



Core Strategy – Proposed Consultation on Selected Policy Options and Brownfield Housing Land Regeneration Statement

SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of the development of the Core Strategy, approval is sought for the publication of a number of documents for consultation. It is proposed to carry out public consultation on broad options relating to planning policies for car parking, public open space and out-of-centre retailing. It is also proposed to publish for comment a statement setting out how the Council is bringing forward brownfield sites and taking action on empty homes to help meet the City's housing needs.
- 1.2 The consultation will start as soon as possible and last until 26 March 2012. It is intended to be a 'light touch' consultation to get a steer on selected policy options before formally consulting on a draft Core Strategy later this year. All stakeholders and contacts will be consulted directly. The consultation material will be circulated to all Neighbourhood and Diversity Forums and partner organisations such as Marketing Derby and the Chamber of Commerce will be requested to circulate it to their members.
- 1.3 Some stakeholders have raised concerns that existing 'parking standards' are too restrictive, particularly in the city centre. The proposed consultation will consider whether the Core Strategy should relax parking standards and whether or not significant new public parking should be provided.
- 1.4 Current planning policy protects all existing public open space and requires significant new open space as part of new development. The proposed consultation presents possible alternatives, including more flexibility on open space protection and more emphasis on seeking contributions to improve the quality of existing open space, instead of increasing the overall amount of open space.
- 1.5 The economic climate and the changing nature of retailing is putting pressure on our existing retail planning strategy. The proposed consultation will ask whether our existing policies to restrict the range of goods that out of centre stores can sell should be maintained or relaxed to allow them to operate in the same way as shops in the city or district centres.
- 1.5 Last summer we consulted on strategic options for establishing and meeting our long term housing needs. Many respondents said that prioritising 'brownfield' development and reducing the number of empty homes should be key objectives. However some stakeholders are sceptical as to the amount of housing that can be delivered in this way. We have therefore drafted a 'Brownfield Housing Land Regeneration Statement' setting out our assumptions about delivery and explaining what is being done to bring key sites forward and to empty homes into use. Although brownfield sites alone are unlikely to be sufficient to meet housing needs, publishing this document for comment will reinforce the robustness of our assumptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree to the principle of public consultation on the policy options and publication of the brownfield housing land regeneration statement, subject to the Director of Planning and Facilities Management agreeing the detailed content.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To assist in the preparation of the Core Strategy.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The programme for preparing the Core Strategy envisages publication of a draft plan later this year. In the meantime, our work has identified a number of areas where additional consultation on alternative policy approaches would be helpful. Some of these issues could be open to considerable debate and it would be beneficial to initiate this sooner rather than later. This report sets out the broad content of the material that we intend to produce.
- 4.2 The areas where policy options need to be considered are car parking, public open space and out-of-centre shopping. In addition it is proposed to publish for comment a statement setting out how the Council is bringing forward brownfield sites and taking action on empty homes. It is intended to publish four documents covering each issue separately for a consultation period ending on 26 March 2012.

Parking Policy Consultation

- 4.3 Concerns have been raised recently about the Council's parking policies and their perceived impact on investment, particularly in the city centre. These mainly relate to parking standards being perceived as too restrictive and a deterrent to developers who wish to provide more parking than the standards allow.
- 4.4 It is intended to carry out a consultation exercise to consider different approaches to the provision of parking. This will not look at the detail of our parking standards, rather it will focus on some 'in principle' alternatives to current parking policies. The broad policy options or approaches are set out below:
- 4.5 **Approach 1: Continue to use City of Derby Local Plan Review policies**
This approach would mean continuing to use the 'maximum standards' set out in the existing Local Plan. This would also mean the continuation of more restrictive standards in the City Centre constraining long stay parking in order to discourage car borne commuting. It would mean no change to the current priority given to short stay public parking in the City Centre.
Some flexibility is provided within the policy to allow more parking than the 'maximum' in some circumstances.

