

CABINET MEETING

12 JUNE

ECSOSC

Agenda Item 9

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	LDF Core Strategy – Background Studies		
Date of Meeting:	12 June 2008		
Report of:	Director of Environment		
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Key Decision:	Yes/No	Forward Plan No.	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

This report seeks formal approval of 6 background studies and 4 interim background studies as contributing to the evidence base for the revised preferred options Core Strategy, part of the Local Development Framework (see accompanying report on the agenda).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:

- 1). To approve the 6 completed background studies and 4 interim background studies as supporting evidence for the revised preferred options Core Strategy, part of the Local Development Framework.
- 2). To note that the final versions of those 4 studies currently at the interim stage will be brought back to Cabinet in November 2009.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

The Core Strategy is part of the Local Development Framework (LDF), which has been introduced by the Government to replace the Local Plan. A report requesting approval of the revised preferred options Core Strategy for public consultation is also on the agenda.

In addition to conforming to national and regional planning policy, the Core Strategy is required to be supported by a sound evidence base. A number of background studies have been prepared which form part of this evidence base. It is important to note that that whilst the background studies are important evidence contributing to policy development they cannot in themselves define what the policies should be. In many cases there will be other evidence and considerations to be taken into account.

Other background studies have previously been completed and approved by the Environment Committee. The various studies have all also informed the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal which must accompany the Core Strategy. A summary of the various background studies is included in an appendix to this report.

4. CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken appropriate to the content of the relevant study:-

- An event was held for invited participants at Hove Town Hall in February 2008 to discuss issues arising for the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- The Environment Agency has given guidance on the preparation of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- Natural England has been consulted on the preparation of the Appropriate Assessment (of European wildlife sites).
- A steering group oversaw production of the Creative Industries and Workspace Study. A web based survey and a survey of registered social landlords and commercial property agents also informed production of this Study.
- Interested organisations will be consulted on the Green Networks Study and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment prior to completion.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Financial Implications:

Preparation and consultation costs for the various background studies have been identified and a budget allocation has been set aside for this within the Environment Directorate. There are no capital implications.

5.2 Legal Implications:

The Background Studies have been prepared to conform to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

5.3 Equalities Implications:

Equalities issues are relevant to a number of the Core Strategy issues, particularly in relation to narrowing the gap between disadvantaged areas and the rest of the city, providing community facilities and providing for housing for all.

5.4 Sustainability Implications:

The planning system has a clear purpose to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development. Most planning policy documents will be appraised for their economic, social and environmental impacts. The Core Strategy has been subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal. The evidence provided by these background studies informs the Sustainability Appraisal.

5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

Not directly addressed by any of the Background Studies.

5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

The risks within this project are regularly reviewed through quarterly highlight reports. Production of a sound evidence base for LDF documents considerably reduces the risk of them being found unsound by a Planning Inspector.

5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

The core strategy will contribute to delivering plans and strategies across the city council directorates, along with the Sustainable Community Strategy. It will also help to deliver external city-wide strategies, e.g. of the Primary Care Trust. The background studies provide the evidence base for the core strategy.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1. None required as the studies are concerned with the identification of matters of fact. The Studies are required by Government planning guidance requiring plans to be supported by a sound evidence base.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To ensure that Cabinet is aware of the background studies informing policy development in the Core Strategy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Summary of Background Studies

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. Affordable Housing Development Viability Study
2. Appropriate Assessment (of potential impact on European wildlife sites)
3. Creative Industries Workspace in Brighton and Hove 2007 -2017

4. Strategic Housing Market Assessment
5. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
6. Sequential Test and Exception Test (regarding flood risk)
7. Interim Green Networks Study
8. Interim Open Spaces, Sports and Recreation Study
9. Interim Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
10. Interim Transport Assessment

Background Documents

1. As for Documents in Members' Rooms