

MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	16 SEPTEMBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY: HEREFORD PREFERRED OPTION
PORTFOLIO AREA:	ENVIRONMENT & STRATEGIC HOUSING

CLASSIFICATION: Open.

Wards Affected

Aylestone, Backbury, Belmont, Burghill, Holmer & Lyde, Central, Credenhill, Hagley, Hollington, St Martins & Hinton, St Nicholas, Stoney Street, Three Elms, Tupsley

Purpose

To seek approval for the publication of the Herefordshire Core Strategy: Hereford Preferred Option paper for consultation purposes.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT: The publication of Herefordshire Core Strategy: Hereford Preferred Option paper be approved for consultation purposes.

Key Points Summary

The Core Strategy Hereford Preferred Option sets out the future strategic development policies and proposals for the Hereford area for further consultation purposes. The preferred strategy includes the development requirement for:

- New Homes
- New Jobs
- New Infrastructure
- Cite Centre redevelopment
- New community facilities
- New green/play space.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Chris Botwright Team Leader Local Planning on Hfd. 260133

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options, preparation of the Core Strategy being a statutory requirement

Reasons for Recommendations

This report is required to ensure targeted consultation on the final package of strategic development proposals for the Hereford area prior to publication and formal submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State early next year. This follows consideration of reviewed and new evidence base and responses made to the Hereford development options contained within the Place Shaping Paper consulted upon in January this year,

Introduction and Background

This report is to agree the publication of the Hereford Preferred Option for further consultation purposes. It builds upon the Place Shaping consultation published in January 2010 and incorporates responses made to that paper.

Key Considerations

1. The Core Strategy is a long-term strategic planning document which sets out the vision and objectives for the County and establishes the policy framework and the broad locations for development necessary to deliver them. Once adopted, the Core Strategy will set the guidelines for development of new homes, businesses, open space and other facilities across the county to 2026. The Hereford Area Plan will set out more details to these proposals, non-strategic allocations and detailed policies for the delivery of sustainable growth of the city including urban area regeneration proposals.
2. The Place Shaping Paper identified the strategic development proposals to be included in the Core Strategy and the area specific options for Hereford. It also set out matters to be furthered through the Hereford Area Plan. Section 6.2 of the paper set out the city's strengths and key issues under social, economic and environmental headings. Where relevant evidence base is identified to support and clarify such issues.
3. The Hereford Preferred Option is based on development requirements for the city previously endorsed by the Council at various stages through the preparation of the LDF. Most recently, at its meeting on 13 November 2009 Council affirmed that the sustainable future for Hereford and the county depended on creating more and better paid jobs, significantly increasing the number of homes (particularly affordable), improving leisure and shopping and procuring the supporting infrastructure, including another bridge crossing of the Wye and a Hereford relief road. The Preferred Option sets out a comprehensive and balanced package of proposals to deliver this vision.

Preferred Strategy for Hereford

- New homes

4. The preferred strategy for Hereford confirms the need to build about half of the county's new homes up to 2026 in Hereford in recognition of the city's status as a Growth Point and its sub-regional importance. As well as homes already built, committed and allowing for those which will be accommodated within the urban area, this will require development on greenfield land on the edge of the city. Here, some 4,500 dwellings will be provided in the form of well planned, sustainable communities, equivalent to some 260 dwellings per annum from 2010 to 2026.

- New jobs

5. Recognising Hereford's role as the main employment centre for the county there will be a need for further employment land to provide new business opportunities and jobs. Whilst Rotherwas is to remain the principal focus for employment in Hereford an additional 15ha of land elsewhere needs to be identified on edge of city locations.

- New infrastructure

6. The proposed new development for Hereford will require further supplies of water and electricity and provision for drainage. The Transport Study (2003), furthered by the Multi Modal Model Forecasting Report (2009) and Hereford Relief Road – Study of Options (2010) has confirmed that a balanced package of transport measures including park and ride, walking and cycling links and bus priority measures along with a relief road will be required to accommodate growth of the city. The Study of Options has considered route corridors for a relief road assessing the environmental and engineering impacts and costs of such a route. The study has concluded that a western route corridor is to be preferred.

- City centre redevelopment

7. Hereford needs to retain its role as being the main centre for shopping, leisure and entertainment. As a historic city it is important that its cultural and tourist attractions are enhanced along within proposals for regeneration. Assessments highlight a need for 40,000m² of non food floorspace in Hereford by 2021 with a further 20,000m² between 2021 and 2026. The retail study (May 2009) highlight the need for additional food store floorspace between 2021 and 2026 due primarily to the planned population growth.

- New community facilities

8. The new communities that will be created through new housing will require essential services and facilities such as healthcare, education, local shops and recreation. In particular the Strategy for Community Buildings (2009) highlighted a gap in provision of community buildings in the north of Hereford City. Developers will be expected to contribute to the provision of such requirements. Separately a need has been identified for the provision and/or improvement of a higher education centre.

