

North Wiltshire Local Development Framework

Core Strategy

Issues and Options

December 2005

Foreword –

The new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Order Act 2004 made changes to the Planning system. Local Plan and Structure Plans have been replaced by Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) (produced by District and Unitary Authorities) and Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) produced by the Regional Assemblies (these also replace the Regional Planning Guidance).

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is an important document within the LDF as it establishes the overall context for future growth in North Wiltshire and sets out a Vision for the area. All other documents within the LDF will have to be in conformity with the Core Strategy.

The programme of the production of the Local Development Framework documents is set out within the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The production of the Core Strategy will follow programme:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Issue and Options document | (Ongoing consultation) | February 2006* |
| Preferred Options document | (Formal Consultation Period) | May 2006 |
| Submission to the Secretary of State | (Formal Consultation Period) | Dec 2006 |
| Examination | | 2007 |
| Adoption | | Jan 2008 |

(*Currently at this stage)

We welcome all responses - To help you respond to the Questions and Options presented in the document a Questionnaire has been produced. If you require a copy a of the questionnaire, please contact the Spatial Plans Team at corestrategy@northwilts.gov.uk or on 01249 706524

Alternative formats of this document are available, such as larger print or audio or translated – to request a different format please contact the Spatial Plans Team using the details below.

Further Information and Contacts:

If you require general information regarding the North Wiltshire Local Development Framework, the process, the programme and current consultation, please look at the following website: www.northwilts.gov.uk/ldf.

If you have any questions regarding the North Wiltshire Local Development Framework, including this document, please contact a member of the Spatial Plans Team:

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1. Introduction

1.1 In September 2004 a new Planning Act made far-reaching changes to the production of Development Plans. A new system, called the 'Local Development Framework' or 'LDF' is now in place.

1.2 The programme for the production of the documents which make up the LDF is detailed within the 'Local Development Scheme' or 'LDS'. This has been prepared and is available from the Council's website at www.northwilts.gov.uk/ldf. It will be updated annually in March if required.

1.3 There are three LDF documents that are currently in preparation and will be taken forward to adoption. These are:

- The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) – Adoption January 2008;
- The Statement of Community Involvement – Adoption March 2007; and
- The Housing and Employment DPD – Adoption November 2008

1.4 This document is the first in the production of the Council's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD). The Core Strategy is an important document within the LDF as it establishes the overall context for future growth in North Wiltshire and sets out a Vision for the area. All other documents within the LDF will have to be in conformity with the Core Strategy.

1.5 The final version of the Core Strategy will comprise the following:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Spatial Portrait of North Wiltshire - Issues facing North Wiltshire - A Spatial Vision for North Wiltshire - Strategic Objectives - A Spatial Strategy | } | Presented in this document |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Core Policies; and - A Monitoring and Implementation Framework | } | To be evolved and presented in the 'Preferred Options' document. |

1.6 In summary, the Core Strategy will set out the key elements of the planning framework for the District. It will broadly detail the overall vision for the area, locations for development, and the type of development that is suitable.

1.7 There is an existing framework of National, Regional and Local planning policy documents; the challenge that the Core Strategy faces is marrying these with the emerging policy documents¹. Importantly the Core Strategy will give spatial expression to those elements of the North Wiltshire Community Strategy that relate to the use and development of land. It's important that the Core Strategy aims to deliver the communities' aspirations.

1.8 The Core Strategy will be designed to be representative of the whole of the North Wiltshire community. The meaning of community in this document is in the widest sense; it includes everyone that has a direct or indirect interest in North Wiltshire.

1.9 This document has been set out in a way that gives some detail to the issues and options facing North Wiltshire. It has been prepared from an extensive evidence base (referenced in

¹ National Planning Policy Statements (PPS), produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), produced by the South West Regional Assembly setting out the strategic planning policy for the Region. Other strategies, importantly the new planning system aims to deliver the land use aspects of other strategies. The District Council may produce these strategies or they may be produced by, for example, the health authorities.

paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2) but we welcome general comments on sections that need more detail or more emphasis. The responses to this consultation document will be used to inform the Preferred Options draft of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy Preferred Options document is programmed to be published in May 2006. Further consultation will lead to the document being submitted to the Secretary of State for approval in December 2006 followed by examination by a Government Inspector, before final adoption in January 2008.

1.10 To help you understand the terminology used within this document you will find a glossary of terms in Appendix 1.

2. What do we mean by Issues and Options?

2.1 Before the Council can prepare detailed planning policy documents, known as 'Local Development Documents' or 'LDDs' about the types and location of development, we need to decide in broad terms what kinds of areas are suitable for further development and the form that development should take.

2.2 This paper presents a number of Issues and Options in the form of a discussion in which we would like you to participate. Your responses will inform the decisions on what should be the Preferred Options. A separate questionnaire has been produced for your responses. We would welcome all comments as it is not the intention to present a definitive version of the Council's Core Strategy at this stage, but rather presents options and questions for your consideration.

2.3 This document represents an informal consultation stage (under Regulation 25²) and as such does not cover all the topics that will appear in the Preferred Options document; these will be developed from ongoing consultation. Formal consultation will begin with the publication of the Preferred Options document to take place in May 2006.

2.4 We wish to consult with everyone that has an interest in North Wiltshire. The consultation process will follow the procedures set out in the North Wiltshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI³). At this stage we intend to consult using forum sessions and through the use of the questions and options response sheets presented in this document. We will advertise the consultation through our website, the local press and by letter and email to our community database contacts.

2.5 In accordance with the requirements we set ourselves within the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), a Spatial Planning Team Newsletter has been prepared that highlights the main points from this Core Strategy Issues and Options document.

2.6 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Development Documents to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive⁴. The Sustainability Assessment (SA) Scoping Report⁵ has been produced and was consulted upon between October to December 2005.

2.7 The Core Strategy must conform to relevant National, Regional and County planning policy. However, guidance published by the Government has clearly stated that planning documents need

² Regulation 25 – Informal, ongoing consultation as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

³ Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – a document of the LDF, establishing who will be consulted and how and when this undertaken for documents produced for the LDF.

⁴ Directive on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (2001/42/EC)

⁵ The purpose of the Scoping Report is to enable better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation of planning documents, setting out sustainability considerations from the start. This important stage has been undertaken in advance of the production of the Core Strategy Issues and Options, so that the SEA has been able to inform its development.

to be produced in consultation with the communities it will serve. Where possible conflicts arise it is important that these are made clear from the outset.

2.8 It is the Council's hope that this informal consultation will set the basis for the future production of Development Plan Documents in accordance with the expectations and aspirations of the communities of North Wiltshire that they will affect.

2.9 This Issues and Options paper seeks to stimulate discussion on particular topics. However, your views on other issues associated with and appropriate for inclusion in the Core Strategy are also welcomed. There is space for comments at the end of the questionnaire.

2.10 In accordance with the requirements we set ourselves within the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI⁶), a Spatial Planning Team Newsletter has been prepared that highlights the main points from this Core Strategy Issues and Options document.

3. What next?

3.1 The consultation period for this Issues and Options document runs from **8th February 2006** to **5th April 2006**. However, continued involvement in the process of developing the Preferred Options is encouraged. A number of forum meetings will be set up in order to enable this continued community engagement.

3.2 This issues and options paper represents an early stage of production of the North Wiltshire Core Strategy. The Preferred Options will be evolved throughout this period of consultation. We welcome all comments and they will all be considered. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to provide an overarching framework, with other more specific DPDs or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) being produced in accordance with the LDS. Consultation responses will be reviewed when revisions to the LDS are considered. Therefore if consultation responses are better dealt with by another LDF document; they will be fed into the production of that LDF document.

3.3 When considering what is reflected in the 'Preferred Options' it is important that the document is realistic in terms of what can be delivered and recognises the wider planning framework that the document fits into.

4. How do I respond to this paper?

4.1 Questionnaire responses may be sent to the Spatial Planning Team by post, fax or email.

Please send you comments by post, and return to:

Spatial Planning Team
North Wiltshire District Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 1ER

Or send your responses via email to; corestrategy@northwilts.gov.uk or fax them on 01249 460810.

4.2 All responses should be received by **5th April 2006**.

⁶ Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – a document of the LDF, establishing who will be consulted and how and when this undertaken for documents produced for the LDF.

5. Profile of the District

Key facts and information about North Wiltshire.

