

Core Strategy Preferred Options Document



Help shape the future of South Bucks

September 2006

Issue 1

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Q. What is this Newsletter?

A. All of us are affected by planning. The Council is now reviewing its planning policies, and we want to involve you in this process. This newsletter summarises what is being proposed in the Core Strategy. A longer version is also available (see the back page for details).

What is the Local Development Framework?

Q.A. The Government has changed the planning system, and has introduced a new type of plan called a Local Development Framework (LDF). The South Bucks LDF will be a set of documents that will guide future development in the District for the next 15 to 20 years.

What is the Core Strategy?

Q.A. The Core Strategy is at the heart of the LDF and will set the 'big picture'. It will have a long-term vision, objectives and will set broad policies for the future development of South Bucks.

Q. What stage are we at now?

A. We are now at the 'Preferred Options' stage of preparing the Core Strategy. It gives the Council's preferred approach to a number of key, strategic issues, but does not contain detailed policy wording at this stage. We have taken into account the comments received from the consultation on the Issues and Options Paper, which took place earlier this year.

Q. How will the Core Strategy contribute towards sustainable development?

A. The preferred options have been tested to make sure they deliver sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal report has been published alongside the Preferred Options Document.

Q. Why should I comment now?

A. This is your opportunity to have a say on how the District will develop over the next 15 to 20 years. No final decisions have yet been made, and the Council need your views on whether it is adopting the right approach. It is important that you do not miss this chance to make your views known to us.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CLOSING DATE FOR COMMENTS IS 23RD OCTOBER 2006

Now please turn over to see our vision for a sustainable future for South Bucks.

More details on how you can find out more and have your say is given on the back page of this newsletter

HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

You are invited to have your say on this Preferred Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal and help to shape the future of our District. All comments received will help us draft the Core Strategy that will be submitted to the Government next year.

Both documents, along with the most relevant supporting documents, can be found on the Council's website (www.southbucks.gov.uk), following the links from Environment/Planning/Local Development Framework/Core Strategy. Hard copies are available for inspection at public libraries and all District/Town/Parish Council offices (during normal opening hours).

Please let us have your comments in one of the following ways:

- ◆ Complete the on-line response form on our website www.southbucks.gov.uk), or
- ◆ Obtain a response form from our website (www.southbucks.gov.uk) or from any library or District/Town/Parish Council office, complete it and
 - ◇ Email it to LDF@southbucks.gov.uk or
 - ◇ Post it to: Head of Planning Policy, South Bucks District Council, Capswood, Oxford Road, Denham, FREEPOST SCE 9630, UB9 4BR, or
 - ◇ Fax it to 01895 837269.

The consultation period will last six weeks. The closing date for responses is 23rd October 2006 (12.00 Noon).

Please note that your comments and contact details will have to be placed on a public register and cannot be treated as confidential.

Thank you for reading this newsletter. We hope you found it helpful. For further information, please visit our website (www.southbucks.gov.uk), call us on 01895 837247, 837315 or 837278 or e-mail us at LDF@southbucks.gov.uk.

FIND OUT MORE...

Find out more at one of the public meetings:

- Village Centre, Rogers Lane, Stoke Poges.**
Tues 19th September 2006, 7.45pm
- St. Peter's Centre, Thorney Lane North, Iver.**
Thurs 21st September 2006, 7pm
- Curzon Centre, Maxwell Rd, Beaconsfield.**
Mon 25th September 2006, 7pm
- South Bucks DC offices, Capswood, Denham.**
Thurs 28th September 2006, 7pm
- Burnham Park Hall, Windsor Lane, Burnham.**
Wed 4th October 2006, 7pm

In addition, exhibitions are being held at:

- South Bucks DC offices, Capswood, Denham.**
11th September to 23rd October 2006
- Evreham Centre, Swallow Street, Iver.**
11th to 17th September 2006
- Sainsbury, Maxwell Road, Beaconsfield.**
18th to 24th September 2006
- Sainsbury, Lake End Road, Taplow.**
25th to 29th September 2006
- Farnham Park Golf Course, Park Road, Stoke Poges.**
30th September to 6th October 2006
- Waitrose, Penn Rd, Beaconsfield.**
7th to 15th October 2006
- Beacon Centre, Mayflower Way, Beaconsfield.**
16th to 23rd October 2006

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

When the consultation period has finished, we will consider all of the responses and publish our response to them. The full draft of the Core Strategy will then be produced and submitted to the Government in 2007. The public will get a chance to make formal representations at this stage. An independent Inspector will then test the 'soundness' of the strategy and produce a report, which will be binding on the Council. The Core Strategy will be adopted in 2008.

