

PLANNING PEOPLE PLACES

First Steps in Reviewing the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan



Introduction

The process of community and stakeholder¹ involvement in the review of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan is ongoing.

In addition to being consulted on an Issues Paper and Spatial Strategy, we may have already met separately with you or your organisation.

The purpose of this newsletter is to:

- Provide feedback on last year's Issues Paper consultation
- Set out further information on the preparation of the Local Development Framework that will replace the Local Plan
- Let you know what we are working on first
- Seek your confirmation of the issues we need to consider
- Seek your thoughts on options for dealing with those issues
- Outline the next stages when you can get involved

We hope you will take the time to respond, and look forward to your continued input.

Messages From Previous Consultations

Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan

This Plan sets out the policies that suggest how land in the Borough could be used, and identifies where major development can take place. The Borough Council is required to review this Plan to make sure policies and proposals are up to date. As a first step in the review, consultation took place in the summer of 2003 on an Issues Paper.

The responses to this paper highlighted key issues that those who responded considered to be important. Here are some things you told us.²

What You Saw As Important:

Open and green spaces

The open space and 'green' environment is seen as a major strength of the Borough and one which should be protected. It was widely recognised that the greenness of the Borough contributes to its character.

Crime and safety

The need for better/more visible policing and the need to create 'safe' environments.

Affordable and specialist housing

The need for affordable, or low cost housing and housing for key workers.

Town centre redevelopment

Redevelopment is considered essential to give a sense of place and identity. People want a wide range of shops, a place to go for entertainment, an attractive and safe environment and for the new town centre to be accessible.

¹A stakeholder is a person with an interest or involvement in something, such as a business concern or the society in which they live (Cassell Paperback Dictionary, 1998)

²The responses to the Issues Paper can be viewed in more detail at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk, or at the Environment and Leisure Department reception in Time Square

Some More Things You Saw As Important...

Community Facilities and Communication

You supported community facilities and activities. The creation of a 'sense' of identity was identified as a priority along with the need to involve local people in future decisions.

Transport and Accessibility

Better and cheaper public transport was identified as a key transportation issue. The need for public transport to be more reliable, along with measures to promote cycling and walking.

Essential Facilities

The need for improved health and educational facilities featured in the responses, as did the need for good retail and community facilities.

A New Planning System

Since the publication of the Issues Paper, new legislation means that the review of the planning policies and proposals in the Local Plan will be undertaken through a different process, and will now be found in documents that together comprise the "Local Development Framework" for the Borough, or "LDF".

These documents will set out the Borough Council's planning policies and proposals for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social needs for the future, where this relates to the development and use of land. They will eventually replace the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan.

Local Development Documents

The Local Development Documents will comprise both Development Plan Documents³ and Supplementary Planning Documents⁴. The Borough Council will prepare the following Local Development Documents in the first phase of replacing the Local Plan:

Core Strategy: this will set out the vision to guide development in Bracknell Forest, and will contain strategic policies that set out the principles to deliver that vision;

Housing Policies: this will contain policies setting out details of the number, type and locations of houses to be built, including policies dealing with affordable and key worker housing;

Employment: this will establish the scale, mix and location of future employment growth;

Movement and Accessibility: this will set out how transport issues will be considered and addressed;

Site Allocations: this will identify major sites where development for a particular or mixed use is being promoted, and show how these sites could be developed.

Statement Of Community Involvement

We are also required to prepare a document that sets out how and when the community and other stakeholders can be actively involved in the preparation of Local Development Documents and in the consideration of planning applications.

In advance of the preparation of this Statement, one of the overarching aims of the new planning system is to ensure that all those with an interest have the opportunity to take part in preparing policies and proposals from the outset. Importantly, we will also want to know how you would like to take part.

³ A type of Local Development Document that is important in the determination of planning applications.

⁴ A type of Local Development Document that holds less weight in the determination of planning applications than a Development Plan Document.