5.1 The District

- Area 76,700 Hectares
- Six main settlements: Malmesbury, Cricklade, Wootton Bassett, Calne, Corsham and Chippenham
- The district is 81% rural
- Ministry of Defence/Previously MOD owned sites across the District including RAF Lyneham

5.2 Population

- Estimated population April 2004: 128,070 (Wiltshire County Council, Population Estimates for Wiltshire 2004)
- Census population April 2001: 125,372
- Estimated population percentage change from 2001-2004: 2.1% Increase
- Population percentage change from 1991-2001: 10.9% Increase
- Number of people per hectare 1.6

5.3 Age and Gender

- Census 2001 49.4% Male
- Census 2001 50.5% Female
- Census 2001 Mean Age 38.3

5.4 Household Characteristics

- People living in households 122,700
- People living in communal establishments 2,672

5.5 Ethnicity

- In 2001 95.93% of the population were White (British)
- In 2001 98.21% of the population were White (British, Irish, Other)
- The largest ethnic minorities in the district are Mixed Caribbean 0.26%, Indian 0.25%, Asian 0.24% and Chinese 0.24%.

5.6 Place of Birth

- Born in UK 94.3%
- Born elsewhere in the EU 2.4%
- Born outside EU 3.3%

5.7 Religion

- Christian 75.9%
- The largest minority religion in the district is Muslim 0.3%

5.8 Transport

- Travel to work by Car 68.3%
- Travel to work by Public Transport 4.6%
- Household with no Car 14.4%
- Household with one Car 42.1%
- Household with two Cars or More 43.5%

5.9 Health

- Life Expectancy Male 76.8 Years, Female 80.7 Years

5.10 Deprivation & Crime

- North Wiltshire is one of the least deprived local authority areas, ranked 322nd out of 354
- Based on “The English Indices of Deprivation 2004” North Wiltshire was divided into 84 neighbourhoods, none were in the 30% most deprived areas, 52 (62%) were in the least deprived areas
- Crime figures indicate that 70 (83%) of North Wiltshire’s 84 neighbourhoods were among the lowest 20% in the Country and only 3 (4%) were in the highest 50%.
- The North Wiltshire Ward with the highest crime rate was Chippenham Avon 295 rate per 1000 population. (02/03 Wiltshire & Swindon Crime & drugs Audit)
- Houses without central heating 4.6%
- Houses without bath/shower, toilet 0.3%

5.11 Employment

- Employed 69.6% (England & Wales 60.6%)
- Unemployed 1.8% (England & Wales 3.4%)
- Household Earned Income £41,232 (2003) (Joseph Rowntree Foundation)
- Economically active 16-74 Full Time 46.44 (England & Wales 40.55)

5.12 Housing

- Mean House Price £168,946 (2003) (Joseph Rowntree Foundation)
- Total Household Spaces 52,082
- With residents 50,275
- With no residents: Vacant 1475
- With no residents: Second / holiday home 332
- Owner occupied 75.7%

5.13 Education

- North Wiltshire has 11,213 primary school pupils, 10,109 secondary school pupils and 133 pupils in special schools maintained by the Local Education Authority (LEA). Source: School Building and Places Section, School population 2005

5.14 Historic & Natural Environment

- The district contains part of 2 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)
- The district has 31 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- The district has 65 Conservation Areas (accounting for 9% of the entire district)
- The district has around 5500 Listed Buildings

5.15 Tourism

- In 2003, over £66 million was spent in North Wiltshire by day visitors.
- 3,189 jobs related to tourism spending.

All figures are from the 2001 Census unless indicated otherwise.

6. A “Spatial Portrait” of North Wiltshire

6.1 North Wiltshire is a predominately rural authority located in the south west of England between the Bath/ Bristol conurbation and the Swindon Urban Area. These larger settlements have a substantial impact upon the district as they act as major employment centres generating large amounts of out commuting. North Wiltshire includes six medium sized market towns surrounded by numerous villages and rural settlements. The six towns are Malmesbury, Cricklade, Wootton Bassett, Calne, Corsham and Chippenham.

6.2 Chippenham is the largest town in North Wiltshire with a busy town centre and an expanding urban area. It performs a role as the district’s main centre. Chippenham has direct transport links with the towns of West Wiltshire including Melksham, Trowbridge, Westbury and Warminster along the A350. The city of Bath is located 10 miles to the east of Chippenham and is easily accessible by the A4. Chippenham is located on the main railway line from London – to Bristol.

6.3 North Wiltshire covers an area of approximately 76,700 Hectares and is classed as 81% rural. The Cotswold and North Wessex Downs, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) protect the historic landscape cover 25% of the area. The rest of the district is equally rich in historic and nature conservation designations with 31 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 65 Conservation Areas, about 5500 Listed buildings and a number of Historic Parks and Gardens, and a range of archaeology. The historic built environment defines the settlements across the district. However, the natural environment designations are under pressure from further development. This pressure is reflected in the existence of a Rural Buffer policy to the east of the district at Swindon and a Greenbelt in the southwest of the district close to Bath.

6.4 The district is growing rapidly with a population of 125,372 people recorded in the 2001 Census; an increase of 10.9% from the 1991 Census. This can be attributed primarily to the large amount of in-migration attracted by this desirable and economically active district. The population of the district is now estimated to be 128,070 people in April 2004 with 77,390 or 60% of people located in the six main towns. Therefore 40% of the North Wiltshire population live in settlement with a population below 4,000.

6.5 The district has a growing economy and an employment rate of 69.6% of the working population (16-64) in employment compared against the England and Wales average of 60.6%. The district’s unemployment rate is equally encouraging with only 1.8% of the population out of work. North Wiltshire is in a good position to continue to perform strongly in terms of economic development as it is easily accessible to the M4 with locations such as Chippenham and Wootton Bassett set to remain strategically important for potential inward investors. The district’s economy is however being eroded by the larger work places of Bristol, Bath and Swindon that provide a greater opportunity for jobs. The district must compete with these influences to slow the unsustainable stream of daily out commuting from the district.

6.6 The district is one of the least deprived areas in the Country with 52 of its 84 neighbourhoods falling within the 20% least deprived areas in the country. Similarly the crime rates in North Wiltshire are low with 70 of the 84 neighbourhoods falling in the lowest 20% in the Country. However, there are pockets of deprivation, with two wards in the 25% most deprived in the Country. The district has a number of tourist attractions including the house and grounds of the Bowood Estate, Castle Combe, Corsham Court and Park, Lackham Country Park, Lacock, Malmesbury Abbey and the Cotswold Water Park, the largest lake system in the UK, whilst the Castle Combe circuit draws in large motor sport crowds.

6.7 Due to the desirable location of the district and in migration of population from outside the district the mean house prices of the district are higher than the surrounding areas. In the year 2000, 64% of first time buyers who were looking to access the housing market had an income too low to get on the housing ladder. The area therefore has a shortfall in the number of affordable housing units required for the growing population.

6.8 The provision and location of both housing and employment developments is an important issue within the district, however, there needs to be careful consideration given to the provision of other land uses which are vital for viable sustainable communities to exist in North Wiltshire.

6.9 Diversity and perceptions of North Wiltshire

It is important that we recognise that the information above can create too simple a picture of North Wiltshire. The district is diverse, not only in its physical characteristics but also with its social characteristics. As with most communities there is considerable diversity and a variety of views and perceptions. This makes the “Spatial Portrait” of North Wiltshire more complex but it is valuable to consider the following points in order to gain a greater understanding of the District.

These are:

- People living, working and visiting North Wiltshire highly value its assets.
- The community is made up of a range of demographics, races, cultures and religions - recognising, accepting and valuing this diversity is important.
- Whilst figures indicate that crime levels are low in North Wiltshire, people do fear crime and this is especially true of young and elderly people.
- There is a concern that the lack of affordable homes in the district is excluding many from entering into the housing market and giving rise to people who have lived within the area their whole lives not being able to afford their own home and potentially leaving the area.
- Concern has been raised over the perceptions and treatment of young people in the community.
- Pockets of deprivation do exist in the district.
- Rural isolation highlights the need to examine the often complex linkages between people’s relationship with the rural and urban areas of the district, in terms of transport needs, services and opportunities for example housing, employment, health care, education, and recreation.
- There is a perception from young people that there isn’t very much for them to do in North Wiltshire.

Q1. Do you agree with the statements made in the Spatial Portrait?

Q2. Are there other areas/points you wish us to cover?

