategy

- 3.6 Policy DS.1 sets out the broad strategy for the three spatial areas and establishes the broad principles which will apply to all development proposals. This is followed by the strategy for each spatial area.
- 3.7 Winchester Town is recognised as the District's main existing urban area, providing the best range of facilities, services, transport connections and a large employment base, and generating substantial housing and economic needs. It is a sustainable location for growth and change, but a key characteristic is its setting and quality of the built environment, together with being a compact city within well-defined boundaries.
- 3.8 The various development needs and pressures are described and Policy WT.1 sets out the proposed spatial planning vision for Winchester. This includes the provision of 4,000 dwellings (including a strategic allocation of 2,000 at Barton Farm), provision for employment, commercial and retail development focussed on the town centre, and recognition of the need for additional open space and green infrastructure. There is commitment to the implementation of the Winchester Access Plan and Air Quality Management Plan and to ensuring high quality new development. Reference is also made to the 'opportunity site' proposed at Bushfield Camp.
- 3.9 Policy WT.2 sets out the detailed requirements for the strategic allocation at Barton Farm, including requirements for the provision of education facilities, open space and green infrastructure, affordable housing and transport measures including park and ride.
- 3.10 Policy WT.3 identifies Bushfield Camp as an 'opportunity site' and sets out criteria that any scheme would need to meet. This is a change from the Preferred Option version of the Core Strategy, which suggested a possible 'knowledge park' allocation. Policy WT.3 does not promote specific uses but sets criteria that future development would need to meet, including the securing of the majority of the site for public recreation, exemplary design and retention of key views. It is not envisaged that development would be for 'standard' housing or employment uses, which could and should be located within the town or other allocated sites, but for necessary development which needs a unique site and could not be accommodated within the town.
- 3.11 The South Hampshire Urban Areas are a local response to planning for the part of the District which lies within the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) area, where the development strategy focuses on new development concentrated to form new urban extensions. In order to support the PUSH economic development strategy, whilst at the same time recognising the rural character of much of the PUSH part of the District, Policy SH.1 proposes that development should be concentrated at two strategic sites at West of Waterlooville and North Whiteley. The policy also recognises the

proposals for a Strategic Development Area (SDA) north of Fareham and proposes a gap between this development and the nearby settlements of Knowle and Wickham.

- 3.12 Policy SH.2 sets out the detailed requirements for the strategic allocation at West of Waterlooville, which includes the previous 'reserve' element of this Major Development Area (MDA). Although the MDA as a whole amounts to some 3000 dwellings, only 2,500 of these would be within Winchester District. Planning permission has now been granted for this MDA, but it is important that the key requirements continue to be set out to inform possible future revised schemes. The requirements include the provision of education facilities, integration with Waterlooville town centre and provision of a substantial area of employment land.
- 3.13 Policy SH.3 allocates land at North Whiteley for 3,000 dwellings as an extension to the existing Whiteley community. As well as providing for major housing growth close to the existing and planned employment areas at Solent Business Parks and Segensworth, this proposal is also aimed at helping to overcome some of the infrastructure shortfalls that have become apparent as Whiteley has been developed.
- 3.14 The environmental importance and sensitivity of nearby areas is recognised and needs to be protected, or harm mitigated. The access issues are also highlighted, with a requirement that these are assessed and solutions implemented at an early stage of development.
- 3.15 Policy SH.4 recognises the proposed North Fareham SDA and defines land within Winchester District which should be retained open and undeveloped in order to provide a gap between the SDA and Knowle and Wickham.
- 3.16 The Market Towns and Rural Area spatial area covers the remainder of the District, including the many smaller settlements, the wider countryside and the part of the District now falling within the South Downs National Park. The District-level population and household projections for this broad area suggest the need to plan for about an additional 1,500 new homes over the Plan period, although Blueprint highlighted a general acceptance of the need for some modest development to meet local needs. Accordingly, the sum of the locally-derived housing targets for the larger settlements results in a higher housing need.
- 3.17 Policy MTRA.1 sets out the spatial vision for this area. Policy MTRA.2 covers the larger settlements and proposes the provision of 400-500 dwellings in each of the main settlements of Bishops Waltham and New Alresford. Six smaller service centres are also identified, with a target of 150-250 dwellings each. The aim in all of these larger rural settlements is to allow housing, economic development and services to be provided to maintain their role and function as rural service centres. The Policy sets out a 'sequential' approach to development of all types, whereby the scope for development within

existing settlement boundaries should be examined before greenfield sites are allocated, if necessary.

