

Harlow's Local Development Framework

Working together for Harlow



Sir Frederick Gibberd described the town as:

"an organism which would go on changing and being rebuilt as the needs of people altered."

# Preface

### About this document

This Issues and Options consultation document represents the first stage of the preparation of Harlow's Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is the main plan in Harlow's Local Development Framework (LDF) which will guide development in the district to 2026 and beyond.

Contained within this consultation document are 31 questions to collect your feedback on the issues that need addressing in Harlow and the potential options for planning the town's future.

The Council is not seeking your comments on the wording of this Issues and Options consultation document. It is **your views** in response to the specific questions that are needed. Have all of the issues been identified, or have any been missed?

Your responses and suggested solutions to the questions in the Issues and Options consultation document are important and will help the Council to prepare Harlow's final Core Strategy.



Step 1: Read the consultation document



Step 2: Respond using the separate questionnaire There are seven parts to this consultation document:

- **Part 1** provides the planning context for Harlow
- **Part 2** describes the issues that need to be addressed
- Part 3 sets out the strategic challenge
- **Part 4** discusses the possible vision, themes, strategic objectives and core policy areas for the Core Strategy
- **Part 5** looks at what will guide future development in Harlow
- **Part 6** looks at possible options for growth around Harlow
- Part 7 discusses the infrastructure that will be needed to support new development

# Where can I view the Issues and Options consultation document?

The consultation document and related background studies are available to view online at www.harlow.gov.uk/issuesandoptions

Paper copies are available for public inspection during normal office hours at the Civic Centre and in local libraries.

Copies of the consultation document can be obtained on CD-Rom by contacting the **Forward Planning Team** on **01279 446028** or by emailing **myharlow@harlow.gov.uk** 

#### How can I have my say?

You can submit your responses electronically using the Council's online consultation portal at **http://harlow.jdi-consult.net/ldf**/

You can email your completed questionnaire electronically to **myharlow@harlow.gov.uk** 

You can hand deliver your questionnaire in person at the Civic Centre or post it to:

Issues and Options Consultation Forward Planning Team Harlow Council Civic Centre The Water Gardens Harlow CM20 1WG

#### What is the deadline for responding? The Issues and Options consultation will end at 5pm on Friday 28 January 2011.

#### What will happen next?

Once the consultation period has finished a summary report detailing the responses received will be published on the Council's website **www.harlow.gov.uk**/ **issuesandoptions** 

The responses to the Issues and Options consultation will inform the next stage of Harlow's Core Strategy which is called the "Preferred Options". This will set out the Council's "preferred" approach and will inform the final plan which has to be submitted to Government before it can be adopted.

If you have any further questions regarding this Issues and Options consultation document please contact the **Forward Planning Team** on **01279 446028** or by emailing **myharlow@harlow.gov.uk** 







# Contents

**Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation Document** 

Foreword	1
1 - The context	3
2 - The issues	13
3 - The strategic challenge	27
4 - The vision, themes and objectives	31
5 - Guiding future development	45
6 - Spatial options for growth around Harlow	53
7 - Developing a delivery strategy	63

Appendix 1 - Glossary	68
Appendix 2 - Evidence base	69

# Foreword



Harlow was created in the 1940's as a place of aspiration, where families and businesses could come for a better quality of life with a range of state-of-the-art facilities. It provided an opportunity for thousands of people to build a new life in better homes and in better surroundings. The Council wants the emerging Local Development Framework to continue this theme, ensuring Harlow develops as the place to choose for a better way of life and to do business.

Harlow was never meant to stand still and needs to evolve to meet the changing needs of the community. Today the town is in need of regeneration. The provision of new housing linked to economic growth and infrastructure improvements is central to this.

Future growth in and around the town will need to recognise and respect Harlow's setting and be delivered alongside a wide range of infrastructure to ensure the long term success of the town.

The Local Development Framework, particularly the Core Strategy, will be the key to delivering our aspirations for the town as it will set out the planning framework to secure sustained investment to underpin regeneration.