Q3. Is there information, which you have, that describes the district better?

Q4. Do you have any impressions of the community and district of North Wiltshire, which are not highlighted in paragraph 6.9?

7. Issues –

7.1 The issues facing North Wiltshire have been highlighted through a number of consultations to date:

- People’s Voice⁷ questionnaire – September 2004
- North Wiltshire Local Plan First Deposit and Revised Deposit Draft Consultation.
- Throughout the Local Plan Inquiry.
- Community Area Plans.
- Community Strategy.
- Councillors ongoing interaction with the community.

7.2 Issues have also arisen from the production of studies and surveys:

- Draft Housing Needs Survey* 2005, undertaken by Fordham Research
- Local Plan –
 - Urban Capacity Study*
 - Retail Needs Assessment*
 - Landscape Character Assessment*
 - Employment Land Study*
 - Rural Buffer Study
- Wiltshire and Swindon Economic Partnership - Workspace Strategy*.

*Available on the Council’s website: www.northwilts.gov.uk

7.3 A number of key issues affecting the community have arisen from these consultations and studies, these can be put into three broad ‘themes’:

| Theme 1 – <u>The Protection of the Historic and Natural Environment Theme</u> | <u>Explanation of the issue:</u> |
|---|--|
| A. Sensitive Landscape | A. North Wiltshire has two AONBs and 31 SSSIs. The pressure for development is often in locations within sensitive landscapes. The river valleys, in a number of the main settlements of the District, are particularly valued. |
| B. Sensitive Historic Environment | B. The built historic environment in North Wiltshire is highly valued and the presence of no less than 65 Conservation Areas gives some indication to the protection currently afforded to these valued areas. The design of development within these areas must accord with their surroundings. |
| C. Number of Listed Buildings | C. North Wiltshire has an unusual diversity and number of Listed Buildings (over 5500 Listed Buildings). These buildings are important and valued urban features, attracting tourists into North Wiltshire. |

⁷ Council created database of 1000 members of the public who have agreed to respond to regular questionnaires on Council issues.

| <p style="text-align: center;">Theme 2 – <u>The Delivery of Services that are important to Social and Cultural Well-being Theme</u></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Explanation of the issue:</u></p> |
|---|---|
| <p>A. Affordable Housing / Meeting specialist housing needs</p> <p>B. Public Transport</p> <p>C. Planning for Change – ex MOD sites / Agriculture</p> <p>D. Infrastructure (Services)</p> <p>E. Infrastructure (Social)</p> | <p>A. Lack of affordable homes. Our recent Housing Needs Assessment stated:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">'Overall, the need for additional affordable housing represents over 100% of the estimated future newbuild in the District (700 units per annum, calculated from information in the Draft Local Plan 2011). It would be sensible to suggest that in the light of the affordable housing requirement shown, the Council will need to maximise the availability of affordable housing from all available sources (including newbuild, acquisitions, conversions etc)'.⁸</p> <p>In addition, there are pressures upon the District in respect of the provision of sufficient transit sites and permanent site for the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. NWDC has commissioned further needs Assessment work to support further policy development.</p> <p>B. North Wiltshire is 81% rural and there is a high dependency on private car use to reach services and facilities. Public transport is therefore a key issue for those who do not have access to a car, such as the young and elderly, therefore it is important to encourage alternative forms of transport. There is pressure from the public for the re-opening of railway stations.</p> <p>C. Many areas in North Wiltshire are facing an uncertain future, with expected release of MOD sites and changes in agriculture.</p> <p>D. Water and Sewerage, as demand increases, whether from within or outside the District, pressure is put on our water supply and sewer systems. Developments affecting the road networks need careful consideration.</p> <p>E. Increased pressure within the District on Doctors, Dentists, schools and community facilities. Through past consultation⁹, people have expressed concern that services have reached capacity and/or that they wish to see appropriate increases in provision when new development takes place.</p> |

⁸ Draft North Wiltshire Housing Needs Assessment, Fordham Research, July 2005

⁹ People's Voice Questionnaire – September 2004

| <p style="text-align: center;">Theme 3 – <u>The Delivery of Economic Development, Regeneration and Growth Theme</u></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Explanation of the issue:</u></p> |
|--|---|
| <p>A. Economic Development</p> <p>B. Growth in Road Traffic & Parking</p> | <p>A. Importance of maintaining North Wiltshire's Economic Role in the South West and reducing unemployment rates across the district. In order to allocation appropriate sites for economic development there is a requirement to assess sites against the communities' aspirations (through consultation), sustainable development criteria and the Structure Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy's direction of development.</p> <p>B. In the ten year period between 1991 – 2001 household car ownership increased by over 35%. This has had an impact on both road traffic level and parking across the District.</p> |
| <p><u>Issues Common To All Themes</u></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Explanation of the issue:</u></p> |
| <p>A. Inward migration</p> <p>B. Sustainability</p> | <p>A. The South West Regional Assembly, has indicated, within the Regional Spatial Strategy consultation document that a rise in population of ½ million over the next 20 years can be expected and should be planned for in the South West of England. The increase in population will not be through natural increase, but rather a result of in migration to the area. North Wiltshire will invariably attract people, as it is an attractive, largely rural District with good communication links. The management of inward migration is a key issue facing North Wiltshire, as the increase demand on a limited housing supply could increase average house prices higher¹⁰ and the increase in population will put pressure on services and facilities across the District.</p> <p>B. There is continually growing recognition that sustainable development is a key issue facing North Wiltshire, in not only a national, but global context. The design, type and location of development can assist in the reduction of CO2 omissions, aiding in the reduction of the Greenhouse Effect.</p> |

Q5. Are there any themes missing?

Q6. Are there any issues we have missed that should be within the themes?

Q7. Is more detail needed in the Background to each of the issues?

¹⁰ Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Current average house prices in North Wiltshire (mean average prices for 2 and 3 bed dwellings), £164,159. House price to income ratio, 3.56. (2004)

7.4 The themes have been addressed against three 'development models' to give rise to nine different options for development in North Wiltshire. These 'development models' have been based upon:

1. Concentrating development associated with each theme in one main location;
2. Concentrating in the main settlements across the District; and
3. Considering the development associated with each theme evenly across the whole of the District.

7.5 These development models have been produced to take account of the different planning strategies, for the District that are emerging in the preparation of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

7.6 The 'Options Matrix' on the following page sets out the Options in a simplified way.

Options Matrix

| <u>Development Model</u> Theme | To concentrate consideration of the themes at only a few places in the District | To identify several main settlements for the consideration of themes | To consider the themes evenly and fairly across the whole of the District |
|---|---|---|--|
| | <i>Option 1</i> | <i>Option 2</i> | <i>Option 3</i> |
| The Protection of the Historic and Natural Environment Theme | <i>A few key historic site and landscapes are given priority over all other interests.</i> | <i>Several historic site and broad areas of landscapes are protected; but prioritised according to the available resources.</i> | <i>All historic sites and all landscapes are given priority protection over all other interests.</i> |
| | <i>Option 4</i> | <i>Option 5</i> | <i>Option 6</i> |
| The Delivery of Services that are important to Social and Cultural Well-being Theme. | <i>To identify a key core settlement large enough (or with the potential to grow) to attract the development of key social and cultural developments.</i> | <i>To spread the growth around the main settlements to act as Service Centres for key social and cultural developments.</i> | <i>To place, encourage or subsidise social and cultural services to be as close to the rural community as possible.</i> |
| | <i>Option 7</i> | <i>Option 8</i> | <i>Option 9</i> |
| The Delivery of Economic Development, Regeneration and Growth Theme | <i>To concentrate employment and housing growth at one or two main settlements to gain the maximum advantage of the economies of scale and attractiveness to business interest.</i> | <i>To encourage economic growth at a few main settlements that offer the best prospect for the creation of self-sustaining communities.</i> | <i>To distribute the benefits of economic growth to all settlements and make particular efforts to diversify, support and protect the local economy.</i> |

7.7 These 'Options' have been the basis for the consideration of the questions posed in the following sections of this Issues and Options paper.

7.8 The prioritising of one or more of these Options does not exclude the consideration of the issues covered within the other options; but it sets out what the primary interest of the Core Strategy is.

7.9 The question of your choice of Option(s) is presented in paragraph 18, allowing you to first consider the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives for North Wiltshire. Details on how to use this 'Options Matrix' are contained within Appendix 2.

