

Core Strategy Issues

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1 Background

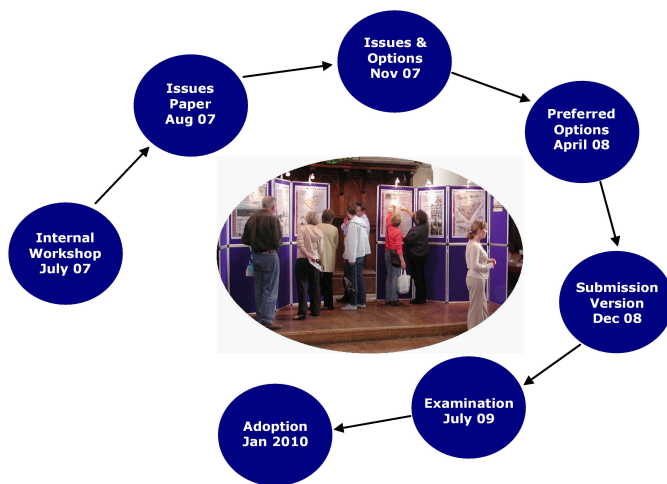
1.1 The new planning framework that will guide the way Lichfield District develops in the future is a collection of documents called the Local Development Framework or 'LDF'. This will influence the physical environment, the way people live and work and will help to deliver the needs of Lichfield District's residents, employers, retailers and visitors.

1.2 The first LDF document to prepare is the Core Strategy. This will outline the broad principles for guiding change in the District and all subsequent documents will need to be consistent with it. The Core Strategy will contain a vision and strategic objectives for the District, leading to a small number of Core Policies that will set the basis for directing change in the District for the next 15 to 20 years. This booklet outlines some of the issues we feel it is important to address through the Core Strategy.

1.3 We have sent this booklet to all those currently on our consultee database. We know that not all issues are highlighted here, but we hope to stimulate responses that will enable us to put forward a comprehensive Issues & Options document for full public consultation in November of this year.

1.4 The identification of issues is one of the first matters that should be undertaken in the preparation of any DPD. Importantly, it should be very clear how these issues relate to the characteristics of the area and the aspirations of the community. Furthermore it is vital that the strategy proposed should specifically seek to address these issues.

1.5 The diagram below illustrates the various stages in the preparation of the Core Strategy. It is essential that the process is 'front loaded', involving as many people as possible in the early stages of the Core Strategy's preparation to ensure that all issues and opportunities are considered and dealt with in the resultant strategy.



Picture 1.1 Core Strategy Process

2 Vision for an Emerging Core Strategy

2.1 The Core Strategy will reflect the vision and aims of both the Lichfield District Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy and the District Council's Strategic Plan (currently under review). The Lichfield District Strategic Partnership (LSP) brings together leaders from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to establish priorities for joint action and develop a long-term strategic framework for the District.

The principle aim of the Sustainable Community Strategy is:

“To make measurable improvements to the quality of life of people who live in, work in, and visit Lichfield District, through actions to improve long term economic, social and environmental well-being.”

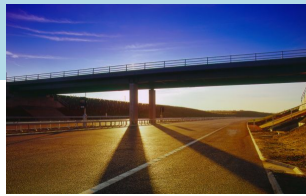
The Core Strategy will direct future development to help make this happen and will do so within the context of improving the existing levels of sustainability of the district. In doing so, it will provide the spatial expression of Lichfield District's Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Strategic Plan.

3 Your Input

3.1 The further development of the evidence base underpinning the Core Strategy and ongoing public participation will identify issues that need to be addressed by the Lichfield District Local Development Framework. However it is essential that the local community has its say to ensure that all issues have been identified and are being fed into the process. We want to know the issues that **you** think should be addressed through the Core Strategy or need further investigation.



Picture 3.1 Burntwood Public Participation Event



4 District Wide Issues

Issue 1

How to tackle the causes and effects of climate change.

