



Planning our District's Future

SPECIAL UPDATE

Where are we now?

You will have heard from earlier newsletters that we are in the middle of producing a new planning document called the **Core Strategy**.

This will set out in broad terms how the council intends to shape the future of Braintree District over the next 15-20 years, through its role as planning authority and by working closely with its partners in the Local Strategic Partnership (PACT), Parish Councils, other public and voluntary agencies, and the development industry.

The Core Strategy is part of the Local Development Framework, which will replace the Local Plan in due course.

The extensive and very useful public consultation we carried out last year on the "Issues and Options" document, together with a number of technical studies on various issues such as transport, housing, landscape and the environment are helping us to move forward to the next stage of the Core Strategy process.

The Core Strategy – Preferred Options

This is the second stage in producing the plan. It is important, as it will set out in some detail the Council's preferred options for the future planning of the district. It will also give some alternative approaches where we think they are feasible, and say why some alternatives have been discounted already.

You will be able to comment on all these or make other suggestions, when the document is published in September this year.

It is important to note that the Core Strategy is very "broad brush" and will not be looking in detail at sites for development, nor will it be setting out lots of detailed policies like those in the current Local Plan. Those more detailed decisions will come later in other documents and you will have ample opportunity to be involved in the debate on the content of those plans.

We explain briefly why and how we have used information on sites for the Core Strategy on the other side of this flyer.

After the Preferred Options – The final stage in making the plan

After the next consultation in September, we will look at all the responses and decide what the final form of the plan should be. This final version will then be submitted to the Government Planning Inspectorate at Bristol who will appoint an independent Inspector to "examine" the plan next year. You will be able to comment on this plan as well.

The Inspector's role is crucial, as he/she must be satisfied that the plan is acceptable (or "sound") before the Council can adopt and use it. The examination will be in public and anyone who has made comments on the plan can contribute to it. However it is at the Inspector's discretion who can speak at the public hearings, although anyone can attend as an observer.

We will keep you informed at each stage in the process.



Sites and the Core Strategy Process

We explained overleaf how the Core Strategy will guide the overall development of the District over the next 15-20 years.

Gathering information on a wide range of subjects, including potential development sites, is an important part of the process of making the plan.

Why do we need to know about sites?

So that we know what options are open to us in making the plan, it is important that we are aware of land that owners or developers may be willing to put forward for development. The Core Strategy has to be certain that land is available that can deliver the amount of development which is required by the government. The plan could not be "sound" if it were to show development in areas which were unavailable. We have therefore asked landowners and developers to indicate what land may be available for the future.

It is important to note that the purpose of this exercise is to identify landowner and developer aspirations. They are NOT plan proposals.

We are required by the Government to publicise the sites sent to us, so that people may comment on them, but again this is to get a picture of any likely local issues or concerns, rather than to make any decisions.

It is also important to note that this process is not connected in any way to the planning application process. Any site being proposed for development in that way would be publicised through the normal development control consultation process, including formal notification of Parish Councils and neighbours.

We explain overleaf that decisions on individual sites will be taken later in a more detailed plan, and you will have ample opportunity to comment during that process.

If you would like any further information about the Core Strategy as a whole, the future plans to be produced, or the issue of individual sites, please contact the Planning Policy team on 01376 551414.

You can also find out more about the new plan for the District on our website at www.braintree.gov.uk

Have you any ideas for future newsletter articles? Contact Linda Hadley – Tel: 01376 551414, Ext: 2343 or Email: Linda.Hadley@braintree.gov.uk. Download a copy of this newsletter from www.Braintree.gov.uk – Council and Democracy – Parish Information – Parish Newsletter.