What Are We Doing First?

We are starting the preparation of the LDF by beginning with the Core Strategy. This will set out the long-term spatial⁵ vision for Bracknell Forest Borough, and the strategic and broad locational policies and proposals required to deliver that vision.

The Core Strategy could therefore cover the following kinds of things:

- Future housing requirement, derived from the Berkshire Structure Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- Broad distribution of new housing;
- The approach to the provision of employment land;
- Major transportation corridors, and any changes proposed to those;
- The sequence of land development, i.e. preferred locations and types of land for development;
- Areas of planned major investment and change, e.g. Bracknell Town Centre;
- Identification of major development areas, urban expansions or new settlements;
- Areas of protection from inappropriate development, e.g. Green Belt, nature conservation designations and countryside.

This list is not definitive or exhaustive, but gives an indication of the sorts of things that a Core Strategy will need to cover.

In essence, it will provide a broad framework that sets out an overall strategy for future development in the Borough.

⁵Spatial planning is concerned with the physical aspects of location and land use, but by considering economic, social and environmental matters, it considers aspects that influence space as well as place (Policies for Spatial Plans: consultation draft, POS, 2004)

What Issues Do You Think The Core Strategy Needs To Address?

To build on the results of previous consultation on the Local Plan we are seeking your views on whether you would like us to consider any additional issues in preparing the Core Strategy. The starting point is the vision contained in the Borough's Community Plan, which the LDF is expected to help deliver:

"To make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive; living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment."

We need to think about how we can help deliver this vision.

Are the previous issues still relevant?

Are there other things that we should be addressing in the Core Strategy?

What Do We Need From You?

We need you to tell us which issues are important to you, and also how you think we might deal with them in the Core Strategy.

At this stage we need to think about broad constraints and opportunities which might affect future land use. For example, if you are a service provider, what issues relevant to you would influence the level and location of development in the Borough?

There may be several options or approaches that could be taken, so we will need to assess whether they contribute to achieving sustainable development by testing them with a sustainability appraisal.

Please contact us with your suggestions on how we can deal with the issues.

Next Stages

Once we have gathered together the issues, and the various options for dealing with them, we will publish these for your comments. An initial sustainability appraisal report will also be published alongside the issues and options report. We are planning to consult on these in February and March of 2005.

Based on your responses to the issues and options, and using further testing through sustainability appraisal, we will then prepare Preferred Options, and these will also be open to comment, most likely in the summer of 2005. We will then submit the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State in the winter of 2005. You will have a further opportunity to comment on it at this stage.

Work on the remaining Development Plan Documents will follow closely behind the preparation of the Core Strategy. The diagram below shows the broad timetable for the preparation of the Local Development Documents (both the Development Plan Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement).

CONTACT US!

We want to hear from you with your thoughts and ideas. Please get in touch via:

Email:

development.plan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Post: Development Plans Team

Environment & Leisure

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This document can be made available in large print, in Braille or on audio cassette.

Copies in other languages may also be obtained.

Please contact us on the above number.

Timetable for Local Development Document Preparation

Date	Oct - Dec 04	Jan - Mar 05	Apr - Jun 05	July - Sept 05	Oct - Dec 05	Jan - Mar 06	Apr - Jun 06	Jul - Sept 06	Oct - Dec 06	Jan - Mar 07	Apr - Jun 07	Jul - Sept 07	Oct - Dec 07
Document													
Statement of Community Involvement	Issues & options gathering	Consultation on issues & options	Consultation on preferred options	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation
Core Strategy	Issues & options gathering	Consultation on issues & options	Consultation on preferred options	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation
Other DPDs*	Issues & options gathering	Consultation on issues & options	Consultation on preferred options	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation	Submission to SoS & consultation

* Housing, Employment, Movement & Accessibility, Site Allocations

Issues & options gathering

Consultation on issues & options

Consultation on preferred options

Submission to SoS & consultation

Examination

Adoption