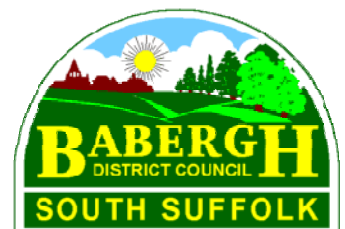


Core Strategy Issues and Options

**Introduction Section
March 2009**



1 Introduction

The Local Development Framework

- 1.1. In September 2004 the government introduced a new plan system to manage spatial planning in England. Before this each local authority had a Local Plan. The Planning system now requires Local Authorities to have Local Development Frameworks (LDF). The LDF consist a number of planning documents containing the local authority's planning policies and proposals to guide development in their area for a 15 year period.
- 1.2. The Local Development Framework will eventually replace the current Babergh Local Plan and will initially provide guidance up to 2027. The development plan documents to be included in the Babergh Local Development Framework are the Core Strategy; Site Specific Allocations; and Development Control Policies.

The Core Strategy

- 1.3. The Core Strategy is a key document in the Local Development Framework. It is a strategic document that sets out the vision and spatial strategy for the Babergh District. It will set out clear elements of the planning framework for the area and will provide a long term spatial vision for Babergh and how that vision will be met, including working with other organisations to achieve this. It will be developed in stages with opportunity for consultation after each stage. The first of these stages is the informal consultation stage regarding the Issues and Options, the second stage will be the formal consultation stage on the draft Core Strategy (or the preferred options). The Core Strategy is about broad issues and does not deal with detailed information on development control or site-specific issues. These issues will be addressed in subsequent documents. We anticipate that work on the Site Specific Allocations will start in the spring of 2010.

The Issues and Options Report

- 1.4. The informal consultation stage or Issues and Options report involves early consultation with the community and other stakeholders. The aim of this report is to highlight the main issues to be addressed in the Core Strategy and possible options to address these issues. The issues represent the problems and changes, and the options are the possible solutions. The issues and options in this document are widespread and won't cover options for everything. For example the document will look at overall levels of growth but not at specific sites, that will be dealt with in the Site Specific Allocations document.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.5. A Sustainability Appraisal will be completed for the Core Strategy, assessing the anticipated impacts of each of the options on the social, economic, environmental, and sustainable development objectives. The document will be prepared in accordance with the Babergh Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The report will be published on the Council's website.

Evidence Base

- 1.6. In addition, important technical evidence has been collected by Babergh to assist with the preparation of the Core Strategy. Those studies include:
- Employment Land Review
 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Viability Study
 - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
 - Housing Needs Survey
 - Retail Study
 - Sudbury and Hadleigh Town Centre Health Checks
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
 - Open Space Assessment
 - Parish Profiles
 - Infrastructure Capacity

The information gathered in these technical studies will justify the 'soundness' of the Core Strategy document.



How can you comment on the document?

- 1.7. We would like your thoughts and views on the issues and options in this document and all comments received will be considered in the preparation of the draft Core Strategy (Preferred Options). This document can be downloaded from the Babergh Council website at www.babergh.gov.uk. The document can also be viewed at the Council Offices in Hadleigh, all libraries across the district and at the Sudbury and Hadleigh Town Halls.
- 1.8. We encourage comments to be sent in electronically via our online consultation which can be access on the Babergh website. If you are unable to get access to the internet you can post your comments to: Babergh District Council, Planning Policy Team, Corks Lane, Hadleigh, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP7 6SJ. Comments can also be emailed to ldf@babergh.gov.uk
- 1.9. The Issues and Options consultation ends on the **26th of May 2009 at 5 pm**. For enquiries and to request a copy of the Issues and Options document please call 01473 826678.
- 1.10. **Please note that no comments (electronic or written) can be treated as confidential.**

What Happens Next?

- 1.11. Once the consultation for this Issues and Options report has finished the Council will review and consider all comments received during the consultation period. The comments received will be taken into account and considered when producing the next stage of the Core Strategy that will set out the draft Core Strategy policies or the preferred options of the Council.
- 1.12. The draft Core Strategy document will be subject to a formal public consultation period. Once this second consultation is completed, the final document will be prepared for submission to the Secretary of State and it will then be subject to an independent examination. The inspector responsible for the examination will check that the authority has prepared the document legally and test whether it is 'sound'. For the Core Strategy to be considered sound the document should be justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- “Justified” means that the document must be:
- founded on a robust and credible evidence base
 - the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives
- “Effective” means that the document must be:
- deliverable;
 - flexible; and
 - able to be monitored
- 1.13. After the inspector has examined the document he/she will produce a binding report with his/her recommendations. Babergh District Council will then make the changes to the document before it is adopted by the Council.

It is anticipated that the consultation periods regarding the Core Strategy will occur as follows:

Core Strategy Reports	Consultation Date
1 st Stage : Issues and Options	April/ May 2009
2 nd Stage: Draft Core Strategy (preferred options)	Winter 2009
3 rd Stage: Submission of Core Strategy (final Core Strategy)	March 2010

The dates in this table may be subject to change.