The Council is committed to ensuring the Core Strategy and wider Local Development Framework reflects local needs and aspirations. This consultation provides an opportunity for you to comment on the development of the strategy.

This is only the first stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy so there will be other opportunities for you to comment as it develops. The Council will continue to work in partnership with public, private, the voluntary sector and with the community to ensure the most appropriate strategy is developed and the regeneration and renewal of the town is a success.

Andrew Johnson Leader of the Council





# 1. The context

#### **1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 This document is the first stage in the preparation of Harlow's Core Strategy.When complete the Core Strategy will be the main document making up Harlow's Local Development Framework (LDF).

The LDF is a collection of Local Development Documents that will deliver the spatial planning strategy for Harlow over the next 15 years and when completed will replace the Replacement Harlow Local Plan (adopted July 2006).

1.1.2 The Core Strategy will set out the overarching planning framework guiding development across the District, setting out the long term vision and objectives for Harlow.

> It will also set out the principles that will protect the environment and guide the development of new homes, shopping, employment opportunities and the infrastructure necessary to meet the needs and aspirations of the community.



It will provide the strategic framework for other detailed planning guidance being produced as part of the LDF. This includes the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) which will provide detailed policies to assist the consideration of planning applications.

A Site Allocations DPD will also be prepared which will identify land for development in the District.

1.1.3 These subsidiary documents will provide the detailed expression of the broader policies and proposals contained in the Core Strategy. The documents that are being produced to create Harlow's LDF are illustrated in the following diagram.



### **1.2** The purpose of this document

- 1.2.1 This consultation document is an informal discussion about the key spatial planning issues affecting Harlow and the possible policy options for addressing these. The focus of this consultation is to allow you to comment on the Council's initial understanding of the issues affecting the town, the strategic regeneration challenges and the possible planning framework to deliver the Core Strategy.
- 1.2.2 The issues are not exhaustive and additional ones may be identified throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy.
- 1.2.3 The Council is also asking for comments on what principles should direct development in Harlow including what role certain land uses should play in the future. The Council has also presented the Options Appraisal work which sought to produce alternative growth options around Harlow (see part 6). The growth options outlined at this stage are open for comment and will be developed according to the feedback received during this consultation and the outcome of additional technical work.
- 1.2.4 There will be additional opportunities to comment on the Core Strategy before it is formalised. The next stage will be the preparation of a Preferred Options paper that will set out a suggested strategic policy direction for Harlow, following the consideration of responses made on this document and the outcome of ongoing evidence gathering.

The stages of Harlow's Core Strategy preparation are set out in the following diagram.



### 1.3 Consultation so far

- 1.3.1 The Council commenced the preparation of the Core Strategy with an awareness raising event and exhibition at the Town Show. In addition a number of informal consultation events and workshops have been held with representatives from the local community and other stakeholders to help to identify some of the issues the Core Strategy will need to consider and address. This has been supported by the development of an evidence base consisting of a range of technical studies to assess the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area. Details of the Council's evidence base can be viewed on the Council's website at www.harlow.gov.uk/ldf (follow the link to 'Evidence Base').
- 1.3.2 The Council is committed to ensuring the community and stakeholders are continually involved in developing the future planning strategy for Harlow.

### **1.4 Sustainability Appraisal**

1.4.1 Every Development Plan Document must be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating the requirements of a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This highlights any significant environmental, social and economic effects of the plan, assessing it against a number of sustainability objectives. Harlow's Sustainability Appraisal will also include an Equalities Impact Assessment and a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA). The appraisal needs to be fully integrated into the plan making process so that it can inform and influence the plan as it develops.

The Council has been working closely with the consultant Scott Wilson who has undertaken a SA and HRA of the Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper. These will help the Council finalise the most appropriate strategy for Harlow. The SA and HRA have been published alongside this consultation and are available for viewing on the Council's website **www. harlow.gov.uk/ldf** (follow the link to 'Core Strategy'). Any comments on these documents should be made separately and sent to the Council's Forward Planning Team.



