



REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 2 APRIL 2009

HEAD OF SERVICE: GARY HOUSDEN, HEAD OF PLANNING

REPORTING OFFICER: JILL THOMPSON, FORWARD PLANNING
MANAGER

SUBJECT: RYEDALE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
CORE STRATEGY
REGULATION 25 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To outline the comments received as part of the latest consultation and to agree this Council's response.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **That Full Council be recommended to agree the Council's responses to the comments received as set out in Annex A.**

3.0 REASONS SUPPORTING DECISION

3.1 To progress the production of the Core Strategy. Once Members have agreed general responses to the comments made at this stage, these will be fed back to the consultees and will help to inform further on-going consultation and dialogue required to inform the production of the draft Core Strategy.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Members will recall that the Government introduced changes to the production of Local Development Frameworks last year. The changes are outlined in new statutory regulations. Regulation 25 marks the first stage of consultation on a Development Plan Document (DPD). It requires a Local Planning Authority to:

- (a) notify stakeholders of the subject of the DPD they propose to prepare; and
- (b) invite representations to the Local Planning Authority about what a DPD of that subject ought to contain.

4.2 In revising the Core Strategy, the Council must follow the process as it is set out in the new regulations.

- 4.3 The consultation period ran from November 2008 to the end of January 2009. In total, it covered a period of ten weeks, which is longer than the standard six-week period. The consultation was extended to ensure that it was publicised for a full six-week period on the web-site and to take account of the Christmas holidays. Over 700 organisations on the LDF database were consulted. These included: Statutory Consultees, Parish, Town and District Councils, local interest groups, developers and agents, utility providers, local businesses and general consultees.
- 4.4 In total, 71 organisations/individuals have responded to the consultation. Summaries of the comments received are outlined in Annex A.

5.0 REPORT

- 5.1 Regulation 25 is designed to inform the production of a document from the outset. There are no provisions in the regulations to take account of the experience of this Authority with its need to produce a revised document following an unsound verdict. Against this, the Council has made it clear to stakeholders that although the revised Core Strategy must proceed through the new regulations, the consultation and evidence used to inform the earlier version of the document will be carried forward to inform the revised document, alongside updated evidence and responses from further on-going consultation that will be gathered throughout the course of this year.
- 5.2 The history of Ryedale's Core Strategy has undoubtedly influenced responses to this consultation. Indeed, the comments that have been received fall into two broad areas – those that list the range of issues to be covered in the document and those that relate to the policy approach of the previous Core Strategy. Whilst it is considered that the latter rather stretch the spirit and purpose of Regulation 25, it is inevitable given the background to the Core Strategy that such comments would be received. Indeed these further comments should be welcomed as they can only assist in informing a revised document.

Issues to be covered in the Core Strategy

- 5.3 As part of the consultation exercise the Council suggested a range of policy issues to be covered in the new Core Strategy. The consultation has highlighted that whilst there is general support for the issues proposed, the vast majority of comments received relate to *how* those issues should be approached and the detail to be included in the document.
- 5.4 Comprehensive comments have been received from the statutory consultees and specific interest groups. For example, Yorkshire Forward and the Regional Assembly have provided detailed cross cutting comments which will act as a useful and comprehensive check list for the Core Strategy. Organisations such as Natural England, English Heritage and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust have provided more detailed topic-specific comments.
- 5.5 In general these comments are to be welcomed. They will undoubtedly assist the Council in revising the Core Strategy and will ensure that key matters will not be omitted from the document. At this stage in the process such

comments will form the basis of on-going dialogue to ensure that the Core Strategy includes an appropriate balance between policy areas/topics, and that it includes an appropriate level of detail.