Approach 2: (2a) Relax parking standards in the City Centre and/or (2b) relax parking standard across the City

2a: This approach would retain the 'maximum standards' we have elsewhere in the City, but also applying them within the city centre. This would remove the distinction

between the city centre and the rest of the City. City centre developers would have the opportunity to provide more parking in association with commercial development than is currently the case.

2b: This approach would relax existing parking standards across the City as a whole, including in the city centre.

Approach 3: Provide more long stay public parking in the city centre

Under this approach, current city centre parking standards would be maintained constraining the amount of spaces allowed for new developments. However, additional long stay public parking provision in the form of new car parks would be provided to make it easier for city centre workers to park close to their jobs.

An element of this approach could be to relax current controls on temporary parking within the City Centre, particularly for long stay parking on sites awaiting development. This could help to address any short term issues with parking.

Approach 4: A flexible approach to parking taking into account the needs of the development and the nature of the area

This approach would abandon use of 'maximum parking standards' across the City. Instead, decisions would be based on the characteristics and needs of individual developments and locations. A range of factors could be taken into account including the nature of the business, public transport accessibility, availability of public parking, congestion and the need to encourage investment and economic activity. The result of this approach is likely to mean an increase in on-site parking in most cases.

- 4.6 The consultation document will identify the pros and cons of the approaches set out above. It will also highlight a range of other parking issues, including questions relating to park and ride, residential parking and the location of public parking in the city centre. In addition, it will ask what priority people think should be given to a range of competing issues relating to parking policy, including the impact on the environment and economy.
- 4.7 This is not intended to be a consultation about all aspects of parking. It will not address areas outside the remit of the Core Strategy, such as car parking charges, enforcement or other aspects of parking management and operation.

Public Open Space Consultation

- 4.8 Existing planning policy aims to protect all public open space and focuses on providing significant amount of public open space as part of new development. These policies have been in place for a number of years and help to provide accessible open space for residents. However, there are questions over whether the policies are necessarily the best way to meet the needs of communities and whether they continue to be deliverable in the current financial climate.
- 4.9 There are a number of different approaches the Core Strategy could take to its policies for open space. It is proposed that the consultation document sets out the following approaches for consideration, alongside their associated 'pros & cons'.
- 4.10 **Approach 1: Continue to use City of Derby Local Plan Review policies**
Maintain the existing approach to the provision of public open space:

- a) Protect all public open space unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown it is surplus to requirements
- b) Continue to have regard to a minimum standard of 3.8 hectares per 1000 people, distinguishing between incidental and major open space

Approach 2: Provide greater flexibility to allow for the development of existing public open space

This approach would continue to protect most open space, but would provide the flexibility to allow for the development of open space in some circumstances, even where there is no surplus. In particular it could allow for the development of open space that is poor quality and not valued by the community. This approach could provide funding to improve the quality of other public open space in the local area.

Approach 3: Reduce the overall quantity of new open space sought as part of new development, but seek more financial contributions to improve the quality of existing public open space

This approach would provide more flexibility to seek financial contributions to improve the quality of existing public open space close to new developments rather than seeking new open space. Additional open space would however be prioritised where:

- access to existing open space in the area is poor and financial contributions to nearby sites would have little benefit, or
- the site is large and justifies the provision of areas of open space on site , or
- the development is close to a proposed new park and could contribute to its delivery

Out-of-Centre Shopping Consultation

- 4.11 The Council has a long standing retail strategy of protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the city centre. To help achieve this aim, the Local Plan aims to ensure that out-of-centre shopping complements rather than competes with the city centre. An important part of this policy has been the imposition of 'range of goods' conditions. These allow the sale of 'bulky goods' but restrict 'high street' comparison goods such as clothing and footwear in out-of-centre locations.
- 4.12 Recent changes to the retail market, national planning policy and the economic climate has led to increasing pressure on this policy. Retailers are changing their business models to sell a wider range of goods and many wish to open stores in both in-centre and out-of-centre locations. In addition, a number of retailers have found loopholes in historic permissions which has meant they could open stores in locations that would not normally have been permitted (an example of this is Next on the Kingsway Retail Park). There is an increasing gap between the policy and the reality of the situation in the City.
- 4.13 It is intended that the consultation will set out three alternative approaches that could be taken alongside their potential consequences.
- 4.14 **Approach 1: Continue to use City of Derby Local Plan Review policies**
The Council would maintain its existing policies. This would mean that it would continue to implement policies restricting the range of goods that are sold on retail parks to 'bulky' goods. This would help to maintain their 'complementary role' with the

City and District Centres.

