

DECISION-MAKER: CABINET
COUNCIL

SUBJECT: CORE STRATEGY PARTIAL REVIEW: ADOPTION

DATE OF DECISION: 17 MARCH 2015
18 MARCH 2015

REPORT OF: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

CONTACT DETAILS

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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Core Strategy was adopted in 2010 and sets out the strategic policies and development targets for the city. The Core Strategy Partial Review adds the national 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'; reduces the office and retail targets in the light of economic circumstances, whilst still aiming for major growth; and makes detailed amendments to the biodiversity policy. The Partial Review gives an up to date and realistic framework for the City Centre Action Plan. The Partial Review forms part of the development plan against which planning applications are judged. It has been through a public examination and the Council can only lawfully adopt it by incorporating the Inspector's Main Modifications. These modifications are now contained in this version, recommended for adoption

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CABINET:

- (i) To recommend to Council that the Core Strategy Partial Review be adopted. (Document 1 in the Members' Room).

COUNCIL:

- (i) To adopt the Core Strategy Partial Review.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To provide an up to date strategic planning framework for the city.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. Not to adopt the Plan. This would not meet the statutory requirement to keep plans up to date.
3. To adopt the Plan without the Inspector's 'Main Modifications' or by introducing other significant changes. This would be unlawful.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2010 and sets out the strategic planning policies for the city. The Core Strategy Partial Review (referred to below as “the Partial Review”) provides a focussed up date to set a realistic framework for the City Centre Action Plan.
5. Following wide ranging public consultation and evidence gathering, the Cabinet approved a submission Partial Review plan on 19th March 2013. This was subject to formal public representations in Autumn 2013 and a public examination in Spring 2014. This led to further public consultation (under delegated powers) in Summer 2014 on changes to the plan to address the issues raised.
6. In December 2014 the Inspector’s final report was received (Document 4 in the Members’ room). She found the Partial Review ‘sound’ provided her ‘Main Modifications’ are made. To adopt the Partial Review, the Council is legally required to include these Main Modifications and make no other significant changes. The Inspector has broadly supported the Council’s Partial Review, and whilst her Main Modifications must be made, they do not significantly alter its overall approach.
7. This report summarises the Council’s submission plan; the Inspector’s Main Modifications; and Additional minor Modifications recommended by officers. These are all incorporated into the Partial Review recommended for adoption.

Council’s submission Partial Review plan

8. The Partial Review plan changes the original 2010 Core Strategy in 4 areas, as follows.
9. The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. This is added to reflect the requirements of the Government and its National Planning Policy Framework. The Planning Inspectorate has prepared some ‘model wording’ to cover the presumption and the Council incorporated this. Sustainable development promotes a strong economy, meets social needs (eg for housing and services), and protects the environment. The ‘model wording’ explains that the Council will take a positive approach which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development; work proactively with applicants to find solutions wherever possible; and approve proposals which are in accordance with the Council’s Plans without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. If the Plans have no relevant policies or are out of date, the Council will grant permission unless the adverse impacts would significantly outweigh the benefits.
10. Office Targets. The targets for office development in the city centre (2006 – 2026) are reduced from 322,000 sq m to a minimum of 110,000 sq m. The reduction reflects the effects of the recent recession and changing working practices (working at home, etc). However it still represents major growth as the economy improves: a 40% increase in the city centre’s office space, and a net growth in 5,000 jobs; likely to be in the following sectors: business services (legal, accounting, etc); financial services; consultancies; public / health; and marine. The Royal Pier Waterfront and Station Quarter are likely to be significant locations for office growth. The target reduction reflects an assessment of likely delivery on Southampton’s sites; and is consistent with the minimum target for Southampton in the revised South Hampshire Strategy (2012). The City Centre Action Plan also identifies sufficient sites to meet the full South Hampshire target of 162,000 sq m, either over the longer term or

should economic growth be stronger than expected. Therefore the growth to meet the full target does not need to be provided elsewhere. The targets are on a net basis and allow for a significant loss of older offices.

11. Retail Targets. The targets for 'non food' retail development in the city centre (2006 – 2026) are reduced from 130,000 sq m to 100,000 sq m. This reduction reflects the effects of the economic recession and the latest data / forecasts for the growth of internet shopping. This reduction still promotes major retail growth in the city centre, whilst avoiding excessive growth which would undermine the existing shopping area.

The Inspector's Main Modification

12. These must be incorporated for the Plan to be lawfully adopted. In any case they are considered useful additions to the Plan. They are set out in full in Document 2 in the Members' room and the key points summarised as follows.
13. The retail target is reduced slightly further, from 100,000 sq m to 90,000 sq m to reflect the latest forecasts.
14. The city centre boundary is expanded to include the whole of the Station Quarter.
15. The biodiversity policy is amended to be more consistent with national policy. This adds clarity to ensure development does not adversely effect international sites, provides necessary mitigation, or otherwise meets the Habitats Directive; and is unlikely to have unacceptable impact on national / local designations, or other features of biodiversity value, with impacts avoided, mitigated or compensated for.

Additional Modifications

16. Whilst the Council cannot make any further major modifications, it can make minor modifications. These are proposed to respond to detailed points discussed at the hearings, and are primarily consequential changes to the Main Modifications. They include the modifications consulted upon in Summer 2014; and a small number of additional points for consistency as follows.
17. The Table setting out the likely phasing of retail sites is transferred to the City Centre Action Plan.
18. The explanation of the office and retail targets and associated monitoring is updated and clarified.
19. An addendum map to show consultation zones around hazardous installations in the city, primarily within industrial areas.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

20. The Plan is being prepared within the existing Planning budget within the Environment and Transport portfolio.

Property/Other

21. None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

22. Sections 17, 19 and 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004

Other Legal Implications:

23. Once the Plan is adopted there is a 6 week period in which parties could lodge a High Court Challenge. This can only be on procedural / legal issues.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

24. The Plan forms part of the policy framework and the development plan against which planning applications are considered.

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: All

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. None.

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. Core Strategy Partial Review – version for adoption. This incorporates the Major and Additional Modifications. See background documents for the original 2010 Core Strategy which is being amended.
2. Major Modifications
3. Minor Modifications
4. Inspector's Report

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out. Yes

Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at: Civic Centre, contact report author.

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. Core Strategy (2010).	