

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**CABINET MEETING**
20TH DECEMBER 2007**Bridgnorth Core Strategy**
Issues and Options Consultation Response

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	A Better Environment
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Managing the Local Environment
KEY PRIORITY:	Forward Planning
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Stephen Clee
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Bridgnorth Core Strategy Issues & Options Paper Appendix 2 - Representations submitted to Bridgnorth District Council (attached) Appendix 1 to this Report has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request (see front cover for details)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the Cabinet's endorsement of representations submitted on the Issues and Options Consultation Paper for the Bridgnorth Core Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 To endorse the representations submitted to the Bridgnorth District Council on the Bridgnorth Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper, as set out at appendix 2 to the Cabinet report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Bridgnorth District Council is currently in the early stages of preparing a Core Strategy as part of its Local Development Framework to replace its Local Plan which was Adopted in July 2006. The Core Strategy will set out the long-term vision, spatial objectives and core policies to guide the future development within Bridgnorth District. The role of the Core Strategy is not to allocate specific sites or set out detailed policies against which to assess development proposals, but to set out the broad planning framework for Bridgnorth District until 2026.
- 3.2 As Members may be aware, Bridgnorth is expected to merge with Shropshire County Council and the other District Councils in the County in April 2009. This will form a single unitary authority for the whole of Shropshire, excluding Telford and Wrekin. Under a new unitary authority, there will be a single Local Development Framework, and therefore a single Core Strategy. It is probable therefore, that Bridgnorth District will not proceed to the preferred options stage, but will begin work on a new Core Strategy for the unitary authority before April 2009. If this occurs, the responses received from this consultation will feed into the "front-loading" process of engagement and consultation.
- 3.3 The Paper identifies a range of key issues which face the Bridgnorth District including; how the housing required to meet the allocations set out in the RSS will be distributed; how to secure affordable housing within the District; how the needs of gypsies and travellers should be met; how new jobs can be provided within the District and where employment sites should be allocated; the future development of the tourism economy; future retail development; the protection of community facilities and open space; environmental sustainability; and the protection of the natural and historic environment.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Officers have assessed the Issues and Options paper and noted some areas of potential concern. Firstly, there is no mention of the issue of the number of caravan/log cabin/chalet developments within the wider Severn Valley area. As Members will be aware, Wyre Forest District has recently completed its own Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation and a major area of concern to local residents is the number of these types of development in the Button Oak area. This issue should be raised as a potential cross boundary matter into Bridgnorth District.
- 4.2 Another issue of importance to Wyre Forest District is the potential for development at Highley to generate a greater volume of traffic along Dowles Road and through the Welchgate Air Quality Management Area in Bewdley Town Centre. This would exacerbate the problem of poor air quality in this area and for this reason anything other than small scale development in this area would need to be very carefully assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process. In addition there are concerns that further development at Button Oak and beyond, which gains access from the B4194 would have potential to exacerbate the existing road safety problems at the junction of the B4194 with the road to Pound Green and Arley.
- 4.3 The final area of concern to Wyre Forest District is the need to consider the Severn Valley in its wider context, this is particularly important in terms of flooding and the

need to ensure that developments upstream do not impact upon the flooding problems experienced within the District.

- 4.6 In view of the deadline for receipt of representations on the Issues and Options Paper (30th November 2007), Officers have, following the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity's agreement, submitted representations reflecting those issues outlined in this report and Council policy. Cabinet's formal endorsement of the representations is now being sought. Further opportunities to consider the Bridgnorth Core Strategy in more detail will be available at the Preferred Options and Submission stages of the document's preparation, or during the preparation of the wider Core Strategy as detailed in para.3.2 of this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications to the Council arising out of this report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The recommended policy responses are in accordance with the Council's established priorities.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 It is considered that the Core Strategy for Bridgnorth District should ensure that any development taking place in the District does not have a detrimental impact on Wyre Forest District; this is particularly relevant in relation to development in the Highley/Button Oak area and also in relation to the Severn Valley and the flooding issues which it presents.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 Cabinet member for Planning, Regeneration and Prosperity

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Bridgnorth Core Strategy – Issues and Options Paper (October 2007).

21st November 2007