Hastings Local Development Framework
Shaping Hastings: Core Strategy Issues & Options Consultation overview

Introduction
This document provides a high-level summary of the comments we received in response to the consultation on the Hastings Local Development Framework document "Shaping Hastings: Core Strategy Issues and Options".

The consultation ran from 30 October 2006 to 8 December 2006. We received 161 responses.

This document has been produced as part of our feedback process outlined in our Statement of Community Involvement.

About this document
This document gives an overview of the responses received and simply lists some of the key points and comments made.

Comments have been grouped by the chapter headings in the "Shaping Hastings: Core Strategy Issues and Options" document. To ensure accurate summaries were made, all the comments to each question were read and summarised separately by at least two council officers, who then cross-referenced their summaries.

Remember this document is merely a high-level summary of what was said, and is not a commentary on, or assessment of, the comments made. The other important point to remember is that a wide range of views and comments were made, making it very hard to summarise general views and identify agreement.

Getting more detail
We expect that you would like to read the comments in more detail. To help you do this we have produced two further documents:

Consultation Summary
The Consultation Summary gives a flavour of what was said, and lists the key points and comments made, using direct quotes from the response forms. We would encourage you to read this so that you can see the wide range of comments made.

The summary document is 125 pages long and you can request a paper copy to be sent to you, or an electronic copy to be emailed to you, by contacting Forward Planning on 0845 274 1098 or emailing fplanning@hastings.gov.uk, If emailing, Please put "CONSULTATION SUMMARY" in the subject line, and state whether you want the summary to be emailed or posted, making sure you provide your contact details.

Alternatively you can view or download the Consultation Summary at www.hastings.gov.uk/ldf

Consultation Catalogue
All of the comments made are available to read in the Consultation Catalogue. The catalogue runs to over 400 pages. A full copy is available to read at
Council offices, Century House, 100 Menzies Road, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex, TN38 9BB
Hastings Information Centre
Hastings Voluntary Action offices, 31a Priory Street, Hastings, TN34 1EA
Hastings Central Library
Ore Library
Hollington Library

You can also view or download the catalogue in sections at www.hastings.gov.uk/ldf

What happens next?

We now have to write the next stage of the process, “Shaping Hastings: Core Strategy – Preferred Options”.

To do this we will go through the comments in detail again, and handle them in different ways:

- Suggested changes to the text to help clarify a point, or correct an error are simple to incorporate in to the Core Strategy Preferred Options document
- Suggested changes and additions to the various policy and strategic approaches, have to be explored further, possibly clarifying with those suggesting the change
- Additional suggestions, solutions or ideas - identified by the questions where we asked “what do you think we have missed” - will first be considered by Council Officers to assess if they are feasible, for example from a financial or a geographical perspective. Any solutions, suggestions or ideas that can be taken further, then have to undergo a “Sustainability Appraisal” to demonstrate the social, environmental and economic impacts if the idea was pursued
- Several questions also asked “what do you think of this approach?” and essentially form the most important part of the consultation process. These comments need to be considered carefully to identify what changes should be made in response to these views and opinions. This will involve difficult decisions, as there are many differing views expressed. Council officers and lead councillors will be tasked with looking at these comments and identifying changes and amendments that should be made for the next stage. Where comments have been made on other council departments and services, we will share them with the relevant teams. For example, responses to questions about Area Co-Ordination will be fed back to the Neighbourhood Renewal team; responses to questions about open spaces will be shared with the Parks and Open Spaces team.

As you can imagine this is not a simple task and one that needs to be given careful consideration. Over the next few months we will be carrying out this work, ready to produce the next stage of the Core Strategy process in Autumn 2007.

We will consult on the document and arrangements for consultations will be publicised once finalised.

Introduction 1
About this document 1
Getting more detail 1
Consultation Summary 1
Consultation Catalogue 1
What happens next? 2
Chapter 4: A vision for Hastings 4
Vision 1 4
Vision 2 4
Chapter 5: Image of the town 4
Chapter 6: Housing and Scenarios for Growth 5
Scenarios for growth 5
Current housing stock 5
Affordable housing 5
Housing types, sizes and tenures 5
Housing densities 5
Chapter 7: Locations for change 5
Chapter 8: The Local Economy 6
Employment sites 6
Retailing 6
Retail location 6
Chapter 9: Transport & accessibility 7
Chapter 10: Community infrastructure and quality of life 8
Area co-ordination 8
Chapter 11: Biodiversity, green space and urban renaissance 8
Open Spaces 8
Children's Play Provision 8
Sense of place and local identity 8
Chapter 12: Environmental and Sustainability Issues 9
Sustainable design 9
Renewable energy 9
Flood Risk 9
More information 10

Chapter 4: A vision for Hastings

We asked for comments on two visions, and responses included:

Vision 1
Do you agree with vision 1? Yes 61% No 39%
The vision is not Hastings specific – it could refer to any town in the UK
A vision should be fairly brief
Needs to be brief, readily understood, particular to the locality and achievable
Need to acknowledge the coastal/seaside role of the town
Don't see why a 'vision for Hastings' assumes a future with Bexhill – concern over the word 'conurbation'
Hastings is a unique, interesting, vibrant and smallish town and should remain that