- 3.18 For the smaller settlements in the rural area, Plans for Places had suggested a 'criteria-based' policy aimed at allowing for development appropriate to the needs of the various settlements in this category, whilst maintaining their rural character. This approach had received substantial support, although concerns were expressed about the loss of settlement boundaries (which would be a consequence of this approach) and whether suitable criteria could be developed.
- 3.19 In practice, developing a criteria-based policy to cover the very wide range of settlements involved has proved to be very challenging. Any resulting policy would need to be a robust 'development management' policy to replace Local Plan Policies H.3 and H.4 and it has not proved possible to develop such an approach successfully. An additional complication is that the settlement boundaries of the larger settlements (MTRA.2) and urban areas would need to be retained, at least until they are reviewed, whereas all other settlement boundaries would be abandoned. It is not clear that it is procedurally possible to continue to 'save' some settlement boundaries whilst abandoning all the others, as they are all currently defined within one Local Plan policy (H.3).
- 3.20 Accordingly, Policy MTRA.3 deals with all the remaining rural settlements, but divides them into two types: those with existing (Local Plan) settlement boundaries and those without. For settlements which currently have settlement boundaries, development would be allowed within the boundaries and there is scope for sites outside to be allocated in the future to meet a local development need. In settlements without an existing boundary, Policy MTRA.3 allows for infilling of small sites on a built-up frontage.
- 3.21 In order to achieve the aim, highlighted through the Blueprint consultation, of allowing each settlement to have modest development appropriate to its character, both types of settlements also have provision for additional development, beyond the 'default' of development within existing boundaries or infilling. This enables each community to address local needs for housing, employment or community facilities. These may be brought forward either through the Development Management and Allocations document (Local Plan Part 2) identifying a need for development to support the village's role, or through a Neighbourhood Plan. Provision is also made for a less formal process than a Neighbourhood Plan, provided clear and wide community support can be demonstrated.
- 3.22 Policy MTRA.4 deals with development in the countryside, namely those areas outside the settlements defined in Policies MTRA.2 and MTRA.3. The Policy relaxes the current Local Plan's criteria for the expansion of businesses located in the countryside and allows for small-scale tourism development appropriate to the location. This also reflects comments made through Blueprint about the need to be more positive about rural business, whilst protecting the character of rural areas and reflecting government policy.

- 3.23 Policy MTRA.5 recognises that there are a number of large commercial or educational establishments already well-established in rural locations, which are generally within sectors which the Council wishes to promote: training, knowledge industries, tourism, etc. The Policy allows for the development of these specific sites, where site characteristics and constraints are respected, and is very similar to the draft policy in the Preferred Option version of the Plan.

Core Policies

- 3.24 A series of core policies ('CP' policies) are set out which are intended to apply to any development across the District. These are grouped under the Community Strategy's headings of:

- Active Communities
- Prosperous Economy
- High Quality Environment

- 3.25 The Active Communities section deals with housing issues, including overall housing provision, affordable housing and gypsy and traveller provision, followed by policies on the provision of facilities and services and open space and recreation.

- 3.26 There has been considerable debate and comment on the levels and type of housing provision needed. Blueprint sought to identify local needs and develop and locally-derived housing target. The [Housing Technical Paper](#) looked at various scenarios for calculating housing provision and selected the one which best matched the aspirations expressed through Blueprint. Consultants were commissioned to advise on the continued suitability of the housing target and the resulting [report by DTZ](#) concluded that the overall housing provision proposed remained justified. Report CAB2231(LDF) considered the responses to the housing numbers issue which were raised through Plans for Places. The Secretary of State's decision on Barton Farm has reinforced the conclusion that 11,000 dwellings is the right level of housing provision to plan for District-wide over the next 20 years.