8. Spatial Vision

8.1 The Government has set out four aims for sustainable development¹¹, these are:

- social progress which recognises the needs for everyone;
- effective protection of the environment;
- the prudent use of natural resources; and,
- the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

8.2 Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) states:

‘Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people’s quality of life;
- contributing to sustainable economic development;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.’ (PPS1, paragraph 5)

8.3 The Core Strategy for North Wiltshire takes into consideration the above points, however whilst acknowledging the importance of these general points it is critical that the statements made in the Core Strategy, are specific to North Wiltshire if they are to bring about appropriate development.

8.4 The Council’s Corporate Business Plan indicates North Wiltshire District Council’s commitment to sustainability:

Our Vision for the future

For Sustainability to be at the heart of everything we do.

Equalities and Diversity:

- To celebrate the diversity of the District and its residents and ensure everyone has access to our services and facilities.

Waste & Recycling:

- To be a zero biodegradable municipal waste to landfill District.

Housing:

- To ensure decent housing for everyone.

Buoyant Economy:

- To have a diverse and flexible local economy.

Spatial Planning:

- To promote the integration of leisure, housing and work.

Healthy Lifestyles:

- To provide leisure opportunities and facilities for everyone to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Local Environment and Streetscene:

- To enhance the safety and attractiveness of the local environment and streetscene.

¹¹ A Better Quality of Life – A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK – CM 4345, May 1999

8.5 The Council's Corporate Business Plan also highlights the commitment to be inclusive of everyone that makes up the community of North Wiltshire:

- To embrace and promote equality of access and opportunity within the communities of North Wiltshire and to celebrate diversity by responding to the specific needs of diverse groups and individuals.
- To establish a sustainable voice for the young people to influence decision-making, and to feedback their needs, wants and priorities.

8.6 The 2005 Community Strategy states the importance of the environment and the high quality of life that North Wiltshire residents enjoy:

Consultation in local communities has shown that we are proud of our unique environment and the quality of life that we enjoy and we are keen that we preserve and enhance North Wiltshire for the future.

8.7 The Vision Options –

An understanding of the sustainability issues¹² and the improvements to people's quality of life is key and they are therefore at the heart of the different vision options set out below. The different Vision options have been drawn from the 'Options Matrix' and they set out what the primary interest of the District will be. The Vision will be the statement guiding the development of all other policies. It does not exclude the consideration of the issues covered within the other Visions; but it sets out the primary interest.

Vision 1:

Based upon Theme 1:

The overall vision for North Wiltshire is to preserve the Natural and Historic Built Environments for future generations. Development should improve the quality of life for current and future residents.

Vision 2:

Based upon Theme 2:

The overall vision for North Wiltshire is to create communities that have access to an affordable home and have community facilities, which are accessible to all.

Vision 3:

Based upon Theme 3:

The overall vision for North Wiltshire is to create an economically successful District, promoting increased economic activity and providing everyone with the ability to gain employment and prosper within the District.

Q8. Which Vision do you feel is the most appropriate for North Wiltshire?

Q9. If you tick, 'None', could you suggest what should be highlighted within the Vision Options?

¹² Sustainability issues = it is important that not only the micro sustainability impacts of development are assessed but that the wider sense of sustainability is also considered. I.E. the loss of a greenfield to employment use could be viewed on a micro level as not being sustainable, however consideration of the social and economic benefits that employment bring to the community must also be considered.

9. Core Strategy's Strategic Objectives

9.1 It is important that the Spatial Vision informs the Strategic Objectives in the final version of the Core Strategy. However, in considering the consultation responses to the questions presented on the strategic objectives below, at this stage of consultation, it is important the process does in turn affect the Spatial Vision. For this reason the following sections provide some detail on the objectives and present a number of questions/options for your consideration. The responses to the questions will be used to inform the most suitable Spatial Vision for North Wiltshire.

9.2 The strategic objectives listed below have been drawn from the consultations, which has taken place to date. The consultation to date contributes to the informal consultation that Regulation 25 requires, as dictated by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulation 2004.

9.3 Each objective is presented with some narrative as an introduction to the questions and options presented. You may have other points to raise regarding the objectives and we welcome comments, a space for these is available at the end of the document. If you feel that there are objectives missing, please highlight at the end of this section.

These are the Objective Headings:

Housing

Employment

Recreation and Open Space

Health, Education, and Community Services

Transport

Sustainability

Design

Landscape and Biodiversity

Cultural Environment

10. Housing

10.1 It is the national and regional policy that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home. The quantity, quality, affordability and location of housing have been important considerations in North Wiltshire. The 2005 North Wiltshire Community Strategy states:

‘Ensuring that there is sufficient housing of all types to meet the needs of the community has been identified as a key issues in North Wiltshire. It is particularly important that affordable homes are available to meet the needs of those who are vulnerable such as the elderly, the disabled and young people’.

10.2 It is important that the provision of housing is balanced with the opportunities for accessing employment, retail, education, health care and recreation in order to create sustainable communities.

It is with the points below in mind that the following options should be viewed.

- Structure Plan 2011, requirement for about 13,500 dwellings to be built in the period 1991-2011, proposed sites contained within the emerging Local Plan 2011 adequate to meet this requirement. Requiring an annual build rate of 718 from 2004-2011.
- Emerging Structure Plan 2016, requirement for 9,000 dwellings to be built in the period 1996-2016. Proposed to also stipulate that of the 9,000 dwellings, 3,000 are to be built in Chippenham, it is also recommended that 1,000 dwellings be planned for either within the Principal Urban Area (PUA) of Swindon or in North Wiltshire District. Essentially much of this requirement is already accounted for within the proposed allocations made in the emerging North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.
- The Housing Needs Assessment 2005 has identified a requirement for affordable units in the order of 800 dwellings per annum for the next five years. This exceeds the total requirements for meeting the 2011 and far exceeds the 2016 Structure Plan housing provision; it is therefore recognised that North Wiltshire is experiencing a severe shortage in affordable homes. It is likely if supply remains limited and the current demand persists then the affordability gap will continue to grow.

10.3 It is important that consideration is given to the requirements for housing growth, the location of that growth and the affordability of homes across the District.

10.4 Location of New Housing in North Wiltshire

In terms of the requirement for future housing growth in the District the direction of growth currently being promoted by the South-West Regional Assembly, is to locate the majority of growth at the Principal Urban Areas (PUA). There are no PUAs in North Wiltshire but it is known, from informal discussions with the Regional Assembly officials, that the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) will provide a list of named settlements as a focus for regional policy below the level of PUAs. At present, this Council is promoting Chippenham for consideration as a named settlement. Within the RSS as drafted to date below the level of the named settlements, development will be encouraged to meet the local needs only. The definition of local needs is likely to relate to an assumption that there will be no growth due to in-migration.

10.5 The approach of directing the largest proportion of development to Chippenham; in the emerging North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 is also the approach promoted in the Alterations to the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan 2016. This approach may or may not be something that you support?

10.6 This raises the question of the appropriateness of locations for use for residential development.

10.7 The approach of the past as detailed in the adopted policies of the Regional Planning Guidance and the Structure Plan (County level) is very much to direct growth to the main settlements of the Districts. This gives rise to a concentration at centres that have facilities and services to support the additional growth. It also means that support for the facilities in smaller settlements is often not available. Growth of the main settlements can be problematic with growth raising concern over the protection of surrounding landscapes.

10.8 The current policy position, however, is to direct most growth at Swindon, with some growth at Chippenham and very little at the other settlements. The advantage is that there are economies of scale, services and facilities are in place or easily expandable, people can live and work in the same location, public transport is made more economic and thus private car use can be reduced.

10.9 There is also a possible third option whereby development would be spread across the whole of the District's settlements. This has numerous advantages, it allows people greater choice as to where they wish to live, it would facilitate a more even spread of affordable dwellings and provides opportunities for services to be supported in smaller settlements, which may otherwise be lost to the larger settlements. This approach may not, however, follow the sustainability principle of providing for all uses in one location, as it is unrealistic to consider that all services, facilities, employment and dwellings can be accommodated in rural locations.

Options – Location of Housing Development

1. Concentrate development at the PUA of Swindon and Chippenham?
2. Distribute housing development across the main settlements of the District?
Suggested main settlements:
 - A. Chippenham?
 - B. Calne?
 - C. Wootton Bassett?
 - D. Suggestions for additional main settlements?
3. Distribute housing growth across all the settlements of the District?