- 5.6 Some representatives of the development industry have suggested that the Core Strategy include strategic sites. Members will recall that the revised Planning Policy Statement 12 – Local Spatial Planning which was issued last year, allows Core Strategies to allocate specific sites in the document where these are considered to be ‘strategic’. PPS12 does not define a strategic site in detail, but describes such a site as being central to the achievement of the strategy.
- 5.7 It is perhaps inevitable that following the issue of PPS12 developers would pursue sites as strategic allocations in the Core Strategy. However, it is considered that it is too early in the process of revising the Core Strategy to commit to including strategic sites at this stage. The extent to which a site could be considered as strategic will depend whichever strategy/option is chosen for accommodating different land uses. The Council will not make decisions on this until later in the year, following site-specific consultation in June. It is this process which will help to inform whether particular sites are sufficiently strategic to warrant inclusion in the Core Strategy.

Spatial Strategy/Settlement hierarchy

- 5.8 It is evident from Annex A that a number of consultees have used the consultation to provide further comments and views on the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy that formed the basis of the previous document.
- 5.9 It is of note that no comments received have challenged the relative position of each of the main settlements in the hierarchy. Consistent with previous consultation, the main areas of concern relate to the role of villages in the strategy, the selection of ‘service villages’ and the policy approach to villages not classed as service villages. The other key matter that has attracted comments relates to the scale of development to settlements within the hierarchy and the relationship between this and the ability of settlements to accommodate levels of development in terms of their infrastructure, availability of deliverable land and impact on the character of each settlement.
- 5.10 At this stage in the process the Council can only provide a limited response to comments made in relation to these key policy choices. On-going technical work will be used to inform decisions on the scale and location of growth at different settlements in the hierarchy and the Council is also committed to undertaking further consultation in June on key strategic and policy issues in conjunction with all of the sites that have been put forward, prior to agreeing the draft Core Strategy.
- 5.11 Responses to comments received (as proposed in Annex A) reflect the current stage in the process of preparing/revising the Core Strategy. Clearly at this stage the Council cannot commit to addressing every point in the revised document. The level of detail in the document and the key policy choices will be established over the course of this year and it is appropriate that this is reflected in the responses proposed in Annex A.

5.12 It should be noted that all of the key issues raised from the various stages of consultation on the Core Strategy over the course of its development will be compiled to be considered by Members when they are asked to consider/agree the draft Core Strategy itself.

6.0 OPTIONS

6.1 It is considered appropriate that Members consider and agree the Council's response to the comments made at this stage.

6.2 Members are not being asked to make decisions on the presence or direction of policy within the Core Strategy at this time.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

9.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct environmental implications with this report.

10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1 There are no risks associated with this document, as the document makes general comments to responses made. The main procedural risk in relation to the Regulation 25 consultation would be if Members did not consider the comments raised, as the Core Strategy is produced.

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 The recommendation is appropriate on the basis of the issues outlined in the report.

There are no background papers

OFFICER CONTACT: Please contact Rachael Richardson if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The Officer can be contacted at Ryedale House on 01653 600666 ext 357 or at rachael.richardson@ryedale.gov.uk

CORPORATE POLICY APPRAISAL FORM *(One for each Option)*

Annex A

Policy Context	Impact Assessment	Impact +ve -ve Neutral
Community Plan Themes <i>(Identify any/all that apply)</i>	Vibrant Communities Access and Communication Health and Wellbeing Landscape and Environment Developing Opportunities	+ve
Corporate Objectives/Priorities <i>(Identify any/all that apply)</i>	Contributes to 4 out of the 5 priority aims in the Council Plan	+ ve
Service Priorities	Forward Planning and Conservation Unit – production of the LDF	+ve
Financial	No direct implications	
Legal Implications	No direct implications	
Procurement Policies	No direct implications	
Asset Management Policies	No direct implications	
LA21 & Environment Charter	No direct implications	
Community Safety	No direct implications	
Equalities	No direct implications	
E-Government	No direct implications	
Risk Assessment	Outlined in the report	
Estimated Timescale for achievement	Examinations – Core Strategy – June 2010	