The Government has a long-term ambition to move towards carbon neutral development. The Government believes this is the greatest long-term challenge facing the world today. Housing currently contributes around 27% of UK CO2 emissions, with built development as a whole bringing this figure to nearly 50%. To achieve more sustainable forms of development in the District, planning, design & construction processes for buildings must be made more sustainable. One issue is the risk of flooding in the district and the District Council has commissioned a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to assist in evaluating the matter.

Issue 2

How to respond to the changes in demographics.

Lichfield District's population has remained relatively static over the last ten years but it is ageing and this is forecast to continue in future years. Older people represent a much larger proportion of the population profile compared to national and regional levels, which will have an impact on the care and support needs within the District. The Core Strategy needs to take account of this and plan accordingly.

Issue 3

Lack of affordable / specialist housing.

Lichfield District consistently has the highest house prices in Staffordshire and has been higher than the national average for the past 4 years. A Housing Needs Survey carried out in 2003 identified a shortfall in the provision of affordable housing of approximately 500 dwellings per year. An update of this situation is currently taking place. Meeting the different housing needs of society is a key issue. The District Council has commissioned a Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment to inform the Core Strategy and will also be considering the accommodation needs of the young and older people.

Issue 4

How to make Lichfield District a more attractive place for business to locate and invest.

The decline of the manufacturing sector in Lichfield District has mirrored national trends and there has been significant growth in employment in Lichfield District in distribution, hotels and restaurants. Although unemployment in the District is consistently much lower than the regional and national averages, pockets of higher unemployment exist in parts of Lichfield, Burntwood, Handsacre and Fazeley. The Council is currently undertaking an Employment Land Review to survey the amount and quality of existing employment areas and identify business requirements. Informed by work at Regional and local level, the Core Strategy will aim to provide for employment opportunities which serve to meet the needs of the area and improve the prosperity of the district.

Issue 5

A high proportion of local people out commute for work.

Journey to work travel is becoming less sustainable in Lichfield District. The percentage of people travelling to work by bus is the lowest in the county and the number of cyclists is comparatively low. Lichfield also has the second highest proportion of people travelling to work by car in Staffordshire. The Core Strategy could look to provide more jobs locally or, where not appropriate or possible, promote more sustainable travel modes.

Issue 6

How to protect Lichfield District's Historic Environment.

Lichfield is home to many historic and listed buildings and conservation areas forming a significant part of the District's heritage and attraction and it is therefore important that they are maintained and improved. The Council is currently undertaking appraisals of a number of Conservation Areas.



Question 1

We have identified a number of headline issues that the Council feels the District faces. **Do you agree with them?**

Can you identify other themes that **you** think should be addressed through the Core Strategy.

5 Local Issues

5.1 Whilst many issues are district wide we know there are some that are specific to local areas. For ease of reference we have divided the District into Burntwood, Lichfield City and the rural area outside of these two main settlements. Please feel free to identify issues that are specific to your village, but remember that the Core Strategy is an 'overarching document that deals with strategic rather than site specific matters.

Issues Specific to Burntwood

Issue 7

Burntwood Issues

- Need for facilities to complement planned improvements to the town centre
- Not enough local jobs for local people
- Are we making the most of Chasewater?

Question 2

We have identified a number of issues that the Council feels are specific to Burntwood. **Do you agree with them?**

Can you identify other issues that **you** think should be addressed through the Core Strategy.

Issues Specific to the Rural Areas

Issue 8

Rural Area Issues

- Declining number of rural key services and facilities, including shops, post offices, doctors, village halls and public houses.
- Many areas are not well served by public transport providing poor access to services and facilities

Question 3

We have identified a number of issues that the Council feels are specific to rural areas. **Do you agree with them?**

Can you identify other issues that **you** think should be addressed through the Core Strategy.

Issues Specific to Lichfield City

Issue 9

Lichfield City Issues

- Protection of the character of Lichfield City from large scale development pressure.
- Lichfield Southern Bypass remains incomplete.
- Lichfield City is a popular destination for day visitors but there is a desire to encourage longer stays.

Question 4

We have identified a number of issues that the Council feels are specific to Lichfield City. **Do you agree with them?**

Can you identify other issues that **you** think should be addressed through the Core Strategy.