

28 November 2012		ITEM: 14
Council		
TO APPROVE FOR CONSULTATION “ISSUES AND OPTIONS” FOR THE CORE STRATEGY AND POLICIES FOR MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT LOCAL PLAN FOCUSED REVIEW – BROAD LOCATIONS AND STRATEGIC SITES		
Report of: Councillor Andy Smith – Regeneration, Highways & Transportation		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Yes	
Accountable Head of Service: Andy Millard – Planning and Transportation		
Accountable Director: David Bull – Planning and Transportation		
This report is a public report		
<i>If the report, or a part of this, has been classified as being either confidential or exempt by reference to the descriptions in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, it is hereby marked as being not for publication. The press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any confidential or exempt items of business to which the report relates.</i>		
Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report: Not applicable		
Purpose of Report: To seek Council’s approval for consultation the Issues and Options for the Core Strategy and Development of Management Local Plan Focused Review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council’s Core Strategy was formally adopted in December 2011.

In March 2012, Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been changed to require those authorities that have under achieved in housing supply (which includes Thurrock) to provide a 20% buffer of additional sites. In further progressing the LDF, the Council undertook consultation earlier in the year on an Issues and Options of the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (SA LP). The Council have considered representations on these sites and in relation to the

need to provide a 20% buffer and, in addition, a desire to provide additional community and sports facilities. Many of the sites in question are in the Green Belt and do not conform with the adopted Core Strategy.

Consequently, there is a need to consider a small number of sites and locations where it is necessary to undertake a focused review of the Core Strategy in order to meet the above requirements and to release sites from the Green Belt.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.1 That Council agree the draft document of the Issues and Options for Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development Focused Review - Broad Locations and Strategic Sites.

1.2 That any minor drafting and formatting amendments as may be required be delegated to the Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways & Transportation.

1.3 That the Issues and Options for the Core Strategy and Management of Development Focused Review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites Local Plan be published for public consultation.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

2.1 The Council adopted the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development in December 2011. The Core Strategy is the key strategic planning document for the Council. It sets out the key planning policies and broad locations for development in the Borough for the plan period to 2026.

2.2 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy, the consolidation of Government planning guidance and statements into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has involved changes to planning policy in a number of areas (the NPPF was published in March 2012). A separate focused review of the Core Strategy for Compliance with the NPPF was agreed for publication in a previous report to Cabinet in October 2012.

2.3 Notably, within the NPPF the Government have made changes to housing supply policy including a requirement for those authorities not meeting the five year supply to identify a 20% additional buffer supply. This requirement is central to the need for this Core Strategy Review.

Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (SAP LP)

2.4 The Council has identified the preparation of a Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (SA LP) as one of the key Local Plans that form part of the Local Development Framework. The Council has previously consulted on the SA LP, including the recent Issues and Options stage in March 2012.

2.5 The Council is intending to publish for consultation a Further Issues and Options version of the SA LP which is the basis of the preceding report.

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

3.1 In order to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework requirement for a 20% buffer, the Council have considered a range of options for providing additional housing supply including bringing sites forward from later periods and increasing densities on sites. However the Council have been unable to identify enough “deliverable” sites in order to provide the buffer.

3.2 In addition, and in order to meet the housing supply buffer, the Senior Member Group have been keen to support proposals that:

- Provide community infrastructure and sports facilities;
- Promote a sustainable community on the Arena Essex Site.

3.3 Consequently it is necessary to undertake a focused review of the Core Strategy in order to ensure that the Plan is “sound”. The first stage of the Focused Review of the Core Strategy would be an Issues and Options stage public consultation. The draft document would outline the Council’s proposals and seek the views of the public and stakeholders.

3.4 The document contains a number of proposed revisions to Policies within the Core Strategy in order to meet the above requirements, notably:

- i) Strategic Spatial Policies CSSP1 (Housing), CSSP3 (Infrastructure), CSSP4 (sustainable Green Belt);
- ii) Thematic policies CSTP1 (Housing Supply) CSTP9 (Well-Being, Leisure and Sports).

3.5 The Council undertook an extensive period of consultation on the previous stage Issues and Options SA LP. The majority of representations received were from landowners and developers and of those received a large proportion were suggested proposals for developments for housing in the Green Belt or responses to the Council’s options for transforming Lakeside into a regional town centre.