10.10 Housing Affordability

The recent North Wiltshire Housing Needs Assessment has highlighted that there is an issue over the affordability of homes across the district. Currently the delivery of affordable units has been largely reliant on developers providing a proportion of a larger development as way of a contribution. To a smaller extent the Housing Associations that operate in the area have also brought forward limited numbers of units.

10.11 The approach contained within the emerging Local Plan sets a much more stringent requirement, however, even with the higher level of provision required from developers, it is expected that up until 2016, we are only likely to receive a maximum of 470 affordable units. This is massively short of what the recent Housing Needs Assessment has found that there is a need for.

10.12 The definition of affordable housing as used within the Housing Needs Assessment is:

“Housing of an adequate standard which is cheaper than that which is generally available in the local housing market. In theory this can comprise a combination of subsidised rented

housing, subsidised low-cost home ownership (LCHO) including shared ownership, and in some market situations cheap housing for sale”.

10.13 The delivery of affordable units in the future will therefore have to come from other sources, unless it is accepted that we should provide a level of housing above that of the strategic requirement in order to draw off additional affordable units. There are different delivery approaches, such as various funding options an example being Private Finance Initiatives (PFI). This would operate with the District Council entering into a contract for a private sector company to provide and manage affordable units on a long-term basis, usually up to 30 years, taking advantage of the private sector expertise and transferring risk to the private firm. We would welcome ideas on the Council's role in facilitating the development of affordable units.

10.14 The Options presented below are based on the theme of the Delivery of Services that are important to the Social and Cultural Well-being (set out in the Options Matrix page 14). The delivery of housing and specifically affordable units has been highlighted as being of high priority in past consultation and through the Housing Needs Assessment 2005.

Q10. Is it correct that the options presented are based upon the Social and Cultural Well-being Theme? YES

NO

Q11. Why?

Options – Housing Requirement

1. Should we only seek to meet the Strategic housing requirement?
2. Provide for a level above the strategic requirement; in order to aid the delivery of affordable dwellings?
3. Be realistic and seek only additional funding sources to deliver as many Affordable units across the District as possible?

10.15 Gypsies and Travellers Homes

North Wiltshire District Council is one of several local authorities in Wiltshire taking part in a project to commission further research on the needs for transit and permanent sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The purpose of the research would enable:

- A greater awareness to be gained from detailed accounts of unique accommodation requirements;
- A fuller understanding of the movement patterns of Gypsies and Travellers across the County and an idea of what the influences and drives these moves;
- An identification of ways in which the authorities can work together to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers; and
- A solid foundation on which local planning policies can be based resulting in better informed and more sustainable future housing development.

10.16 The timing for the reporting back of suggested site search allocation criteria will not be until late Spring 2006. It is intended that a policy be included within this Core Strategy that will allow for

the use of the site search criteria, not only to allow the identification and allocation of suitable sites, but also for appropriate enforcement decisions to be made in respect of unauthorised sites.

Options – Location of Gypsy and Traveller Transit and Permanent Sites

4. Allocate sites on the edge of the PUA of Swindon and Chippenham?
5. Allocate sites on the edge of the main settlements and larger villages with appropriate services?

Suggested main settlements:

- A. Chippenham?
- B. Calne?
- C. Wootton Bassett?
- D. Suggestions for additional main settlements?

6. Distribute sites within rural areas?

11. Employment

11.1 North Wiltshire's strategic location has enabled it to develop into one of the most prosperous parts of South West England. It benefits from a high level of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and personal wealth and a low level of unemployment and deprivation. It is important that the level of employment and the careful balance between housing and job provision is maintained.

11.2 The Government has indicated in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development that planning should:

'Facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;
- Contributing to sustainable economic development'

11.3 The strategic policy position regarding Employment is detailed in the Structure Plan (County level) and their replacements the evolving Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS):

- Structure Plan 2011, requirement for about 150Ha of additional employment land to be made available in the period 1991-2011, the proposed allocations within the emerging Local Plan 2011 combined with the outstanding commitments and the completions are adequate to meet this requirement.
- Emerging Structure Plan 2016, requirement for about 160Ha to be made available in the period 1996-2016. Proposed to also stipulate that of the 160Ha of employment land, 45Ha should be allocated at Chippenham. Essentially much of this requirement is already accounted for within the proposed allocations made in the emerging North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.
- The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy has proposed that Principal Urban Areas (PUAs) should aim to accommodate the largest proportion of growth, with 'named settlements' outside of the PUAs receiving a strategic allocation below the level for the PUA. All other settlements would only be allowed growth for 'local needs only'.
- The approach that both the Structure Plan, adopted and emerging, and the Regional planning policy has taken is that the growth in housing development, should be matched by the growth in employment opportunities.

It is with the above points in mind that the following options should be viewed.

11.4 Retention of Employment Sites

The government has over the past five years taken the position that employment sites should be examined and the potential for residential use in the site should be investigated. This has culminated in the release of an addition to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, which details that applications for residential use on employment sites that are no longer needed should be assessed favourably¹³. The retention of existing and committed employment sites is therefore of concern. If it is assessed that a housing development is appropriate then the current position regarding the balancing of employment and housing must be taken into consideration. If it is accepted that there should be a balance then additional employment land must therefore be found and allocated.

¹³ Update to PPG 3: Housing: Supporting the Delivery of New Housing, ODPM, 24th January 2005

Options – Retention of Employment Sites

1. Safeguard employment sites, currently in use, or committed for that use.
2. Retain employment sites within the main settlements of the District

And/Or:

3. Recognise that there will be losses and assess the requirement for additional employment land to combat any shortfall, accepting that non-viable, uneconomic sites should be released for housing.

11.5 Location of Employment Development

The important role that employment plays across the District, whether that is in rural locations or within the main settlements of the District, should be recognised. It must also be noted that over the past fifty years there has been a continued decline of 'traditional' heavy industries and manufacturing. Where as there has been increase in the service based employment, the requirement for land has over the same period therefore changed. Office based employment generally requires a smaller area per employee, thus reducing the requirement for allocations. It is however, important that there is a range of sites available to meet the differing requirements that businesses may have.

11.6 The position as detailed in the adopted Structure Plan and Regional Planning Guidance are that the majority of employment growth should be centred on the main settlements of the District. The emerging policy position is to focus employment development, as with housing growth, on the Principal Urban Areas. These represent two approaches, a distributed approach across the main settlements of the District, or a concentrated approach. You may wish to consider these two approaches, however, you may feel that a third option is more suitable for North Wiltshire, as with housing options, that of spreading employment development across all settlements of the District?

Options – Location of Employment Development

1. Concentrate development at the PUA of Swindon and Chippenham?
2. Distribute employment development across the main settlements of the District?
Suggested main settlements:
 - A. Chippenham?
 - B. Calne?
 - C. Wootton Bassett?
 - D. Suggestions for additional main settlements?
3. Distribute employment development across all the settlements of the District?

12. Recreation and Open Space

12.1 Recreation and Open spaces contribute to people's quality of life, contributing to people's healthy lifestyles and also creating attractive features within and surrounding our settlements. Accessibility and quality of these areas are important for their viability and use by the community, the 2005 North Wiltshire Community Strategy states:

'A thriving leisure and cultural environment can bring neighbourhoods together and help create a strong sense of community spirit'.

12.2 Whilst it is recognised that housing and employment play vital roles within peoples lives, the importance of community facilities in supporting a viable community must not be forgotten. Every community needs access to education, health care, community facilities, recreation facilities and open space. The level and point of this provision has over the past century changed dramatically. Whereas in the past settlements of relatively limited population have had access to health and recreation facilities there has been a continued decline of services in the smaller settlements and a concentration of facilities at the main settlements.

- Recreation and open space are closely linked to providing a high quality of life for individuals across the District. These facilities are often linked with providing activities for young people, but is similarly appraised by all age groups of the community.
- People are prepared to travel various distances to reach facilities and by a variety of transport. Access to facilities is dependent upon a number of factors, an example is the ability to drive and this allows access to facilities outside the normal operating hours of public transport.
- Statistically, the overall level of open space provision across the District is high, however within certain locations access is limited and on occasion restricted, by for example fear of crime or pedestrian access.
- It is recognised that there are population thresholds below which facilities become unviable, the level of support means that running costs associated with the facilities is greater than an income achieved. In some circumstances these facilities require some form of subsidy.
- The location of recreation and open space needs careful consideration to ensure that developments provide for and facilitate a high level of sustainability.