Approach 2: Allow increased flexibility

The Council would continue to try and maintain a complementary relationship between out-of-centre locations and defined shopping centres. However, it would also recognise the changing nature of retailing. This would result in a policy where restrictions would still be imposed, but there would be a greater recognition and acceptance of companies selling 'high street' goods and some relaxation of either goods or floorspace.

Approach 3: No restrictions on out-of-centre retailing

The Council would remove the restrictions on out-of-centre retail locations so they can sell any and all types of goods. Existing defined retail parks would become part of the 'Shopping Centre Hierarchy' and be able to sell the same range of goods as the City and District Centres. This is likely to have the most significant implications for the City Centre.

- 4.15 The consultation will also ask people about whether there are particular goods or services that should definitely not be part of the out-of-centre 'offer' and, if they would prefer a 'flexible' approach what should the extent of that flexibility be.

Brownfield Housing Land Regeneration Statement

- 4.16 The 'Derby Housing Market Area: Options for Housing Growth' core strategy consultation indicated that the City could realistically deliver around 10,000 new homes through existing commitments and brownfield land up to 2028. About half of this is anticipated being provided on brownfield regeneration sites.
- 4.17 There was a general consensus, particularly from members of the public, that brownfield regeneration and filling empty homes should be a major part of the overall growth strategy. While it is very unlikely that all of Derby's housing needs can be met on brownfield sites, the more brownfield sites that can be delivered, the less reliance there will be on greenfield land.
- 4.18 It is intended to publish a 'Brownfield Housing Land Regeneration Statement' that will set out what the Council and its partners are doing to ensure the major brownfield sites are regenerated. The document will set out how many new homes could potentially be built on a range of brownfield sites and give further details about what is being done to bring empty homes back into use. The statement highlights a number of sites, including the Castleward, the Osmaston Triangle, Friar Gate Goods Yard, Manor / Kingsway, the DRI and the Derby Distribution Centre (Sinfen Lane). In addition, it sets out the Council's approach to dealing with empty homes and long term housing vacancy.
- 4.19 The statement will provide an opportunity for people to consider the assumptions we have made and challenge them if they so wish. In addition, it will help to demonstrate to the public that extensive work is being done by the Council to facilitate regeneration and reduce the reliance on greenfield sites. The statement will be published mainly as a technical paper, but comments will be invited.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Producing no interim consultation or information on these issues prior to publishing the draft Core Strategy. This was not considered appropriate as there are important policy options to consider, and on which the views of stakeholders and the public should be sought, before the draft plan is finalised.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Stephen Teasdale Michael Kirk Christine Durrant Rob Salmon, Greg Jennings, Richard Williams, Andrew Beddow, Ian Fullager, David Gartside
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Name 01332 255074 e-mail steven.lee@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 None at this stage.

Legal

- 2.1 Core Strategies are a key part of the new local planning system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. They are intended to enhance the strategic role of local authorities, and set the vision for spatial change and policies in the area.

Personnel

- 3.1 None at this stage.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 None directly relating to this consultation. The equalities implications of any policies will be addressed through a Sustainability Appraisal and associated Equalities Impact Assessment

Health and Safety

- 5.1 None at this stage.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 The Core Strategy will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA process will identify and assess any sustainability implications arising from different policy options.

Asset Management

- 7.1 None

Risk Management

- 8.1 None

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 9.1 Preparing the Core Strategy is a corporate priority and will support all of the outcomes of the Derby Plan including a thriving, sustainable economy, good health and well being, being safe and feeling safe and a strong community.

