

Welcome to the latest edition of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's LDF newsletter, which is designed to keep you up to date with the latest news on planning policy matters and progress on the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The Core Strategy: Inspector's Report Expected

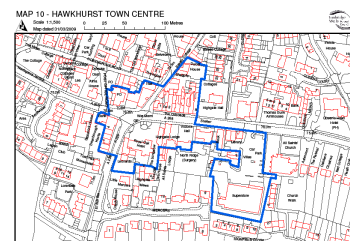
The Core Strategy will be the overarching document in the Borough Council's Local Development Framework. It will set out how much development will take place in the Borough until 2026 and broadly where it will be located. It will also provide the overarching principles and policies with which development will need to comply.

After a long process of preparation and engagement, the Core Strategy was recently examined for "soundness" by an independent Planning Inspector. Public hearing sessions ended on 15 December 2009 and the Inspector's Report is expected very soon, during April 2010. Details of the Report will be posted on the Core Strategy webpage at <http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/corestrategy>, where more information about the process to date can also be found. The recommendations in the Report will be binding upon the Council, meaning that they will need to be accepted by the Borough Council and included within the Core Strategy in order for it to be adopted. A full Council resolution is required to do this and a meeting is scheduled for 17 June 2010 following a Cabinet meeting on 10 June 2010.

It is worth noting that, upon the adoption of the Core Strategy, Policies EN26; EN27; H3; and part of ED4(c) of the Local Plan, 2006, will be superseded.

The Town Centres Area Action Plan and Allocations DPDs: Further Consultation

The Borough Council is producing a TCAAP and an Allocations DPD to take forward the broad proposals set out in the Core Strategy. The TCAAP will provide the framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed and will cover the four town centres within the Borough: Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough, Paddock Wood and Cranbrook. The Allocations DPD will allocate land for new development and uses across the whole Borough, including at the four towns referred to above (although allocations within the town centre boundaries will be made in the TCAAP); Hawkhurst; the Villages; and the rural areas. A first stage of early engagement consultation on the TCAAP and the Allocations DPD was carried out from April - June 2009 and sought comments on the vision and objectives for the main centres in the Borough and the rural areas; the boundaries of the town centres; and the uses appropriate within them and the wider area. We also sought the submissions of any sites considered suitable for development/redevelopment. We have now summarised all the comments received on a settlement by settlement basis. Additionally, a list of all the sites submitted through the process has been produced.



Next Steps

We are now in the process of finalising the broad vision and objectives for each of the settlements/areas in light of comments received, and determining the Town Centre boundaries. We have also been assessing all the sites submitted to us in order to assess their suitability for a number of uses. It is planned that **we will carry out another stage of consultation in late May to July 2010**, at which time we will seek views on the sites submitted and uses proposed as well as the final visions, objectives, town centre boundaries and other issues such as access and movement, priority areas for redevelopment etc. We are planning to hold a **series of exhibitions** across the Borough where we will be inviting the public to view the details as set out above and to make comments. Details of this consultation will be published shortly on our website and through various other means, including posters around the borough and the media.

The Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

The Borough Council has set out within its adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS), the intention to a Development Control Policies DPD. This will be used in day-to-day planning decisions across the Borough, and will help to guide the future development and conservation of the Borough, according to the principles in the Core Strategy. This document will replace some policies of the Local Plan with locally-specific development control policies covering a wide range of topics, including housing, employment, transport and the preservation of the Borough's environment, which will add to, and complement national and regional policy.

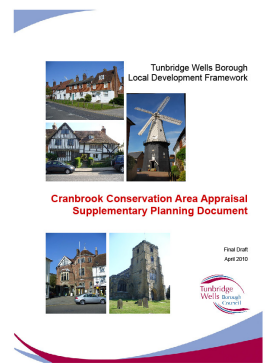
Following the re-consideration of existing 'saved' Local Plan Policies, and a review of the national and regional policy context, work has commenced on policy areas for inclusion in this DPD. A series of workshop events, covering the varied policy areas will occur in the summer, and public consultation on a draft document will take place later in the year.

The Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal

The preparation of the latest Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document is now complete. This is a review of the previous 1997 document, and is a combination of the original appraisal with more recent guidance from English Heritage for doing appraisals. The document benefited from the significant and most welcome input of two members of the Cranbrook Conservation Advisory Committee and has resulted in a document which follows the spirit of the EH guidance but is considered to be locally relevant and useable.

Responses received to the formal consultation on the draft have now been considered and where appropriate have been included in the final document. Formal adoption as part of the Local Development Framework is the next step.

It should be noted that the format of the appraisal which has been carefully evolved with the CCAAC, will also now provide a useful template for future CA Appraisals elsewhere in the Borough.



The Transport Strategy

A new Transport Strategy is being prepared for the Borough. The purpose of the strategy is to provide a strong focus and clear direction for the development of the local transport network in the context of wider regeneration, development and environmental objectives set out in the Borough's Local Development Framework and Kent's Local Transport Plan. The Transport Strategy will identify the key challenges that face the network and will include the development of a strategic multi-modal transport model (VISUM model) against which different scheme options and development scenarios could be tested. Consultation on the draft Transport Strategy will start in May 2010 to coincide with consultation on the TCAAP and Allocations DPDs.

The Evidence Base

The Borough Council is currently gathering together information on *Green Infrastructure* assets within the Borough and will be holding a series of meetings to discuss this important evidence base with key stakeholders. There will be an opportunity to comment on aspects of Green Infrastructure as part of the consultation on the TCAAP and Allocations DPDs in May-July 2010.

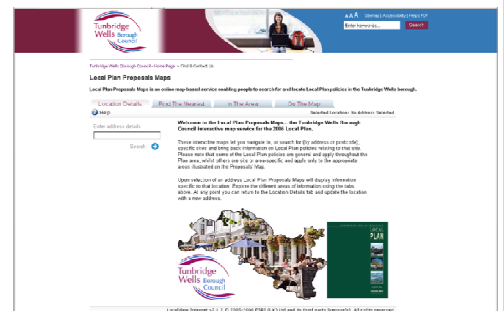
The Borough Council is also in the process of commissioning consultants to undertake an update on the *Employment Land Review*, a new *Retail Study*, and a *Water Management Study* for Paddock Wood. These studies will form the evidence base for future LDF policies and allocations.

Localview and the Local Plan maps

A new Interactive Local Plan Proposals Map service is available now on the TWBC website. The system allows you to search by address, or navigate using the map to an area you are interested in. Once selected, all Local Plan policies relating to that specific point will be listed and a hyperlink provided to the policy details and supporting information. The website also allows Local Plan policies to be viewed on the map, one at a time.

In addition, there is a facility to find the distance of your selected location from the nearest point where each policy applies. For example, if your chosen site is the Town Hall in Royal Tunbridge Wells, the nearest Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Policy EN26) is 1.63km away.

If you have any questions relating to the interactive maps, please contact the Planning Policy team and we will be happy to help. The interactive maps can be found at: www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/localplanmaps



Your contact details

LDF newsletters are sent to everyone on our LDF database to keep you up to date with current events. We also notify you of the various stages in the production of the Borough Council's LDF documents, including when consultations will be taking place. You can view LDF documents and participate online during public consultations by using the Borough Council's **consultation portal** at <http://consult.tunbridgewells.gov.uk>

If you have received this newsletter by **post** this means that, although you are already on our database, we do not have a record of your email address. **If you would prefer to be contacted by email**, please email your name, address and email address to planning.policy@tunbridgewells.gov.uk and we will gladly update your details for you.

If you no longer wish to be contacted about LDF documents, or **if your contact details have changed**, please let us know and we will remove you from our circulation list or update your details for you.

If you require this in another format or would like more information about any of the items in this newsletter, please email planning.policy@tunbridgewells.gov.uk, telephone us on 01892 554056 or visit our website at www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/ldf