If you require a translation or large print version of any of these documents, we will seek to provide them on request.

A sustainable future for South Bucks

The Core Strategy Preferred Options Document contains a vision of what the District may be like in 2021, and 28 preferred policy approaches. These are summarised below:

A Vision of South Bucks in 2021...

In 2021 there will be high levels of community identity, belonging and pride in South Bucks. Residents will be able to access the facilities they need and will enjoy improved health and community safety. More help will be available in meeting local housing needs, whilst the Green Belt and the character of settlements will continue to be protected. The economy will continue to thrive but the rate of traffic growth and congestion will have been reduced.

1. Promoting sustainable development: This policy would set out the overarching approach to promoting sustainable development in South Bucks. It would seek to ensure that new development contributes to social, environmental, and economic improvements.

2. Overarching spatial strategy: The proposed strategy is to steer development away from the Green Belt, and towards those settlements that are excluded from the Green Belt. There would be a slightly greater focus on the larger settlements as these have greater infrastructure (for example community facilities and public transport) and accessibility than the smaller ones. Development in the Green Belt settlements would be strictly limited.

3. Areas of Potential Change: Three locations have been identified that offer potential for change that would bring about significant improvements in these areas. They are Wilton Park in Beaconsfield, Mill Lane in Taplow and Court Lane in Iver, although these are expected to remain in the Green Belt.

Meeting Social Needs

These policies are aimed at ensuring that people's housing and other social needs are met whilst at the same time protecting the character of our environment.

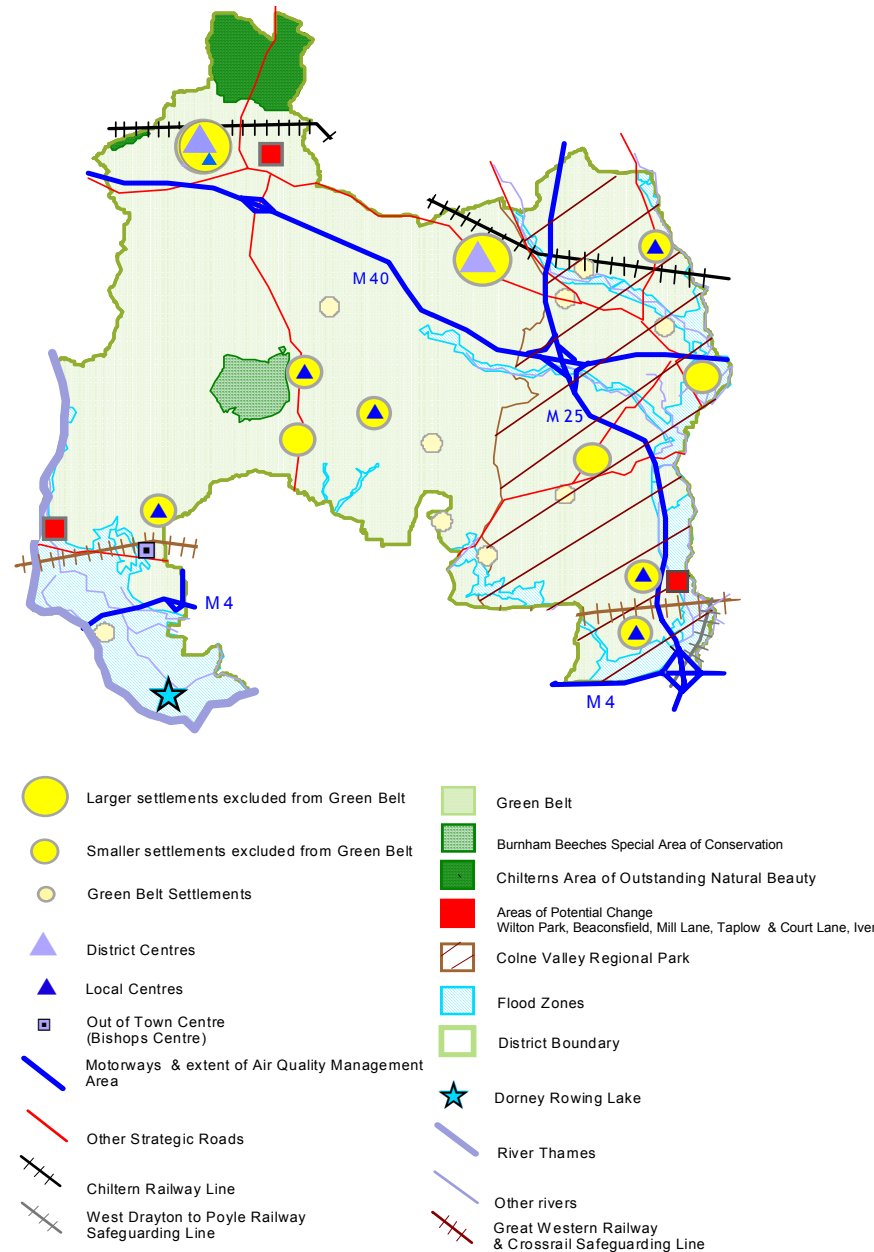
4. Overall housing provision: The preferred approach is to make provision for an average of 90 additional dwellings per year in the District, in line with the expected regional housing target.

