

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
26TH MARCH 2009

**Shropshire Council Core Strategy
Issues and Options Consultation Response**

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	A better environment for today and tomorrow
CORPORATE PLAN AIM:	A Sustainable Environment
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Stephen Clee
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Shropshire Council Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper (<i>This appendix has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details).</i>) Appendix 2 - Representations submitted to Shropshire Council

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

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

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Shropshire County Council and the Shropshire District Councils will merge in April to become Shropshire Council. As such, work is already underway on a single Core Strategy for the area which will replace the Adopted Local Plans of the existing authorities. The Core Strategy will set out the long-term vision, spatial objectives and core policies to guide the future development within Shropshire. 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 Shropshire until 2026.
- 3.2 The District Council was consulted on, and responded to, the Bridgnorth Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper in November 2007. At this time, it was reported

to Members that work on the Bridgnorth Core Strategy was unlikely to proceed should a single authority be created, and that should this be the case, the issues addressed through the Bridgnorth Core Strategy would instead be addressed through a single Core Strategy for Shropshire. This single Core Strategy is now being developed, and the District Council has been consulted on the Issues and Options document.

- 3.3 The Issues and Options Paper identifies a number of key issues which face Shropshire, including: how the housing required to meet the allocations set out in the RSS will be distributed; how to secure affordable housing within the area; how the needs of gypsies and travellers should be met; how new jobs can be provided within the area 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. The Core Strategy will also include minerals and waste planning policies.

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 completed its own Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation during Summer 2007 and a major area of concern to local residents is the number of these types of development in the Button Oak area. The Wyre Forest District Core Strategy Preferred Options Paper has included a preferred option to restrict further development of this type. This issue should be raised as a potential cross boundary matter into Shropshire.
- 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 Also 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. Related to this is the potential to generate hydro-electricity from the River Severn. This issue should be raised as a concern due to significant implications which it could have on the landscape and biodiversity of the Severn Valley and the flooding issues currently associated with the River Severn. Further related, is the potential for a flood management scheme upstream of Shrewsbury, this would increase the capacity of the floodplain and benefit communities downstream. It is recommended that this be supported in principle subject to Sustainability Appraisal outcomes.
- 4.4 In view of the deadline for receipt of representations on the Issues and Options Paper (9th March 2009), Officers have, following agreement from the Cabinet

Member for Regeneration and Enterprise, 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 Shropshire Core Strategy in more detail will be available at the Preferred Options and Submission stages of the document's preparation.

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 Shropshire District should ensure that the Severn valley is considered in its wider context and that an approach consistent with that of Wyre Forest District should be taken towards the development of mobile homes/caravans/log cabins. Development at Highley should be subject to rigorous Sustainability Appraisal in order to establish impacts on the AQMA in Bewdley.

9. CONSULTEES

9.1 Cabinet member for Regeneration and Enterprise.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Shropshire Core Strategy – Issues and Options Paper (January 2009).