#### 1.5 Working with adjoining authorities

1.5.1 Harlow is a key sub regional centre in West Essex (see page 7). The town's influence and the range of facilities and services it provides extend beyond its tightly drawn administrative boundary. It is important that future strategic planning decisions affecting the town and the wider Harlow area are not restricted by such constraints. It is particularly important that the town continues to provide the homes, jobs, shops and the services that many in the adjoining districts use and benefit from. Furthermore, delivering certain elements of the Core Strategy will require the help and support of adjoining Districts. This is why the Council will continue to work with the adjoining authorities to develop a consistent approach to address the planning needs of the wider area.

#### 1.6 The planning context

- 1.6.1 When preparing the Core Strategy the Council must be mindful of the key policy drivers affecting the district.
- 1.6.2 The East of England Plan was central to informing the preparation of the Council's Core Strategy. However, the East of England Plan, along with other Regional Strategies, has now been withdrawn and with it the key regional policies supporting the town's regeneration, renewal and growth. Subsequently the requirement of that plan to deliver 16,000 new homes and a significant proportion of jobs has also been removed. This is a significant change to the planning system but gives the Council much greater freedom to develop its own plan based on the identified needs and aspirations of the local community.

# Locational context and setting of Harlow



- 1.6.3 Whilst the regional planning framework has been removed there remains a need to prepare a statutory LDF to guide development in Harlow to meet future needs and aspirations. There continues to be a need to provide new homes and employment opportunities together with key infrastructure and the protection of environmental assets.
- 1.6.4 The Council does not have a completely free hand when preparing the plan and will need to ensure that the emerging planning framework is responsive to the direction set by Government in national Planning Policy Statements and the evidence supporting the needs and aspirations of the local community.

# 1.7 Harlow Council's approach to its planning future

- 1.7.1 Although the regional policy framework has been removed the regeneration of the town remains the Council's number one priority. This is set out in the Council's Corporate Plan and the Regeneration and Social Inclusion Strategy. The Council believes that growth and investment is an important catalyst for securing regeneration and renewal. It is an important mechanism for addressing a number of issues affecting the town including:
  - Localised social and economic deprivation
  - The need to facilitate the restructuring and diversification of the local economy
  - Diversifying the housing stock
  - Raising educational attainment throughout the town
- 1.7.2 Although the East of England Plan has been withdrawn there are elements in



the evidence base that remain valid and relevant to Harlow. One of these is the role that housing and jobs growth can have in delivering the regeneration of the town. To help achieve this, the East of England Plan sought the provision 16,000 new homes and approximately 8,000 new jobs in the Harlow area. The Council believes that growth around this level will help provide the critical mass necessary to sustain regeneration and support infrastructure provision to help meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. The Council is seeking comments on this approach as part of this consultation.

#### 1.8 Accommodating growth

- 1.8.1 Accommodating this level of growth will be challenging given that Harlow has a tightly drawn administrative boundary. The Council will need to consider a full range of alternative options for delivering growth in and around the town and make some difficult decisions on the scale, nature and specific locations of new development.
- 1.8.2 Decisions on growth will be made with the help of a clear policy framework that sets out the broad principles for

development in and around the town. The Core Strategy, in its final form, will provide this strategic policy framework guiding future development in Harlow.

1.8.3 Development opportunities do exist within Harlow's urban area including the mixed use redevelopment in the town centre. All potential opportunities within the urban area will be explored to determine what contribution they can make to meeting the community's development needs.

> However, given the need to ensure development complements the unique character and setting of Harlow a significant proportion of new development may need to be accommodated beyond Harlow's administrative area and into parts of Epping Forest and East Hertfordshire District Councils.