5. Making efficient use of land whilst protecting character: This policy would require housing development to make full and effective use of land, whilst having regard to the character of the surrounding area.

6. The mix of new housing types and sizes: Proposals for new housing should provide a suitable mix of dwelling types and sizes, having regard to housing needs and the character of the surrounding area.

7. Affordable housing: Many local people cannot afford to live in South Bucks, and so it is proposed to increase the proportion of affordable housing that would be sought on qualifying sites. Where there is a local need, a limited number of small sites in or near to some villages could be developed for affordable housing.

8. Gypsies and Travellers accommodation: The preferred approach is to include a policy in the Core Strategy which would ensure that when planning applications are received for Gypsy and Traveller sites, they are assessed against reasonable and realistic criteria.



Achieving a Sustainable Economy

9. Making better use of employment land: The policy would seek to ensure that there is a sustainable and balanced economy in the District.

10. Maintaining and enhancing town centres: The preferred approach is to focus any significant additional retail and other town centre uses within the District Shopping Centres if they are able to accommodate it.

11. Television and film industries: The preferred approach is to retain uses connected with the television and film industries within the District, and enable them to expand to a modest extent (subject to constraints that exist, such as the Green Belt).

12. The rural economy: The preferred approach is to support appropriate development, including farm diversification, where this would help promote sustainable communities in rural areas.

Protecting the Natural and Built Environment

13. Protecting and enhancing the Green Belt: The Green Belt will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. No major changes to the Green Belt boundary are proposed.

14. Landscape Protection: The policy would conserve and enhance the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which lies northeast and west of Beaconsfield. Elsewhere, development would only be permitted if it is in keeping with the landscape character.

15. Colne Valley Park: The eastern part of the District lies within the Colne Valley Regional Park. The Council would work with others to pursue the four key aims of the Park.

16. Damaged Land: Some Green Belt land has become damaged through mineral extraction or neglect. This policy would seek to ensure that these damaged landscapes are improved wherever possible.

17. Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: The preferred approach is to protect and enhance sites and species of recognised nature conservation importance.

18. Protecting and enhancing the built environment: The preferred approach is to ensure that all new development is of a high quality design and respects and enhances local character.

19. Prevention of pollution to air, land or water: Development proposals that would give rise to unacceptable levels of such pollution, including contamination, air quality, noise and light, would not be permitted.

20. Protecting and enhancing the water environment and 21. River Thames and its Setting: These policies would provide the overall approach to development that could affect the water environment, including the River Thames.

Accessibility and Infrastructure

22. Community Infrastructure: The provision of new community infrastructure, such as shops, schools and health facilities, would be encouraged in appropriate, accessible locations. The loss of existing infrastructure will be resisted.

23. Encouraging sustainable transport and 24. Railway safeguarding: The first policy would seek to encourage the use of non-car modes of transport, whilst accepting that the car will continue to be the primary mode of travel for most journeys. The second policy would safeguard land in connection with two potential railway schemes.

25. Dorney Rowing Lake: The preferred approach is to identify the lake, which is due to host the rowing events for the 2012 London Olympics, as a regionally significant sports facility.

26. Sustainable waste management: The preferred approach is to require developers to manage waste sustainably. Developments should be designed to provide space for recycling facilities.

27. Energy efficiency and renewable energy: Small-scale renewable energy development is supported in principle. All development should incorporate high standards of energy efficiency wherever possible.

28. Securing infrastructure through planning obligations: The preferred approach is to secure necessary infrastructure improvements by seeking planning obligations from developers.