3.6 The Council have considered these site representations in terms of providing the 20% buffer and contribution to community and sports facilities. Furthermore the Council have considered the locations and sites in relation to the Core Strategy spatial strategy and each other in relation to the SA/SEA of Broad Locations and High Level Sieve of sites.

3.7 There are a number of Broad Locations/sites in the Green Belt that could be developed and released from the Green Belt for the above reasons. The sites and locations below do not conform to the adopted Core Strategy and are therefore subject to this focused Core Strategy review of Broad Locations and

Strategic Sites. The sites are cross referenced to the Site Allocations Further Issues and Options Local Plan.

3.8 The Broad Locations/Sites included in the Core Strategy Review are:

- Arena Essex Site, North of Lakeside, West Thurrock
The development proposed would be a residential led mixed use development and at this stage would include up to 1000 dwellings, a location for a retail convenience store ,a possible primary school and leisure facilities;
- Land At Tilbury Football Club, including land to the north of the current site
This would involve residential development on the existing stadium site and a new community football stadium on land to the north.
- East Thurrock Football Club site, Rookery Hill, Corringham
A high quality residential development on the existing site of the East Thurrock Football club;
- Pegasus Club Site, Herd Lane, Corringham (relocation of East Thurrock Football Club)
The East Thurrock Football Club would relocate to the site of the Pegasus club in Herd Lane and provide a community football stadium and sports facilities.
- Land at Coryton Oil Refinery
Inclusion of safeguarded oil refinery expansion land in the Green Belt.

Other reasonably appropriate sites that have been promoted and are not supported by the Council would need to be identified as reasonable alternatives (notably those that have high sustainability credentials). These include land at North Grays and North East Corringham.

3.9 The Core Strategy Focused Review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites is subject to Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and Appropriate Assessment as a statutory requirement at each stage of the plan process. The SA/SEA includes Equality and Health Impact Assessments and will be available for public Inspection together with the plan for a period of public consultation.

3.10 The Core Strategy development options will also be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment and take account of other technical evidence previously published or to be published in conjunction with the Issues and Options of the Site Allocation Local Plan.

3.11 The Council will consult a wide range of stakeholders including public agencies, business groups, landowners and developers as well as community groups and the public. It is intended to carry out public consultation for a six week period to enable adequate time for stakeholders, the public and community groups to respond.

- 3.12 Following a six week period of consultation (which will commence in January 2013) the representations received will be reported to Members prior to the completion of the next stage (which will be the publication of a pre-submission document). The pre-submission document be published for representations late in 2013, prior to Submission to Examination by a Government Inspector.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- 4.1 Council is recommended to agree and publish the Issues and Options of the Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development Local Plan Focused Review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites in order to ensure that the Council progresses its programme of planning policy documents in alignment with corporate priorities.

5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The report has not been considered by the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.2 The draft changes have been subject of informal discussions with the Portfolio Holder and Senior Members Group, comprising the Leader, Portfolio Holder, Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Portfolio Holder).

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 6.1 The Core Strategy sets out the strategy, policies and proposals for spatial planning in the Borough to 2026 and is in line with the Council’s corporate objectives.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652**
mjones@thurrock.gov.uk

The preparation of the Core Strategy Focused Review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites Local Plan, including this Consultation Draft Issues and Options, will see the majority of associated costs likely to be incurred within the next three financial years. Provision has been made within the 2012/13 base budget in respect of this, with the longer term cost implications addressed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Telephone and email: **01375 652087**
david.lawson@bdtlegal.org.uk

The Core Strategy Focused Review of Broad Locations and Strategic Sites Issues and Options consultation is being prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the and Local Plans Regulations 2012.

The consultation referred to in this report is being carried out under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**
sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in the provisions of services and employment.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been conducted on this draft local plan as an integral part of the Interim Sustainability Appraisal. This ensured that any negative impact is identified and revised as appropriate. This is a statutory requirement and obligation placed on the Council. The Representations on the published Site Allocation Local Plan will be carried out according to the LDF Statement of Community Involvement Adopted Document. This means the Representations process is designed to work in partnership with all communities in Thurrock to ensure they are fully involved in the decision making process about the soundness of the Spatial Development Strategy, including harder to reach groups.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- National Planning Policy Framework – Strategic Planning, Civic Office
www.communities.gov.uk
- Adopted Thurrock Core Strategy

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- None.

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Richard Hatter

Telephone: 01375 652274

E-mail: rhatter@thurrock.gov.uk