12.3 The impact on people's quality of life is a major factor when considering the planning of recreation facilities and the provision of open space. It should be noted that there has in the past been a concentration of facilities at the main settlements of the District.

12.4 A detailed district-wide Open Space Study was undertaken in 2004. It assessed both the quantity and quality of existing open space provision so as to identify surplus or deficit of provision to allow better management of open space.

Q12. Is there a shortage in the provision of recreational facilities? YES NO

Q13. If Yes, what facilities are needed?

Q14. And where would you like this facility located?

Q15. Is there a shortage of high quality publicly accessible
Open space? YES NO

Q16. If Yes, where?

Q17. Do you want existing open space and
Recreational facilities protected from development? YES NO

13. Health, Education and Community Services

13.1 Issues relating to health, education and community services are particularly important to communities across the District. Accessibility, choice and cost are key points that have been highlighted through past consultation. The 2005 North Wiltshire Community Strategy states:

‘Making Wiltshire the healthiest County in which to live is one of the priorities aimed at meeting the needs of growing numbers of elderly people and reducing the level of preventable illness’.

- Community facilities and services are closely linked to providing a high quality of life for individuals across the District. Access to differing facilities are of concern to different groups often dependant upon the age of the user, for example playing pitches and play areas are used mainly by younger people, whereas the elderly are often greatly concerned with access to health care facilities.
- People are prepared to travel various distances to reach facilities and by a variety of transport. Access to facilities is dependent upon a number of factors, an example is the ability to drive and this allows access to facilities outside the normal operating hours of public transport.
- It is recognised that there are population thresholds below which facilities become unviable, the level of support means that running costs associated with the facilities is greater than an income achieved. In some circumstances these facilities require some form of subsidy.
- The location of community facilities and services need to be carefully considered to ensure that a development provides for and facilitates a high level of sustainability.

13.2 The impact on people’s quality of life is a major factor when considering the planning of community facilities. It should be noted that there has in the past been a concentration of facilities at the main settlements of the District. Notwithstanding this point, many rural villages across the District do have some level of community facilities; for example many have a public hall, 62% in 2001. However, there are only 22 rural villages (out of a total of 90) which have a specialist shop and only 42% has a recreational field¹⁴.

13.3 Access to health facilities in rural areas remains limited, with only 8 doctor surgeries and 5 clinics operating within the 90 rural villages in North Wiltshire. Many of the villages have limited public transport provision and therefore there is a strong inter-connection between improving access to health care facilities and the improvement of public transport linkages.

13.4 Within a largely rural district the location of educational facilities is an important issue. Transportation to and from nurseries, schools and colleges can have significant impact on peak traffic levels. It is also important to consider the mode of transport used and the cost in reaching these destinations.

13.5 Access to retail facilities affects the entire population of the district; the consideration of the location of these facilities is an important issue. Providing a level of provision and choice is also important, retail centres often make up the hearts of North Wiltshire’s towns and villages often acting as a focal point for the community. The vitality and viability of the centres of our towns and villages have significant implications for their wider sustainability.

¹⁴ Rural Facilities Survey 2001, Wiltshire County Council, August 2003.

Q18. Is access to services/facilities – Unacceptable Acceptable

Q19. If you answered unacceptable, which services/facilities need improvement, in what way and in which location(s):

| <u>Improvement:</u> | Increased capacity needed | Inaccessible – Too far to travel | Inaccessible – Too costly to travel | Other – Please state: |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Service/Facility:</u> | | | | |
| Nursery Location: | | | | |
| Infant School Location: | | | | |
| Junior School Location: | | | | |
| Secondary School Location: | | | | |
| Dentist Location: | | | | |
| Doctors (GPs) Location: | | | | |
| Other Health Care Facilities – please state and detail the location: | | | | |
| Youth Facilities – please state and detail the location: | | | | |
| Other Facilities – please state and detail the location: | | | | |

Q20. Are the retail facilities in North Wiltshire adequate? YES NO

Q21. If you answered NO, what retail improvements do you wish to see? And in what location?

14. Transport

14.1 The right transportation facilities and viable choices of transport modes are essential for sustainability in a largely rural district. The 2005 North Wiltshire Community Strategy states:

‘Good transport facilities are essential to meeting the needs of everyone who lives and works in North Wiltshire’s rural locations and market towns. It is important to make sure that everyone, particularly those who are vulnerable or rurally isolated, are able to move around freely and safely, whilst also protecting the countryside’.

14.2 Increasing importance has been placed on reducing the reliance on private car use, which for a largely rural District is a clear challenge. Over many years private car use has increased while other forms of transport mainly walking, cycling and public transport use has declined.

- Currently only 5.2% of journeys to work in Wiltshire are made by bicycle, however, taken in context that over 60% of trips in urban areas are below 2km in length, there is a greater potential for encouraging people to use cycling instead of car use.
- A major obstacle in increasing cycle use is the perception by cyclists and would-be cyclists revealed during a recent consultation exercise, that roads are unsafe due to high vehicle speeds.
- The scope for transport issues to be dealt with by the District Council is limited due to the fact that Wiltshire County Council are responsible for transport planning across the whole of Wiltshire. However the role that the District Council has in considering s.106 agreements¹⁵ means that the direction of planning contribution associated with a development can be directed to transport related areas.

14.3 Wiltshire County Council is responsible for the production of the Local Transport Plan. The Provisional Wiltshire Local Transport Plan for the period 2006/07 – 2010/11 has been produced and its adoption is scheduled for March 2006. This provisional Plan has four ‘shared priorities’ at its heart:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Tackling Congestion | 2. Delivering Accessibility |
| 3. Safer Roads | 4. Better Air Quality |

14.4 The Local Transport Plan gives more detail to each of the priorities above and can be viewed online at www.wiltshire.gov.uk or you can obtain a copy from:

Wiltshire County Council
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

14.5 The Core Strategy can aid in the delivery of these priority areas.

- Tackling Congestion – In North Wiltshire there is an issue of journey time reliability and some limited and perceived congestion at specific times and junctions.
- Delivering Accessibility – Accessibility planning seeks to improve access to the services with the greatest impact on life opportunities – jobs, health care, learning and food shops.
- Safer Roads – Identify the problems, investigate and implement the solutions.
- Better Air Quality – Poor air quality needs to be tackled because of the identified linkages between air quality and the risk to human health.

¹⁵ S. 106 (Section 106) Agreements – legal agreements entered into by the developer to secure provisions to enable the development of the land that are not suitable or capable of being contained in a condition attached to the planning permission.

Q22. Can you identify any congestion “hotspots” that are of particular concern?

Q23. The Provisional Transport Plan seeks to improve access the services with the greatest impact on life opportunities – jobs, health care, learning and food shops. Please prioritise the accessibility of the following:

Employment

Health Care

Education

Food Retail

Rating: 1 Highest priority - 4 Lowest priority

Q24. Please identify the means of access you wish to see improved:

| | Employment | Health Care | Education | Food Retail |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Public Transport | | | | |
| Walking | | | | |
| Cycling | | | | |
| Private Motor Vehicle | | | | |

In the columns - you may tick one, or you may wish to rate each mode of transport 1 to 4, 1 – requires the most improvement, 4 – requires the least improvement.

Q25. Are there locations that have particular road safety issues to any road user?

Q26. Are there any locations that have poor air quality? At what time of day is the air quality poor?

15. Sustainable Development

Design/construction/renewable energy/waste disposal

15.1 Sustainable development is at the heart of planning for the future and is enshrined as a purpose for Planning within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.¹⁶

15.2 All plans and policies prepared as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) such as this Core Strategy must be examined for their sustainability impacts using a 'Sustainability Appraisal' method. This is contained within the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' that all local planning authorities must prepare, by law, for their LDF documents.

15.3 An Initial Sustainability Appraisal of this stage of the Core Strategy has been produced as a separate document and is available on the Council's website www.northwilts.gov.uk/ldf.

15.4 Sustainable development has been defined as, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"¹⁷. To ensure that our resources can be made available for future generations, it is important that all aspects of local decision making on their use take account of the global constraints on their availability.