To respond to this challenge Harlow, East Hertfordshire and Epping Forest District Councils had commissioned an Options Appraisal study to assist the Council(s) in making a decision on the most appropriate housing distribution in the Harlow area. Although this was originally commissioned as a response to the East of England Plan the approach used in this assessment remains valid. 1.8.4 A fuller discussion of the Council's approach to the overall level of development and change is found in Part 3 and in Part 5 where the principles to direct growth are discussed.

### 1.9 Spatial portrait -Harlow, the story so far

1.9.1 Harlow is a former New Town, conceived in the 1940's in response to post war housing need in London and the south east. Sir Frederick Gibberd was commissioned to prepare a Masterplan that would meet housing, employment, leisure and other community needs in a planned and co-ordinated way and which accorded with good practice in town planning of the day.

> A key component of the Masterplan was the creation of a number of separate neighbourhoods each with a range of community facilities including shopping centres, schools and community centres. Small shopping areas (hatches) to meet the immediate needs of residents were also provided. The neighbourhoods were to be held together by a network of landscape areas (commonly referred to as Green Wedges) that brought the countryside within easy reach of residents. The Masterplan has helped to shape Harlow's distinctive character (see page 12).





- 1.9.2 Today, Harlow benefits from its strategic location along the M11 corridor which links London, Stansted Airport and Cambridge. The town also has a presence of renowned international companies whilst maintaining links to its manufacturing and engineering past.
- 1.9.3 However, Harlow does experience some complex socio-economic and physical issues that have affected the success of the town. Industrial decline, a lack of investment and population stagnation in recent years has taken its toll. The town centre needs to be rejuvenated, a wider housing mix needs to be encouraged, the town's infrastructure needs upgrading, and an increase in the business base needs to be facilitated. All of which are necessary for changing the image and perception of Harlow. Addressing these issues will require coordinated and sustained investment in the town and its physical and social infrastructure.

#### 1.10 What the Core Strategy can do

1.10.1 The role of Spatial Planning is to address these issues by coordinating and targeting the efforts of the Council, its partners, the private and voluntary sectors through the planning system. The Core Strategy, when finalised, will

provide the overarching and long term statutory planning framework to deliver the necessary regeneration and renewal of Harlow. It will also guide future Council strategies seeking to implement specific regeneration projects such as updates to the Regeneration Strategy. It is therefore important that the Core Strategy integrates other relevant plans and strategies that have been produced or are currently being produced by the Council and its partners. This coordination will enable the effective delivery of wide ranging economic, social and environmental improvements to Harlow.



### 1.11 Relationship to other plans and strategies

1.11.1 In addition to National Policy Statements there are a range of other plans, strategies and guidance relevant to Harlow that will need to be considered. The Local Development Framework will be used as a delivery vehicle to help achieve a range of social, economic and environmental objectives set out in these plans and strategies.

# 1.11.2 County Strategies

1.11.3 The Council will have regard to the strategies prepared by Essex County Council and, where relevant to Harlow, those prepared by Hertfordshire County Council. These include the following:

# 1.11.4 Harlow Council Strategies

1.11.5 The Core Strategy will also be informed by existing strategies prepared by the Council. These include the following:



Harlow's

Local Development

Framework

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Communities

# Harlow's spatial portrait



# 2. The issues

#### 2.1 What you have been telling us so far

2.1.1 The Council commenced the preparation of the LDF with an awareness raising event at the Town Show. In addition, a number of informal consultation events and workshops have been held with representatives from the local community and other stakeholders. During these initial stages of informal consultation a number of issues have been identified. These can be summarised under the following themes that have been developed through the initial plan making process.

Placeshaping
Enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment

Housing Delivering housing at the right scale, of the right type and in the right location to meet the needs of the whole community

#### • Prosperity

Securing economic growth and regeneration in order to improve employment and educational opportunities in the town and reflect its strategic role

#### Infrastructure

Ensuring growth and regeneration is supported by appropriate levels of infrastructure provision

#### • Lifestyles

Meeting the leisure, recreational and cultural requirements of the community in a sustainable manner







# 2.2 Placeshaping

2.2.1 Harlow has a distinct character derived from the physical make up of its town centre, employment areas and residential neighbourhoods which are separated by a network of Green Wedges. This has been reflected in comments made by community and stakeholder representatives. Some of the issues identified are summarised under topic sub headings set out below.