- 3.27 Therefore, Policy CP.1 requires the provision of 11,000 dwellings, subdivided into the three spatial areas and makes clear that the majority will be provided within the three strategic site allocations. Although the Government remains committed to the abolition of regional strategies, there is no guarantee that this will take place before the Local Plan Part 1 is submitted or examined. It will, therefore, still be necessary to show that the Plan is in general conformity with the South East Plan housing requirement (12,240 dwellings in the period 2006-2026), which would be impossible if the housing figure for 2011-2031 was significantly lower than 11,000.

- 3.28 Policy CP.2 relates to housing mix and aims to bring more flexibility in terms of the size of dwellings required, whilst still emphasising the need for 2 and 3

bedroom properties. Policy CP.3 deal with affordable housing provision and seeks a contribution of 40% of dwellings on all sites, of which a large proportion should be rented. Reference is made to the need for this to be economically viable and an updated viability assessment has been undertaken to ensure that this target remains achievable across the District. Policy CP.4 allows for 'exceptions' schemes to be developed for affordable housing, where the provisions of other policies would not allow for adequate affordable housing development. The policy provides for an element of market housing to be provided where this is demonstrated to be essential to overcome particular site constraints or development economics issues.

- 3.29 Policy CP.5 deals with gypsy and traveller site provision and implements relevant recommendations from the Informal Scrutiny Group that recently considered this issue. It is quite a detailed policy, reflecting the recommendations of the ISG and the lack of any detailed saved Local Plan policy or South East Plan policy on this issue.
- 3.30 Policy CP.6 promotes the provision of facilities and services and the retention of existing provision, and Policy CP.7 sets out requirements for open space provision. This implements the standards for open space and built recreation facilities recommended by the 'PPG17 Open Space Study'.
- 3.31 The Prosperous Economy section contains only three policies, as the majority of guidance on this topic is specific to various spatial areas and is set out in the spatial strategy policies. There are, however, policies promoting economic development (Policy CP.8), particularly in those sectors which are strengths of the Winchester economy, and seeking to retain existing employment sites in commercial use where they are suitable (Policy CP.9). This section also includes a strategic transport policy (CP.10).
- 3.32 The High Quality Environment section contains a range of policies relating to environmental matters, starting with Policy CP.11 on sustainable construction. This requires new housing to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 for energy and level 4 for water conservation, with the equivalent standards for commercial development. The requirements have been modified following work on viability issues, discussions with development interests and production of Sustainable Buildings Guidance. In particular, the requirement for water conservation has been modified to Code level 4 to reflect widely-acknowledged concerns about the difficulty and cost of achieving higher levels in the short term. The Policy also sets out a hierarchy that should be followed in terms of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.
- 3.33 Policy CP.12 promotes the development of renewable and decentralised energy schemes and sets criteria which large scale schemes should meet. Policies CP.13 and CP.14 deal with design and density matters. These are based on the policies contained in the Preferred Option version of the Core Strategy, but modified to take account of issues arising. In particular, although higher density development is encouraged in suitable locations, there is no minimum density requirement proposed for housing developments.

- 3.34 Policies CP.15 – CP.17 and CP.20 deal with a range of environmental matters including green infrastructure, biodiversity, flooding and heritage. These are similar to the Preferred Option Core Strategy's policies, but have been updated following consultation and discussions with specialist advisors such as the Environment Agency and Natural England. The policy on Gaps (Policy CP.18) retains the Gaps defined in the Local Plan Review and adds the proposed Gap between the North Fareham SDA and Knowle and Wickham. A new policy is included in relation to the South Downs National Park, which has been drafted by National Park Authority officers (Policy CP.19).
- 3.35 The final section deals with implementation and monitoring and includes Policy CP.21 which seeks to ensure adequate and timely infrastructure provision. The Policy has been revised to set out a clear preferred hierarchy of provision, with on-site provision of physical infrastructure required where possible, followed by off-site provision or dedicated contributions, followed by general infrastructure contributions through S106 obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Reference is also made to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which is in production and will be published as a separate document to support the Core Strategy/Local Plan. This will set out in more detail the infrastructure requirements for the strategic allocations and any significant shortcomings in particular types of infrastructure.