Vision 2
Do you agree with vision 2? Yes 75% No 25%
Reference to the sea, tourism and visitors should be included
Preferable to Vision 1, more realistic and achievable
Culture and arts needs to be at the core of regeneration to give Hastings a clear definition, different from elsewhere
Don't base everything on culture and the environment
Preserving the environmental heritage is key
Requires courage and drive to achieve these

Chapter 5: Image of the town

We asked for comments on 5 potential scenarios:

A centre of excellence for education & learning	75% yes, 25% no
A high-tech business location	74% yes, 26% no
Culture & Tourism	95% yes, 5% no
A show case for sustainable living	83% yes, 17% no
Specialist shopping	42% yes, 58% no

Comments on this chapter included:
Pursue the 5 themes together
Place a greater emphasis on tourism and seafront
Create a distinctive new tourist attraction
Build on our history and heritage
Culture and arts are the catalyst for regeneration

Chapter 6: Housing and Scenarios for Growth

Scenarios for growth
We asked for comments on two scenarios for growth. Comments included:
Focus on developing brownfield sites
Developers support building on greenfield sites as well as it can help to keep momentum of delivery
Balance the amount of housing and employment land
4200 homes is too high
4200 homes is too low
Refer to the MBM masterplan
Re-use empty and redundant buildings

Current housing stock
We asked for comments on some options:

Focus on worst quality housing areas?	84% yes, 14% no, 2% no opinion
Seek to create more mixed communities?	72% yes, 17% no, 11% no opinion
Support the Central St Leonards Masterplan	86 % yes, 2% no, 12% no opinion

Comments and other ideas included:
Take a town-wide approach
Improving housing will not automatically improve social issues
Let the housing market decide what happens
Demolish and rebuild
Use space above shops
Encourage self-build

Affordable housing
Comments about possible options to help deliver affordable housing included:

HBC should take a strong line with developers
Developers concerned about viability
Ghettos v Integration
Affordable housing should be on all sites
People first, then regeneration
Consider flat pack “IKEA” homes
Address the issues of 910 second homes

Housing types, sizes and tenures
Comments about possible options to plan for mixed communities included:

We need good tenure choice right across the town
Concern that Hastings Borough Council has an obsession with delivery of social rented housing
Set a target to reduce the percentage of private rented and encourage home ownership
Tinkering with housing stock will not address social problems

Housing densities
Comments about possible targets for housing densities included:
37% yes, 40% no, 23% no opinion
Local infrastructure is important
Open and green spaces need to be preserved, and setting densities can help this
Densities too high for Old Town Conservation Area
Design guidance and flexibility is needed

Chapter 7: Locations for change

There was general agreement on the locations for change identified in the consultation.
Comments about suitable locations for change included:
Town centre should be a priority

Seafront should play a major role, with the pier a dazzling icon; Seafront strategy is important
Wilting Farm is in danger of becoming a satellite and an example of urban sprawl, but would make a good location for a transport hub
Millennium Communities need high quality design and better employment opportunities
Bulverhythe is in danger of flooding
Central St Leonards needs to support retail trading

Other suggested locations for change included:
A21-Bexhill economic corridor
Queensway
Build a sports stadium at Queensway and housing at Pilot field
Extend beyond the borough boundary
Developing existing industrial space e.g. Ponswood

Chapter 8: The Local Economy

Comments about suggested issues and options for economy and employment included:

Employment sites
Need to balance the number of housing and employment sites
There is no major site for a major employer
Broadband means you don't need an office
Remember to think of accessibility with any new employment sites
Little mention of tourism
Employment in housing areas can minimise travel

Retailing
There needs to be a focus on local neighbourhood centres
Little or no reference to public realm or public transport
Encourage a balance between national and local stores

Retail location
Develop the Ravenside site
Bring empty shops back into use
Other locations suggested for developing retail were: Queens Road, Bulverhythe, Glyne Gap, Town Centre, Bohemia, East side of Queens Road, Rock a Nore, Silverhill

Chapter 9: Transport & accessibility

Comments on a suggested integrated package of measures included:

Good transport links are critical for prosperity of Hastings, put the investment into public transport instead
Mixed feelings about the idea of 20mph zones, close town centre at certain times
The Highways Agency currently has no major improvements within its Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI) immediately adjacent to Hastings Borough. However two improvement schemes on the A21 to the north in Kent, are planned to be delivered by 2012 and both will improve access to Hastings.
Lobby for improved links
Introduce the metro link
Priority one should be to improve link to London non-stop to Hastings, have a 1066 special
Car share, car pools, free school bus, walking bus
For and against cycling – challenging topography, cycle routes to employment areas; cycle lanes, national cycle network, on-platform cycle parking
Support for making the Greenway a reality
Reduce traffic sign clutter
Car Parking: comments about the cost, suggested underground parking at Wellington Square & Cornwallis Gardens, and Stade car park free for residents in the evening
Copy Brighton minibus idea
Query effectiveness of the Quality Bus Transport

