
ROCHFORD DISTRICT REGULATION 25 CORE STRATEGY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval from Members for the draft Rochford District Core Strategy. This document has been produced to comply with the milestones set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme.
- 1.2 The Planning Policy Sub-Committee considered an earlier version of this document and recommended a number of changes. Since the initial preparation of this document, the first two Core Strategies produced have failed their tests of soundness and have been withdrawn by an Inspector. This version takes account of comments made by the Inspectors dealing with the Lichfield and Stafford Core Strategies.

2 THE CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The Regulation 25 consultation will be undertaken in line with the requirements set out in the Council's draft Statement of Community Involvement. As such, this document is primarily for key consultees, though it is intended to make it widely available for comment. General public consultation on a preferred options paper will take place later in the process, as part of the Regulation 26 process.
- 2.2 The results of the Regulation 25 consultation will be reported to this Committee in due course, together with a further draft for approval. This will be the Regulation 26 draft, which is subject to wider public consultation.

3 CORE STRATEGY RATIONALE

- 3.1 Members are reminded that it is not the intention of the Core Strategy to produce in depth policies. The Core Strategy is an overarching document that must be in general conformity with the *East of England Plan (RSS14)*. Once adopted, the Core Strategy will be the senior document in the hierarchy of Development Plan Documents produced by the Council, as all others must be in general conformity with it.
- 3.2 The Core Strategy does not go into site specifics. It does not include a detailed proposals map; instead a Key Diagram is to be produced. The features for inclusion on the Key Diagram were shown in appendices 1 to 5 of the original document circulated to all Members. These, together with indicative figures for housing and employment, will be shown in later versions as a composite diagram.
- 3.3 *Possible and probable* policy direction has been shown in a tabular form at the end of each of the policy areas. All the changes made are shown as

struck through text where it is to be removed, or as underlined text where it is to be added.

4 MAJOR CHANGES OTHER THAN THOSE PROPOSED BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE

4.1 A number of major changes have been deemed necessary. They are summarised below and can be seen in full in the Appendix.

- The first section of the Core Strategy will detail the statutory basis for the plan;
- The second section will be a comprehensive glossary;
- The Spatial Vision has been re-worded to move forward from the 2004 Community Strategy base that had been used previously, given that it will be redrafted;
- Three of the 14 key areas have been expanded, to take account of the need to create a better framework on which to hang other policies;
- Extra text has been added to clarify the situation between brown and green field development and the need to protect the Green Belt;
- Further examples of local characteristics and features have been added to give the document a sense of place, particularly with regard to nature conservation;
- The quality of aerial photographs has been improved and photographs of the Wallasea managed realignment scheme have been sourced;
- Initial figures have been added indicating the percentage of development intended to be split between first and second tier settlements. This will be further broken down for the Regulation 26 draft; and
- A final section dealing with implementation and monitoring has been added.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There is an issue with Regulatory Risk if the Core Strategy fails to comply with the relevant sections of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 or secondary legislation.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Any further slippage of the Core Strategy timetable laid out in the Local Development Scheme will significantly affect the award of Planning Delivery Grant (PDG).

6.2 Preparation, consultation and the professional printing of subsequent versions will all have varying resource implications, and for the moment these can be met through existing budgets and the PDG.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are legal implications if the Core Strategy fails to comply with the relevant sections of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 or secondary legislation.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That the draft Regulation 25 Core Strategy be progressed to public consultation in line with the requirements of the Council's latest draft Statement of Community Involvement and the results reported back to this Committee.

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Background Papers:-

None.

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