4 Next Stages

- 4.1 The Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy requires approval by full Council prior to Pre-Submission publication. It is recommended that it be considered by the following meetings:
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| • Cabinet (LDF) Committee | 28 November 2011 |
| • Cabinet | 7 December 2011 |
| • Council | 8 December 2011 |
| • South Downs National Park Planning Committee | 12 December 2011 |
| • South Downs National Park Authority | 13 December 2011 |
- 4.2 The Local Plan, including all the recommended policies and explanatory text, is attached at Appendix 2 to this report, for consideration by Cabinet (LDF) Committee and for recommendation on to Cabinet and full Council, subject to any suggested changes. In addition, appendices to the Local Plan are proposed dealing with the following and it is recommended that delegated authority be given for these to be approved by the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement:
- Glossary
 - Evidence Base
 - Delivery Plan
 - Monitoring Framework

- 4.3 Following approval of the main Plan by the City Council and the National Park Authority and the addition of the appendices and any background documents, it is proposed that the Plan would be published in January 2012. As noted above, although this is called a consultation stage, it is a formal consultation purely on the questions of whether the Plan is 'legally compliant' and 'sound'.
- 4.4 Legal compliance requires that the document has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme, has regard to the Community Strategy, complies with the Statement of Community Involvement, has been subject to sustainability appraisal, complies with the Development Plan Regulations (2004 and as amended in 2008 and 2009 and currently proposed to be further amended), and is in general conformity with the Regional Strategy for the area.
- 4.5 Soundness requires the Plan to be justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives), effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored) and consistent with national policy. The Council should only publish the Plan if it considers that it meets the tests of legal compliance and soundness and is suitable for submission to the Secretary of State and for independent examination. This should, therefore, be the version of the Plan that the Council wishes to submit to the Secretary of State and no significant changes should be made between publication and the Plan being submitted or examined by an independent Inspector.
- 4.6 At this stage of the process the Development Plan Regulations (in particular Regulations 27-30) set out various requirements which govern the process. Comments made in response to the consultation on legal compliance / soundness are collated by the Council and forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. As the Plan must be considered sound to be published it would be submitted to the Secretary of State after the close of the consultation period without any significant changes being proposed. The Inspector starts the process of examining the Plan as soon as it is submitted and will determine from the comments made which issues he requires further information on. The Inspector will hold a public examination and invite key witnesses to attend, to explore the main soundness issues identified through the representations.
- 4.7 The Pre-Submission and Submission stages should be considered as one continuous process and, unless a new and unexpected soundness issue is raised, the Plan would not need further consideration by the Council between Pre-Submission and Submission. Therefore, it is recommended that, as well as authorising publication of the Pre-Submission Plan, the Committee recommends to Cabinet and Council that submission be agreed and delegated authority be given to the Head of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement, to submit the Plan to the Secretary of State. In order to deal with any minor changes that may be needed, or to make corrections or small changes in response to

representations, delegated authority should also be given to make minor editorial changes which do not affect the meaning of the Plan.