### 2.2.2 Natural Environment and Biodiversity

- The quality of green spaces, green corridors and trees in Harlow should be maintained and protected
- The boundaries of the Green Wedges in Harlow should be re-evaluated
- The Gibberd principles are important but a rigid adherence to those principles should not be allowed to stifle regeneration
- Areas of biodiversity and wildlife importance should be protected and enhanced

### 2.2.3 Built Environment

• High quality sustainable architecture and design should be promoted

- The use of appropriate materials in development should be encouraged
- Recycling, waste facilities, energy efficiency and grey water facilities should be promoted
- Appropriate densities should be encouraged when constructing new estates
- Development should be sympathetic to the town's design, building upon the Gibberd principles
- New development should be integrated with the existing urban form
- Areas should be regenerated with new housing development
- Faith buildings should be centrally located within communities
- Safety should be a major consideration in the design of new developments
- Inappropriate development in Conservation Areas should be avoided

### 2.2.4 Accessibility/ Permeability

- Development should be designed to accommodate vehicles and provided with adequate parking
- The cycleway and footpath network should be improved, maintained and extended

# 2.2.5 Land Use

- Previously developed land should be developed before greenfield sites
- Development on floodplains needs to take full account of the issues raised by flooding, both in terms of the impact on the site, and on other land that may be affected

### 2.3 Housing



- 2.3.1 Access to good quality housing is one of the most important issues for the local community. A number of other issues have been raised and these are summarised below.
  - A range of house types, across a range of tenures, is required to meet the aspirations of all the community
  - The existing housing stock should be regenerated as necessary
  - Minimum space standards for different dwelling types should be set
  - Lifetime homes to meet the long term needs of the community should be promoted
  - There is an imbalance between the number of flats and houses built in recent years
  - Some housing densities are too high
  - Too much social housing has been provided
  - Some employment sites could be changed to residential use
  - Additional pitches should be provided for Gypsies and Travellers
  - Some homes are in multiple occupation reducing the stock of family housing
  - More flexibility is needed in the use of underused stock

- Extra care housing is needed
- New housing should meet Lifetime Homes standards
- Infrastructure should keep pace with new housing
- Greenfield development should be located in the north and east of Harlow
- 2.4 Prosperity



- 2.4.1 Prosperity is a measure of the economic well being of communities that can help provide a platform to create attractive places within which to live, work and spend leisure time. Initial consultation with community and stakeholder representatives generated a range of issues. These are summarised below.
  - The town centre should be more attractive and vibrant
  - The retail offer and choice in the town and neighbourhood centres need to be improved
  - Education, training and skills base needs to be improved in the town
  - New and diversified business opportunities should be attracted to the area
  - Diversification of employment base to create a range of employment opportunities

- Make efficient use of employment land and improve access to employment sites
- The town's major employers should be retained
- Need to encourage more business start ups
- Need to improve quality of employment space

# 2.5 Infrastructure



- 2.5.1 Infrastructure can be seen as the basic physical and organisational structures needed to ensure communities can work and function. Some of the key issues identified in initial discussions are set out below.
  - Ensure road and other infrastructure is provided to accommodate growth
  - Improve cycleway and footpath connections in the town
  - Traffic congestion in the town needs to be addressed
  - Appropriate provision for car parking in development should be made
  - Capacity on railways should be increased and access to the station improved
  - Public transport including buses needs to be provided to urban extensions and existing neighbourhoods

# 2.6 Lifestyles



2.6.1 This relates to a range of facilities and experiences that assist people within the community to live their lives. In response to initial consultation the following key issues have been identified.