15.5 One illustration of this can be found in considering CO2 emissions, which are generally believed to be responsible for climate change. The growth of car ownership is often cited as a significant source of raised CO2 emissions, but the following striking statement is taken from the World Wildlife Fund's report, "Building Towards Sustainability":

"UK homes have a significant effect on the environment, including direct impacts on climate change, forests, freshwater and pollution, all of which are priorities for WWF. Housing contributes around 27 per cent of the UK's carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and up to 70 per cent of timber used in the UK goes into construction, a high proportion of which is used for house-building and refurbishment. Other impacts related to the construction of new homes include quarrying to provide aggregates, the wasteful use of water and the widespread use of toxic chemicals in materials."

15.6 The government has issued guidance in Planning Policy Statement 1 on the principles of providing for a sustainable future. There are four main principles:

- Social progress which recognises the needs for everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- The prudent use of natural resources; and,
- The maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

15.7 At the level of North Wiltshire District, these principles underlie everything that is contained within this Core Strategy. There are, however, a number of individual topics that if addressed specifically can also lead directly to more sustainable forms of development. These are:

- Design that supports a sustainable future
- Sustainable construction techniques
- Infrastructure to support sustainable development
- Renewable energy technologies,
- Conserving energy
- Recycling
- Reforestation
- Waste disposal.

¹⁶ Section 38(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004 states: "The person or body must exercise the function with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development."

¹⁷ Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, ODPM, 2004

Q27. Are there other topics that you would consider need to be covered?

15.8 Design that supports a sustainable future

The manner in which towns are laid out, buildings arranged, uses mixed and appearances created all have an important part to play in supporting a sustainable future.

Q28. Which of these approaches to preparing design policies would you consider offers the best chance of improving North Wiltshire's sustainable future?

- A. Preparing a formal Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document for North Wiltshire as a whole?
- B. Preparing Sustainable Design guidance for the main towns?
- C. Including Sustainable Design guidance within Parish/ Village Plans across North Wiltshire as required?

15.9 Sustainable construction techniques and issues

The new Local Development Framework approach to plan-making offers the opportunity to take a broader approach to issues that were not traditionally included within the old Development Plans which were land-use based. It is therefore possible to work in partnership with builders and regulators to prepare agreed principles that will be followed towards building in a more sustainable manner.

Q29. Which of the following approaches to sustainable development construction policies would you favour?

- A. To gather and set out the Sustainable Construction Best Practice (SCBP) as developed nationally for application to North Wiltshire.
- B. To include the above in a SCBP that takes into account particular aspects of North Wiltshire: e.g. locally derived materials, local economic factors, accommodating local historic character, local builders waste issues, local skills shortage issues, my suggestions
- C. To allow construction companies to determine their own standards in accordance with established national regulations.

15.10 Renewable energy technologies

North Wiltshire has a number of advantages that could generate power using established and forthcoming technologies. This includes the possibility of bio-mass fuel production, bio-mass energy production, wind turbines and small scale hydro schemes. However, these can conflict with other well established principles such as the protection of natural landscapes, ecology and historic environments.

Q30. Here is a list of possible approaches to renewable energy generation. Are there any missing? Please rank them in order of preference (1 is high)?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wind Turbines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Individual building specific turbines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Solar energy technologies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Waste to energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Combined heat and power plants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Biomass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Geo-Thermal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hydraulic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: |

Q31. Do you agree that it is appropriate that we request that: at least 10% of energy requirements of all new development come from renewable sources?

YES NO If no, why?

15.11 Conserving energy

The spatial planning of our environment to assist in conserving energy can be considered at many levels: We can promote development that reduces the need to travel using the private car, we can lay out our developments for housing and other parts of an urban area to maximise the advantages of solar gain, we can design buildings to conserve energy and we can use appropriate materials and building standards to save energy. Not all of these measures can be controlled directly through the Planning system and many will require partnership working with commercial business, other regulators and other organisations to reap the benefits.

Q32. Here are a number of possible approaches to preparing policies that promote the conservation of energy. Are there any missing? Please indicate a preference?

- A. Set out only energy conservation policies that can be delivered by land use planning policies such as the location of development, the layout of urban areas and the site layout of individual buildings.
- B. Set out the above policies together with advice on other measures that could be employed that has been developed using the best practice advice available.
- C. Set out the above policies together with policies that have been developed in partnership with the regulatory authorities and the development industry with appropriate agreements on implementing the policies within North Wiltshire.

Q33. Here are a number of possible approaches for prioritising the efforts towards energy conservation. Please indicate a preference?

- A. Direct efforts to the main urban area where growth will be concentrated, to gain the maximum benefit for the minimum outlay of public and private cost and effort.
- B. Direct efforts to the main towns and urban expansions, to gain the maximum benefit possible from the significant growth areas.
- C. To ensure that all parts of the District are responsive to the needs of energy conservation regardless of the scale of development involved.

16. Landscape and Biodiversity

16.1 The landscape and biodiversity of North Wiltshire is of particular value, defining the level of protection afforded to specific areas is an important issue.

- Within the District there are two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, there are two candidate Special Areas of Conservation, 31 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and there are a number of County Wildlife Sites.
- There are two Biodiversity Action Plans, a Wiltshire wide Plan and one for the Cotswold Water Park located in the North of the District.
- There are areas of highly valued local landscapes such as escapements and river valleys. In 2004, nearly 62,000Ha or 81% of the District was used for agriculture, reflecting the largely rural nature of the District.

16.2 The protection of the natural environment has a number of 'knock-on' effects for creating a more sustainable district. Protection preserves the natural value of the area, directing growth to the main urban settlements. It allows for the separate identities of villages and towns to be maintained. Utilising the natural environment can also provide leisure facilities and open space, often highly valued, making a positive contribution to people's quality of life. The protection can create habitats for animals and plant life.

16.3 A detailed North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment was carried out in 2004. This assessment provides an important reference for the consideration of development.

16.4 The Cotswold Water Park, in the North of the district, provides a unique habitat with opportunities for wildlife and leisure activities. The area is rich in sands and gravels and extraction on an industrial scale has occurred for nearly 80 years. The extraction process combined with a high water table has led to the formation of lakes. The total area of the Cotswold Water Park amounts to 10,500 ha (25,000 acres) and the lakes contain a larger water area (about 1,000 hectares – 2,500 acres) than the Broads of Norfolk and Suffolk. There is a careful balance to be taken between the on-going minerals extraction, nature conservation, sports, recreation, leisure and tourism.

16.5 The Cotswold Water Park has a specific Biodiversity Action Plan, which was adopted in 1997. It is an area that extends northward into Gloucestershire and planning control for the northern area of the Cotswold Water Park sits with Cotswold District Council. The Cotswold Water Park is subject to ongoing minerals extraction, controlled by the two County Councils, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. The park provides a rich habitat of a variety of wildlife.

Q34. What landscapes should be protected from development?

Q35. Should the Landscape Character Assessment be the main consideration for any planning applications in areas outside the main settlements of the District?

YES NO

Q36. Should a specific Policy position be taken for the area of the Cotswold Water Park?

YES NO

17. Cultural Environment

17.1 The cultural environment encompasses the historic and man-made features within North Wiltshire. The district has some highly valued and protected man-made features.

- The cultural environment of North Wiltshire is extremely rich, with highly valued heritage and archaeological sites along with protected historical developments existing throughout the District.
- There are 65 Conservation Areas in North Wiltshire.
- Within the District there are around 5,500 listed buildings.
- Castle Combe and Lacock attract numerous tourists to the area. Bowood House and gardens are Grade 1 listed for being of Exceptional Interest and also attract large visitor numbers to the area.

17.2 Heritage and cultural interests across the district attract large numbers of tourists into the district. The historic and cultural environment also provides a sense of local identity, enhances people enjoyment of their surroundings, provides a resource for learning and creates jobs through tourism and ongoing maintenance, repair and management.

Q37. Should development affecting heritage assets be strictly controlled?

YES NO

Q38. Should more facilities be provided to enable more tourist activity in North Wiltshire?

YES NO

Q39. If yes, which facilities and in what location should they be provided?

Q40. Are there any Strategic Objectives missing from this document?