- 4.8 It is normal for Inspectors to ask questions of the Council before and during the public examination. This may include seeking the Council's view on certain changes that the Inspector may be considering making a recommendation on. Normally these will relate to matters which the Council has considered and resolved a position on, and which officers will be able to relay to the Inspector. However, specific delegated authority should be approved so that officers are clear on how they can respond to such matters. Where a possible change would significantly change the meaning of the Plan the matter would require discussion with, and possible approval by, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement or the Leader and provision should be made for this.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The LDF Core Strategy has been in preparation for a considerable time, which has involved substantial evidence gathering and consultation. The Council is now in a position to publish its final version of the Plan, which it is recommended should be called the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy. Given the housing land supply situation in the District and the thrust of the emerging National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), it is recommended that this be done as soon as possible, so that the Plan can start to gain some weight in the decision-making process.
- 5.2 Accordingly the Cabinet (LDF) Committee is recommended to consider the document and to commend it to Cabinet and Council for publication.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

6 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 6.1 As part of progressing effective spatial planning of the District, the Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy is one of the key implementation mechanisms for the Council's Community Strategy. To this extent, the Plan reflects the outcomes of the Community Strategy, and the policies cover those matters where there is a land use planning requirement for their delivery.
- 6.2 The requirements for production of Development Plan Documents require Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment and these processes have been followed.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The key resources for undertaking work on the LDF have been approved as part of the budget process. The nature and scale of the LDF will continue to require shared resources in terms of utilising skills and expertise from other

Teams within the Council. This is now even more critical given the emphasis on localism.

- 7.2 Although the Development Plan Regulations require that the Plan be submitted for examination by an independent Inspector, the Council is required to meet the costs of appointing the Inspector and organising the examination. The Planning Inspectorate will charge a daily rate for the Inspector, which is calculated taking account of preparation and writing-up time, as well as time actually spent at the hearing. In addition a Programme Officer will need to be appointed to help the Inspector organise the hearing and to act as the point of contact between the Inspector, the Council and participants. Other associated costs include venue hire, equipment, printing costs for documents and possible consultancy costs if specialist witnesses are needed to provide evidence.
- 7.3 It is proposed that the One Team process be used initially to identify whether a Programme Officer can be appointed internally. This is a temporary post, which would initially be part time, but in order to maintain independence, the Programme Officer could not have had any direct involvement in planning work for the Council. If an internal appointment was not possible there are several independent Programme Officers who work on a self-employed basis and charge daily rates. This would be a cost-effective and flexible alternative way of appointing an experienced Programme Officer. Funding exists within the LDF budget/Reserve to cover all the anticipated costs of the examination for the Local Plan Part 1, which are estimated to total a maximum of £250,000, as follows:
- Examination costs (mainly Inspector's fee but also including Programme Officer, venue hire and equipment) - £230,000
 - Printing of documents (Pre-Submission and Submission Local Plan, material/documents for the examination) - £10,000
 - Consultancy (if needed to ensure that specialist witnesses can be appointed to give evidence to the examination) - £10,000.

Agreement is requested to the use of up to this level of funding to progress the Local Plan to publication, submission and examination.

- 7.4 Based on current forecasts of expenditure on the LDF, there is adequate funding within the LDF budget/reserve to progress the Local Plan Part 1 through the examination process to adoption. However, there is likely to be a significant budget shortfall from 2013/14 onwards which would affect future DPD production and will need to be reviewed in due course to assess whether additional funding is required to enable other parts of the LDF to progress.
- 7.5 PPS3 requires the Council to demonstrate a 5 year supply of available housing land and this is likely to remain in the NPPF. Further delays in progressing the Core Strategy and allocating key strategic sites to address any assessed housing need could result in developers submitting speculative

planning applications and appeals, which could create an unplanned need for resources.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 8.1 The Localism Bill reaffirms Government's intention to retain LDFs and their constituent development plan documents, albeit re-named as local plans. The National Planning Policy Framework and revised Local Planning Regulations, both published for consultation, also reaffirm the format and content of development plan documents and the broad process LDFs will be required to follow.
- 8.2 A particular risk to the Council in the short term is the issue of an ageing Local Plan and the lack of a recently-adopted Local Plan. This could result in challenges regarding not only regarding housing supply but also the emerging presumption in favour of sustainable development which requires applications to be considered favourably if the local plan is silent or absent, etc.
- 8.3 The risks of failing to progress the Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy in a timely manner are considerable and include putting the Council more at risk of dealing with development proposals through the appeal process.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1: Summary of responses on behalf of Bovis Homes and Heron Land Developments and recommended responses.
- Appendix 2: Recommended Pre-Submission Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy

APPENDIX 1**Summary of responses on behalf of Bovis Homes and Heron Land Developments and recommended responses.****Comments: Question 1**

Support the Council's assessment of Winchester Town as the most sustainable location within the District and a suitable location for significant levels of housing (paragraph 9.5 of the *Housing Technical Paper*).