# 2.6.2 Recreation, Sport, Leisure and Open Space

- Recreational facilities should be protected and enhanced
- More facilities and areas for young people should be provided
- Encourage youth to participate in leisure and recreation
- Increase school facilities to enable greater out of school activity provision
- More allotment sites should be provided to meet growing demand

# 2.6.3 Safety (Crime and Violence)

 Crime, safety and anti-social behaviour around the town should be addressed

# 2.6.4 Quality of Life

- Policies should raise the levels of aspiration within the town
- There is a need to increase the town's diversity and harness new talent and skills

- Provision of sixth form education in schools should be broadened
- Low educational attainment levels within the town needs to be addressed
- Child poverty in the town needs to be addressed

### 2.6.5 Health and Healthy Lifestyles

- Appropriate levels of primary care facilities should be provided in the town as it grows
- Healthy lifestyles should be promoted
- Quality green spaces for public health and leisure use should be protected and maintained
- Cycle track network in the town should be maintained and expanded to encourage use for transport and to promote healthy lifestyles
- Making better use of waterways should be examined
- Use of public footpaths should be promoted





# 2.6.6 Culture, Art and Entertainment

- Maintain the strong public art / cultural heritage of the town as it develops
- Enhance and promote more art, culture and entertainment facilities in the town
- Improve theatre provision for Harlow and the wider area
- Improve the evening use of the town centre by introducing more cultural and leisure activities
- 2.6.7 These reflect a range of issues that have currently been identified by the Council that will be considered during the preparation of the Core Strategy. Not all of these can be addressed through the land use planning process. It is important, however, to ensure that the relevant social, economic and environmental issues have been identified.

# 2.7 What the evidence base has been telling us

- 2.7.1 Key to developing an effective Local Development Framework is a clear understanding of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of Harlow. The Council has begun to assemble a comprehensive evidence base that consists of technical reports and studies. These have highlighted a number of issues that need to be addressed through the Core Strategy. In some instances these studies have been undertaken jointly with neighbouring councils as some issues cut across administrative boundaries. This reflects the sub regional role of Harlow which extends beyond its administrative boundaries and that some of the development options may require land in the adjoining authorities.
- 2.7.2 These studies may need to be refined and updated throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy to ensure emerging policies and proposals can be adapted to reflect changing circumstances. The following is a summary of the findings of the evidence base to date.



### 2.8 Placeshaping

2.8.1 The Core Strategy will consider and set out policies that will be used to maintain, enhance and create the physical character of the town's environment. Key issues identified from evidence base studies include the following.

# 2.8.2 Natural Environment and Biodiversity

- The Green Wedges should be strengthened in order to improve aesthetic appeal, sense of place and links to the countryside
- Adequate green spaces and associated facilities should be provided in new development, and where possible, existing landscaping should be retained. Greenfield development should seek to protect and integrate existing landscape assets
- Existing allotment sites should be protected, enhanced and extended where possible. In areas of significant growth and development new allotment sites should be provided
- New development should respect the key characteristics of the Stort Valley
- Green spaces and parks should be accessible to all and safe
- There is a need to retain, protect and enhance biodiversity. River corridors should be emphasised for habitat creation and enhancement
- There is a need to establish a strong network of multi-functional green infrastructure which supports habitats and species

• Stringent protection should be awarded to designated sites, including SSSIs, LNRs, County Wildlife Sites, Local Wildlife Sites and Living Landscape Areas

### 2.8.3 Built Environment

- The Gibberd principles should be reinforced taking into account current best practice
- Development should be distinctive to Harlow, embracing the character of the local landscape setting and the original concept of the New Town
- A strong built form and high quality townscape needs to be promoted in new development, supplemented by public art at appropriate locations
- Design should encourage surveillance
- Urban regeneration initiatives should be facilitated
- Listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments and registered parks and gardens should be conserved, enhanced and protected
- Areas of architectural significance (not covered by other designations) should be preserved and enhanced
- New development should be well integrated into its surroundings and be energy efficient where possible

### 2.8.4 Accessibility and Permeability

 Greater accessibility should be promoted in order to link urban areas with green areas within and surrounding the town