Other comments about Transport and Accessibility included:
Regeneration is unlikely without improvements to accessibility
Differing views for and against Park and Ride schemes
Car parking should be free from 4pm, or based on engine size
Use the sea to improve transport inks
East Sussex County Council referred to other areas of their work that will help inform the next stage of the Core Strategy and help to promote a co-ordinated approach
Consider building new housing near existing schools to minimise need to travel

Chapter 10: Community infrastructure and quality of life

Comments about a strategic policy to ensure development proposals contribute to community infrastructure and the quality of life included:

92% agreed with the suggested approach
Having local facilities means people travel less
Community facilities mean one thing to residents and another thing to the Council
Consider how to make community facilities all-inclusive
Do not place too many demands on developers otherwise they may not wish to develop here
Add stronger links between health, housing and also the evening economy

Area co-ordination

We asked for views on how area co-ordination could be used as

A way of putting planning policy into practice	70% yes, 15% no, 15% no opinion
A way of involving communities in local planning issues	78% yes, 16% no, 6% no opinion
A mechanism for continual improvement in council services	71% yes, 14% no, 15% no opinion

Other comments about Area Co-ordination included:
Mixed views about the effectiveness of the area-co-ordination format, suggesting that the four areas need to share good ideas
It could water down action in deprived wards
We are all citizens and should try to involve ourselves in all aspects wherever possible
The planners should come to us to ask for comments
People need to feel they can affect the decisions, there is little opportunity for open debate

Chapter 11: Biodiversity, green space and urban renaissance

Comments about a proposed strategic policy to avoid a net loss of biodiversity included:
Locally important areas and wildlife should be protected
These objectives need to be supported by developers and landowners
Include reference to High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plan
Prioritise what should be retained – we can't save it all
We need a strategy for the built environment too
Protect ancient woodland to same level as SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest)

Open Spaces

Comments about how the general policy direction could support the draft Parks and Open Spaces strategy included:

There were mixed views about providing new spaces and preserving existing ones
Sport England commented that a robust policy is needed to secure contributions for open spaces, sport and recreation
Seek more provision while we still can – the South East is filling up
Recognise the importance of allotments
Draw up action plans with communities to allow them to carry out work with HBC support, although people have not felt contributions are well received
More volunteers are needed to manage spaces

Children's Play Provision

We asked if people supported the new approach to children's play provision:
71% agreed, 14% disagreed, 15% gave no opinion

Sense of place and local identity

We asked a series of questions about creating a sense of place and identity:

Should we have a town-wide urban design guide? Agree 59%, Disagree 23%, No opinion 18%
Should we prepare area specific urban design guides? Agree 88%, Disagree 5%, No opinion 7%
Site specific design briefs for major development sites? Agree 80%, Disagree 8%, No opinion 12%
Continue as at present: Agree 35%, Disagree 40%, No opinion 25%
Encourage developers to invest in public art: Agree 68%, Disagree 24%, No Opinion 8%

Other comments received included:
This section should be near the front of the document
Town centre and sea front are essential to prosperity
Local people should be involved
HBC needs to let people decide for themselves
Domed all weather ground
CABE (Commission for Architecture and Built Environment) commented that there should be robust design policies, and that officers and members should champion design tools, codes and briefs
Residents should adopt a street
Use local artists for public art
Urban design should appear in the vision
The idea of supporting public art is appealing, but examples in recent years have been disastrous.

Chapter 12: Environmental and Sustainability Issues

Sustainable design
93% of responses supported introduction of BREEAM/Eco Homes
Other comments on sustainable design included:
BREEAM standards is not high enough
Such a requirement would place a burden on development in a location where growth and regeneration are imperative, and where viability is finely balanced

Renewable energy
Comments on energy demand of new developments and on site renewable energy included:
Is 10% too low?
At least 10%
Developers have concerns about viability of such a proposal, and consider that there needs to be a flexible approach on a site by site basis
There needs to be a balance between large and small schemes
Develop off shore wind with Rother for the district, small scale wind power is not effective enough
Suggested possible renewable energy sites included a wind farm at Pebsham or Bos Field, William Parker grounds, above the castle, on the Pier

Other issues that were suggested to be covered in an environmental sustainability policy included:
Carbon neutral homes - we need a milestone including all new homes to be zero-carbon by 2016
Transport considerations – encouraging sustainable modes, discourage car use, reducing the need to travel

Flood Risk
We asked if the policy covers the flood risk issues for Hastings:
Agree 47%, Disagree 35%, No Opinion 18%

More information

A detailed summary is available from www.hastings.gov.uk/ldf or by calling 0845 274 1098

All of the comments made are available to read in the Consultation Catalogue. The catalogue runs to over 400 pages. A full copy is available to read at
Council offices, Century House, 100 Menzies Road, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex, TN38 9BB
Hastings Information Centre
Hastings Voluntary Action offices, 31a Priory Street, Hastings, TN34 1EA
Hastings Central Library
Ore Library
Hollington Library

Forward Planning
Regeneration and Planning Directorate
February 2007