Object to the housing requirement. The proposed housing requirement for Winchester Town (4,000 dwellings between 2011 and 2031) will not meet current levels of need and will do little to resolve issues associated with the current housing and economic imbalance or affordable housing shortage. The Core Strategy should increase the requirement for Winchester Town to at least 5,500 dwellings over the plan period.

Recommended Response

The comments on housing numbers were considered in Report CAB2231(LDF). The economic and housing projections were reviewed by DTZ in light of current economic and demographic evidence. Following the review, DTZ advised that, even under economic-led scenario promoted by the respondent, only 580 dwellings/year would be needed. This is very close to the Council's proposed provision of 550 dwelling/year, which was considered by DTZ to remain appropriate. The economic-led projection has not, therefore, been used and in any event does not now produce a significantly higher projection. In addition, the constraints to development in Winchester have led to the conclusion that a housing provision in proportion to the size of the town is the correct approach.

Comments: Question 2

Object to economic strategy which indicates that employment sites would be delivered piecemeal throughout the City. Need to consider the District's role in the wider setting of adjoining districts, and therefore support the need for a knowledge park to attract high-end knowledge based industries to Winchester.

Support the principle of economic growth in Winchester town and agree that there is a need for additional retail floorspace in Winchester Town and appropriate retail provision for the strategic development sites.

The Core Strategy should identify the scale of the shortfall in public open space/green infrastructure and make appropriate provision within strategic development areas which is taken into account in determining the precise boundary of any strategic allocation.

Recommended Response

The DTZ review of employment prospects and demographic projections identified a substantially reduced land requirement for employment development in the District. As a result no specific allocation for a knowledge park or other business use is needed for Winchester. The strategy also emphasises the importance of promoting development in or adjoining the town centre to regenerate and strengthen Winchester's economy, rather than major greenfield site allocations. Therefore, no strategic allocations, for employment, retail, etc are needed in the Core Strategy.

Comments: Question 3

Support the land uses identified in Table 7. Need to identify greenfield land as a potential source for housing and employment uses, as it is clear that the existing built up area cannot accommodate the requirement. Need to consider fully, the implications of losing surface car parks. Object to the minimum land area required to accommodate the additional development set out in Table 7; consider this a gross under-representation. If the redevelopment opportunities referred to in the table are suitable, available and deliverable, they should have been included in the SHLAA (potential for double counting).

Recommended Response

Table 7 demonstrates that there is a need for the release of greenfield land, which for the Core Strategy is addressed through the Strategic Allocations. Agree that suitable, available and deliverable sites should be identified in the SHLAA to avoid double counting. Further work has been undertaken on the capacity of the built-up area of Winchester and it is concluded that a strategic allocation at Barton Farm is needed.

Comments: Question 4

Object to the housing requirement for Winchester Town which should be increased to at least 5,500 dwellings which necessitates planning for additional residential development, over and above that proposed at Barton Farm. An extension of the site at Barton Farm to include land North of Well House Lane will allow for a more comprehensive mixed-use development enabling provision of sustainable measures to be considered from the outset as part of the masterplanning process. This would provide sufficient space for a knowledge based business park and allow for the appropriate provision of supporting infrastructure.

Object to the alternative plan for housing provision suggested in paragraph 5.31 which could have a negative impact on the character and function of Winchester as a sustainable city.

Recommended Response

Given the conclusion on the need for housing and employment land, it is considered that Barton Farm needs to be allocated through the Core Strategy. However, development needs are not so substantial as to require land to the north of Barton Farm to be included in the strategic allocation.

APPENDIX 2

**Recommended Pre-Submission Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 –
Joint Core Strategy**