- New green/play space

9. It is important to integrate the growth of Hereford within the surrounding countryside. The Green Infrastructure Strategy highlights the need for an additional country park north or east of the city, green corridors through and around the city and the creation of a new edge to the built form. The Play Facilities Strategy confirms the need for new and improved play facilities for children and young people. It sets out the requirements for a variety of easily accessed, safe and attractive places for play to be included within urban expansion areas.

Preferred Option for Hereford

10. The Place Shaping Paper sets out the possible options for Hereford in order to deliver the spatial strategy. Whilst in the urban area a preferred option was identified, the urban extensions and transport options had not been decided and options were offered for choices to be made.
11. Consideration of the responses made to these options as contained in the Place Shaping Paper has now been completed. Additionally, new and reviewed evidence base has been

received. Both have informed the compilation of the attached report as being the preferred option package for Hereford to be taken forward and included within the final version of the Core Strategy. In summary the preferred option sets out:

12. **Section 1: Introduction** - Sets out the purpose of the Place Shaping paper, the consultation to date on the Core Strategy and the role of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment. It makes clear how to comment on the preferred option proposals.
13. **Section 2: Hereford 2026 The Vision** – By 2026, Hereford will consist of healthy, sustainable communities with a wide range of homes and employment opportunities for all which are well serviced by a range of community facilities and public transport.
Issues and opportunities – Sets out the issues and spatial strategy for Hereford based on housing and employment growth, transport, environment, educational and community requirements.
14. **Section 3: Hereford City Centre** – Confirms and strengthens the role of the city centre as providing the focus for shopping, office and business uses, leisure and for places to visit. Proposals include more city centre living and address movement issues. In summary, proposals include:

800 homes

Additional retail floorspace

New recreation/leisure/tourist facilities

New road infrastructure

Integrated transport hub

New commercial/office space

Enhanced historic heritage

15. **Section 4: Movement policy** – Identifies the existing transport constraints within and around the city which need to be addressed in terms of facilitating the future prosperity and growth of Hereford. Sets out the preferred transport policy as being a package of sustainable transport measures (including park & ride, new cycle/walkways and a transport hub) based upon an amended Option 2 from the Place Shaping Paper with provision of a relief road along an inner western route corridor as informed by the Hereford Relief Road – Study of Options Report (August 2010).
16. **Sections 5 - 8: Growth Distribution/Urban expansion areas** – Sets out the growth areas to be designed as urban extensions based upon an Option 4 dispersed option. The urban extension area proposals being:

Northern Urban Expansion

Holmer East

5ha employment

Holmer West

1,000 homes

Park & Ride

Primary school/extension to Aylestone High School

Western Urban Expansion

Three Elms

1,000 homes

10ha employment

Park & Ride

Whitecross

1,500 homes

Primary school

(western expansion will require extension to Whitecross High School)

Southern Urban Expansion

Lower Bullingham

1,000 homes

Park & Ride

Primary school or travel links to other S. Wye schools

All housing areas to have community hub, high energy efficient homes, 35% affordable, contributions to new road infrastructure/sustainable transport measures, green infrastructure, play space/open space/sports facilities, sustainable urban drainage.

17. **Section 9: Consultation** – Sets out the consultation questions and response information.
18. Other non-strategic policies and proposals will be required to enable the Hereford of 2026 to be realised. These will be contained within the Hereford Area Plan, various master plans and additional supplementary guidance.
19. The preferred option report also sets out:
 - What the place shaping consultation has told us
 - How the Sustainability Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment have influenced the preferred location
 - Summaries of what the evidence base is telling us
 - Alternative options not taken forward and why

Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment

20. In May 2010, specialist environmental consultants were appointed to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the preferred policies. This involves assessing each policy against a range of sustainability objectives. This process is still ongoing. A verbal report of its findings will be given at the meeting.
- 21 A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is also ongoing. This is to assess the affects of any development on designated Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Any results available at the time of the meeting will also be given verbally.

Targeted consultation

22. Once agreed the preferred option package for Hereford will be subject to targeted consultation. This is to take place over a period of 6 weeks and through October. This will include a press release, public meeting and setting up of an exhibition to make clear the proposals and to receive local views. All who have participated in the plan making process for Hereford will be invited to make further comment. Parish Councils, statutory undertakers and stakeholders will be encouraged to make their views known. The preferred option package will be accompanied by the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment reports. At the end of the consultation period all comments will be considered to allow any further changes to be included in the final Core Strategy document to be presented to Council in February. The Core Strategy will then be published and submitted to the Secretary of State. At this time it is anticipated that an Examination will take place during the summer of next year with possible adoption by the end of 2011.

Community Impact

The Core Strategy document is being prepared with due regard to the Council's Community Strategy and has widely consulted upon plan issues and development options. This is a further stage of community involvement.

Financial Implications

Cost of the consultation exercise will be met within existing budgets.

Legal Implications

None specifically identified. The Core Strategy is a planning document being prepared as part of the Council's Local Development Framework.

Risk Management

Preparation of the Core Strategy is a statutory requirement.

Consultees

Hereford Futures Ltd

Appendices

Hereford Preferred Option Paper.

Background Papers

Place Shaping Paper Consultation January 2010

Hereford Relief Road – Study of Options August 2010.