

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT

16 December 2009

Report Title	Core Strategy Alternatives
PSAP Date	16th December 2009
Purpose of Report	To discuss and broadly agree the Alternative Strategies for consultation purposes early in 2010 as part of the preparation of the Council's Core Strategy.
Decision(s)	The Cabinet Member for Development RESOLVES that: a) the broad format and content of the Alternative Strategies document and Background Papers for Consultation at end of January/start of February be approved. b) on behalf of PSAP to agree to any further amendments/changes to the text of the Alternative Strategies document and Background Papers prior to formal consultation commencing.
Consultation and feedback	The background papers have been prepared in consultation with colleagues in other statutory organizations (e.g. Gloucestershire County Council, Natural England) as necessary and appropriate to the topic covered.
Financial Implications	None directly Sandra Cowley, Head of Finance Tel: 01453 754136 Email: sandra.cowley@stroud.gov.uk
Legal Implications	Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council is required to prepare a Local Development Framework that incorporates a Core Strategy. The preparation of Alternative Strategies is an integral part of the preparation process of the Core Strategy. Once adopted the Core Strategy will become a Local Development Document and will replace parts of the Council's Adopted Stroud District Local Plan. As such it will have statutory status and be an integral part of the decision making process on planning applications. Patricia Adley, Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754370 Email: patricia.adley@stroud.gov.uk
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Portfolio Holder	Cllr Mrs B Tait, Cabinet Member for Development Tel: 01452 812743 Email: cllr.Barbara.tait@stroud.gov.uk
Options	The final Core Strategy must be submitted to the Secretary of State through the relevant Government Office. Not to do so would leave the

	Council vulnerable to loss of funding as plan making performance will be judged by the Government against the latest Local Development Scheme milestones as material in determining levels of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. This stage of preparation of the Core Strategy is an integral part of its production.
Performance Management Follow Up	Performance Management will be achieved through the mandatory Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) as part of the <i>Local Development Framework</i> process once the Core Strategy is adopted. The preparation process for the Core Strategy is similarly monitored and is subject to project management within the team and by senior management in Development Services
Background Papers	Draft Core Strategy: Alternative Strategies Consultation. Alternative Strategies Background Papers

Discussion

1. The Planning Strategy team has been gathering evidence to identify key issues and support policy making for the Core Strategy since late 2007. The Council consulted on the Core Strategy Issues from 13 March 2009 to 1 May 2009. 238 comments were received and an analysis of these is provided in an Issues Consultation Response Report to be published alongside the Alternative Strategies papers. From the evidence gathered and taking account of the responses to the Issues consultation a range of Alternative Strategies have been drafted to address the development of the district over the next 15-20 years.
2. The Issues have been developed into policy and strategy approaches. PSAP have been actively involved in this process. It is now proposed that the next stage of consultation be based upon the draft Alternative Strategies document supported by the range of Background Papers that have been circulated to PSAP Members prior to this meeting. Further evidence will still continue to come forward and may impact upon the final choice of strategy. For example, we are awaiting the final report of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Town Centres and Retail Study at the time of writing. Further work may also be necessary in terms of a level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 depending upon the preferred strategy selected from the Alternative Strategies. Therefore, the Alternative Strategies presented to date may be subject to modification in the light of further evidence
3. The Alternative Strategies do not place great significance of the current economic climate that has deteriorated dramatically in the last two years. Whilst the recession is an important short term factor in development, it is assumed that there will be recovery, albeit not necessarily to previous levels of development. Planning for the future in the Core Strategy covers a significant time period in which there will no doubt be other economic swings of some proportions. The general assumption remains that growth in the economy will continue overall. National forecasts predict a return to more normal market conditions by 2011/2012. The Core Strategy is still in its early stages and such matters are not considered "show stoppers" at present.
4. The Alternative Strategies:
 - Set out the long-term spatial vision for the District (up to 2026), and suggest alternative strategies for delivering that vision;
 - Identify the overall levels of different types of development (including housing, employment, retail, and leisure) that is envisaged and a range of potential distributions of that development;

- identify some potential improvements in infrastructure that may be required to support the scale and distribution of development
 - Provide a SWOT analysis of each spatial option;
 - Put forward a number of potential strategic policies for the District; and
 - Include diagrammatic maps of the distribution of development for each of the alternative strategies could work in spatial terms.
5. Background papers provide the context for and will support the Alternative Strategies and suggested policies. A Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal will accompany the final documents.
 6. Further work will be required to refine the links with, and support the delivery of, other key strategies and plans, including the Sustainable Community Strategy.
 7. PSAP Members are now asked to consider the material suggested for the Alternative Strategies consultation and to support the approach taken. The approval of the Cabinet member for Development is sought to provide a mandate for the refinement of these documents and their use as the basis for the consultation on Alternative Strategies proposed to commence in late January/early February 2010.

Approved by Cllr Barbara Tait; Cabinet Member for Development

Signed:

Date: