



Name
Address

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8th July 2009

Dear Sir or Madam,

Formal Notice of preparation of the West Somerset Core Strategy

The two consultation questions on which views are currently being sought are as follows:

- 1. What are the most important social, economic and environmental issues currently facing West Somerset? (please give examples and/or refer to any supporting evidence if you can).**
- 2. What, in your view, should the West Somerset Core Strategy contain, and in particular, which would address the issues you have identified in response to the first question?**

I am writing to notify you that West Somerset Council is commencing the preparation of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy for the part of its area lying outside the Exmoor National Park (see plan attached). This notification, made in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 as amended, serves to inform you of the subject of the proposed development plan document and invites you to make representations on what you consider it should contain.

The document being prepared, the West Somerset Core Strategy, is an important statutory planning policy document which will set out the vision for the future for the various parts of the District; when finally adopted, its policies will replace many of the saved policies of the adopted West Somerset District Local Plan.

This is the beginning of your opportunity to have your say about how much and what sort of future development should take place within your community.

What is a Core Strategy?

- The Core Strategy is the town and country planning policy document whose policies will be used in deciding planning applications, and deciding what sort of development is appropriate in the various parts of the District,
- It will be the lead development plan document for the District, providing a context for the preparation of any further development plan documents and supplementary planning documents,
- It responds to local issues and opportunities, it is based on evidence, a sense of local distinctiveness and the community's own objectives, set within the overall framework of national planning policy and regional strategies.
- Once adopted the Core Strategy will become part of the statutory development plan for the part of West Somerset District outside the Exmoor National Park area. (The Exmoor National Park Authority is preparing a Core Strategy for the National Park).
- The involvement of residents, the business community and a wide range of local, regional and national stakeholders / interest groups is essential to the successful preparation of the core strategy, this letter is an open invitation to become involved in the process.

What is in the Core Strategy?

- The West Somerset Core Strategy will contain the spatial vision, objectives and strategy for development in West Somerset up to 2026 in which core planning policies for the District will be set out. These will take account of the aims and objectives of the West Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2010 and will also help to implement them.
- The core policies will address the priority issues for achieving the district's spatial vision / objectives which will be linked with the Settlement Strategy. This will, for example, address development proposals in Minehead and regeneration issues in both Watchet and Williton.
- The West Somerset Core Strategy must follow national policy guidance set out in central government's Planning Policy Statements (PPS), as well as in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

The LDF Core Strategy, unlike the Local Plan, is not limited to land use planning matters. Spatial planning is concerned with economic, social, health and environmental matters as well. One of the opportunities offered by the preparation of a Core Strategy is to better coordinate the investment and service delivery decision making of a range of public bodies for the greater benefit of the community.

Please make any responses within eight weeks, the consultation period ends on Tuesday the 1st of September. Although the initial preparation of the Core Strategy involves an ongoing process of discussion, meetings and correspondence, **your contribution will be most valuable if made early on in the process.**

It would be particularly helpful if you could make any response via the www.westsomersetsays.com website. However, you may also respond via e-mail to LDF@westsomerset.gov.uk or by post to:

The Local Development Framework Team, West Somerset Council,
West Somerset House, Killick Way, Williton, Somerset. TA4 4QA.

If we have contacted you by post, I would be most grateful if you could please let us know your e-mail address if you have one, so that future contact can be made in the most efficient way. **If you no longer wish to be consulted on LDF documents please let us know and we will delete your records from our mailing list.**

What information is available to help you to take part?

You don't need to do anything more than let us know what you think the main economic, environmental or social issues are within the area, and / or what the Core Strategy should include, you may find some or all of the following helpful though.

- Further information on the Council's proposals for the Core Strategy and the LDF in general can be found on the Council's website: www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk where the LDF Statement of Community Involvement, Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Report can be downloaded.
- A plan showing the extent of the West Somerset Core Strategy area is attached
- A summary of the aims of the West Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy is attached.
- An LDF newsletter is available.
- These documents can also be consulted at the Council's offices or at local libraries within the District.
- Please make responses via www.westsomersetsays.com if possible
- Government guidance on LDF core strategies is contained in Planning Policy Statement 12 – Creating strong, safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning, available to download free from www.communities.gov.uk .

Yours sincerely,

Toby Clempson,
Local Development Framework Team.