18. Options Matrix

18.1 With consideration of all the other sections and in particular the Strategic Objectives now undertaken, it is appropriate to return to the 'Options Matrix'. Please note that a guide on how to use this matrix is contained within Appendix 2.

| <u>Development Model</u> <u>Theme</u> | To concentrate consideration of the themes at only a few places in the District | To identify several main settlements for the consideration of themes | To consider the themes evenly and fairly across the whole of the District |
|---|--|--|---|
| The Protection of the Historic and Natural Environment Theme | <i>Option 1</i> <i>A few key historic sites and landscapes are given priority over all other interests.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Option 2</i> <i>Several historic site and broad areas of landscapes are protected; but prioritised according to the available resources.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Option 3</i> <i>All historic sites and all landscapes are given priority protection over all other interests.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Delivery of Services that are important to Social and Cultural Well-being Theme. | <i>Option 4</i> <i>To identify a key core settlement large enough (or with the potential to grow) to attract the development of key social and cultural developments.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Option 5</i> <i>To spread the growth around the main settlements to act as Service Centres for key social and cultural developments.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Option 6</i> <i>To place, encourage or subsidise social and cultural services to be as close to the rural community as possible.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Delivery of Economic Development, Regeneration and Growth Theme | <i>Option 7</i> <i>To concentrate employment and housing growth at one or two main settlements to gain the maximum advantage of the economies of scale and attractiveness to business interest.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Option 8</i> <i>To encourage economic growth at a few main settlements that offer the best prospect for the creation of self-sustaining communities.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Option 9</i> <i>To distribute the benefits of economic growth to all settlements and make particular efforts to diversify, support and protect the local economy.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q41. Please tick the option or options, which you feel are the most appropriate for North Wiltshire. Some of the Options are complementary, whilst others are directly opposed.

19. Generic Development Control Policies

19.1 Throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy 'Preferred Options' in conjunction with the consideration of the consultation responses to this Issues and Options document the generic development control policies will be developed.

19.2 We would however welcome your comments on the two generic policies set out below.

19.3 Principles of Development

New development will be permitted subject to the full consideration of the following criteria. This policy should be read in conjunction with the other policies in the Local Development Framework.

- i) The new development respects the local character and distinctiveness of the area with regard to the design, size, scale, density, massing, materials, siting and layout of the proposal;**
- ii) The new development respects the quality of the natural and built environment, including the historic environment, archaeology and ecology of the locality and where necessary includes measures for the preservation or enhancement of such features;**
- iii) The proposed development avoids creating unacceptable levels of privacy and amenities and avoids any unacceptable loss of privacy and amenities to adjacent development;**
- iv) The proposal ensures that access into and within the development is safe, minimises the risk from crime, and is convenient and attractive to pedestrians, cyclists, and people with disabilities;**
- v) The new development incorporates energy conservation features and design principles to promote the use of renewable energy sources and prioritise the use of local, natural and recycled materials, provides satisfactory arrangements for efficient water supply, use and disposal and proposals for the storage, collection and recycling of refuse;**
- vi) The development proposal promotes sustainable patterns of development that will reduce the overall need to travel and support increased use of public transport, cycling and walking;**
- vii) The new development has a satisfactory means of access, turning, car parking and secure cycle storage and does not result in a detrimental impact upon highway or pedestrian safety;**
- viii) The new development avoids overloading of existing or proposed services and facilities, the local road network or other infrastructure; and**
- ix) The development is not in a location that would generate, or be subject to, a detrimental effect upon public health or pollution to the environment by the emission or production of excessive noise, light intrusion, smoke, fumes, effluent, vibration, waste or litter.**

19.4 Community Infrastructure

Many of the Strategic Objectives detailed above require developers to enter into planning obligations with the Local Authority. It is entirely appropriate for the Local Authority to ensure that the full consequences of a development are taken into account and, where appropriate, addressed either through integration into the development proposal or by means of a financial contribution. The following list has been prepared with regard to the physical, social, cultural, economic and environmental consequences of major development:

Provision for the directly related community infrastructure costs of all major development proposals, appropriate to the scale of that development, will be sought. The local planning authority will examine each major development proposal for its need to contribute to the following community infrastructure requirements and negotiate to secure planning obligations or by means of other appropriate methods to secure the requirements identified. The community infrastructure requirements are:

- Affordable housing
- Education, skill training provision, and libraries
- Travel and transport infrastructure
- Community buildings and facilities
- Health care provision and social services
- New or improved public open spaces
- Leisure, sport and recreation provision
- Waste management and recycling
- Environmental protection and enhancement
- Information Communication Technology infrastructure
- Art in the community

Q42. Do you have any comments on the Principles of Development policy?

Q43. Do you have any comments on the Community Infrastructure policy?

20. Monitoring the effectiveness of the Local Development Framework

The Council will publish an Annual Monitoring Report containing a series of indicators to measure progress towards the Core Strategy's Spatial Objectives. This annual monitoring exercise is expected to lead to reviews of the relevant LDF document to react to new circumstances and ensure continued progress.

Q44. Please use the space below to enter any comments which you feel should be considered for inclusion in the North Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document, which have not been explored elsewhere in this Issues and Options document.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these issues. Your views are important and will be used to ensure that we deliver the most relevant development strategy for North Wiltshire.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

AAP Area Action Plan

The mechanism for ensuring development of an appropriate, scale, mix in a defined area. These Plans will focus upon implementation, providing an important and quality for key areas of opportunity, change or conservation.

AMR Annual Monitoring Report

Authorities are required to produce an AMR to assess the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which policies in LDDs are being achieved.

CS Core Strategy

Sets out the long term vision for the District and provides the strategic policies and proposals that will deliver that vision.

CoS Community Strategy

The Community Strategy is a statement of the needs and aspirations of local communities. The Local Strategic Partnership, of which North Wiltshire District Council is a partner, formally launched the Community Strategy in November 2005.

DPD Development Plan Document

Any part of the LDF that forms part of the statutory development plan. This includes the Core Strategy, area wide policies, topic policies, area action plans, proposals map and site allocations.

LDF Local Development Framework

The collective name given to all those policies and documents forming the framework for future development in North Wiltshire. The LDF will contain a portfolio of LDDs.

LDD Local Development Document

The individual documents that set out planning policies for specific topics or for geographical areas.

LDS Local Development Scheme

The LDS sets out the programme for preparing the LDDs, what they will contain and proposals for monitoring and review.

LP Local Plan

The existing statutory plan setting out policies for controlling development and proposals for particular areas/sites.

PPS Planning Policy Statements

Government statements of national planning policy, being phased in to supersede Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG's)

SA Sustainability Appraisal

Assessment of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the LDF.

SCI Statement of Community Involvement

Document explaining to stakeholders and the community, how and when they will be involved in the preparation of the LDF, and the steps that will be taken to facilitate this involvement.

SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment

Assessment of the environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the LDF (in line with SEA Directive 2002)

SPD Supplementary Planning Document

SPDs are intended to elaborate upon the policy and proposals in DPDs but do not have their status.

Appendix 2 – How to Use the Options Matrix

The Options Matrix - can be found on pages 13 and 36, it has been set out in a way that allows you to select one of the options which you feel is of most significance for North Wiltshire. However, you may wish to highlight more than one Option, creating a hybrid of Options.

It is important to remember that the selection of an Option sets what you feel should be the primary interest the North Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document. It does not exclude the consideration; to a lesser degree; of the other options.

Purpose - The consultation responses on the Options Matrix will have an affect on the suitability and development of the Spatial Vision and the content of the Strategic Objectives. The will lead to the production of suitably tailored Core Strategy Policies that will deliver the Vision and Spatial Objectives.

Content of the Options Matrix - Vertically the matrix presents three 'development models' based on different distributions of growth. Horizontally the matrix presents three 'themes' based on the key issues affecting North Wiltshire that have arise from past consultations and studies.

It is important to remember that whilst some of the Options are complementary, others conflict. As examples show:

- It may be seen that policies and proposals that seek to deliver strong economic growth, such as Option 7, would be complementary to policies that would generate sufficient taxation or "planning gain¹⁸" to deliver the services required for Option 6.
- Option 8 would be in a position to deliver some of the affordable housing and social needs (through planning gain) that would complement Option 5 and to a certain extent, Option 1.

- But on the other hand, the costs of delivering Option 9 might be so great that there is little that can be done to deliver on Options 4 or 5.
- If it was stated that the over-riding Vision for the District is to place greater weight upon the protection of the historic environment over any other theme but this approach should distribute resources to that end fairly across the District. This would suggest that Option 3 would be favoured. This would imply that economic growth across the District would be a secondary consideration or that the delivery of social facilities are a lower priority than the preservation of the historic and natural landscape.

- ❖ It is completely acceptable to only select one of the nine Options. Your views will be assessed against all other responses.

¹⁸ Planning Gain = Mitigating the impacts of proposed new developments through legal agreement.