

Preparing the Local Plan

The Planning Policy team is currently working towards the 'Preferred Options' for the Local Plan.

This is a change in our approach, which previously followed the 'Local Development Framework' (LDF) system that was introduced by the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. This intended to guide development through a series of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that were to be prepared in stages.

At the time, the Core Strategy was to be the first DPD that the Council would prepare. It would set out spatially that vision, strategic objectives, the overarching strategy and core policies for the area, together with a monitoring and implementation framework. The document would focus on matters of strategic importance and aim to cover the long-term, i.e. up to 2031. As such a Core Strategy Issues and Options Report was published for public consultation in 2010. It considered the major issues facing the District and set them in context. It also considered various options open to the Council to address the issues and posed a number of questions to assist public debate.

Before the Core Strategy DPD was progressed any further, the Localism Act 2011 gained Royal Assent. This Act sought to further improve the planning system and allow much more local discretion by removing the regional tier of planning policy. It also removed much of the process that was associated with the LDF system, and started to refer to a 'Local Plan'. The Council started work on determining a local housing target and consulted the public on the options during early 2012.

The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) was then published in March 2012, and along with bringing together most Government Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes into a much shorter, single document, it also did not refer to the term 'Local Development Framework' but preferred to use the term 'Local Plan'.

Planning officers decided that the best course of action would be to rebrand the existing Core Strategy work as the strategic policies of the Local Plan, which will be supported by more detailed development management policies and land allocation / designation policies. A formal decision to adopt this approach and produce one single planning document was made by Full Council on 30th July 2013.