- The visual and physical links between the key areas within the town needs to be significantly improved
- Streets and spaces should be safe, attractive, active and wellconnected
- Environmental enhancements along the key gateways to the town and particularly to the town centre should be endorsed
- Access should be improved where appropriate into the Stort Valley

#### 2.8.5 Land Use

- Development should be avoided in areas identified at risk from flooding
- Flood retention and mitigation initiatives should be supported and encouraged
- Green Belt policies should be proactive for uses such as recreation, nature conservation, public access and farming



# 2.9 Housing

- 2.9.1 The provision of housing to meet the needs of the community as well as the regeneration aspirations of the town is a key element that will be considered through the preparation of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy will consider where housing should be provided to address local needs and aspirations. This has been informed by a range of technical studies. Some of the key findings of these are summarised below.
  - Provision of new homes in the Harlow area to help meet local need and help secure the regeneration and renewal of the town
  - About 35% of new dwellings should be affordable housing
  - Harlow is losing families to out migration to adjoining districts
  - Harlow has the highest proportion of people on its social housing waiting list although it has the largest social housing stock in its market area
  - There is likely to be a long term shift away from home ownership to private renting
  - The market housing requirement is for 3 bedrooms and above and the social housing requirement is for 1 to 2 bedrooms
  - Overcrowding occurs in the private rented sector in Harlow
  - There are around 5,000 dwellings identified in the town (with planning permission, allocated, or where the principle of development has been accepted)
  - Pitches to meet the specified needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community



# 2.10 Infrastructure

- 2.10.1 One of the key elements in the preparation of the Core Strategy for Harlow is the identification of infrastructure requirements that will be needed to both support growth and as well as helping address existing shortfalls of provision in the area.
- 2.10.2 Evidence collected so far suggests that a range of additional infrastructure may be required to support the growth in the Harlow area. Specific requirements would be identified, considered and consulted upon through the preparation of a subsequent Preferred Options document. Some of the key findings of the evidence base relating to infrastructure requirements are set out below:
  - Provision of multi-purpose community centres will be required to make Harlow more attractive as a place to live and work
  - Children's centres and youth facilities will be required to support the new communities being created
  - Facilities should be provided as early as possible in order to support the growth of the new communities

- Co-location of facilities should be encouraged and some need could be addressed through the expansion of existing facilities
- New primary school provision would be required in the urban extensions
- There will be a need for additional secondary schools to meet the needs of development within urban extensions
- Police, Ambulance and Fire and Rescue service provision to meet the needs of the growth requirements will need to be enhanced but this will be dependent on the nature of localised requirements within the area
- Existing health facilities coupled with programmed enhancements to provision should meet most of the additional needs from the proposed growth, however, additional health centre provision will be needed to the north of Harlow





- Additional library provision will be needed to meet the proposed growth
- Programmed improvements to indoor leisure facilities may be sufficient to meet the proposed growth, however, this will need to be monitored and reviewed to ensure that future increases in need can be properly accommodated
- A range of strategic and local road improvements will be required to address shortfalls in capacity in order to accommodate new development
- Improvements to public transport will be required including to rail and bus services in order to provide more sustainable alternatives that will address the challenges of climate change
- Measures to enhance walking and cycling opportunities that link the town centre with the station, employment areas, existing residential neighbourhoods and new areas of development should be promoted
- Water, wastewater and power supplies will need to be upgraded and, in some instances, expanded, to meet the levels of growth proposed

# 2.11 Prosperity

- 2.11.1 The studies indicate that Harlow will need to continue to improve and diversify its retail offer to ensure it maintains and strengthens its position within the regional hierarchy of town centres. There are also a number of fundamental weaknesses in the retail, commercial and leisure offer which have been identified and need to be addressed:
  - Harlow has below average provision of convenience and service units and of high quality retailers compared with the national average and competing centres in the region
  - An increase in the quantum and quality of the town centre's retail and leisure offer, along with other town centre uses, is required to reduce the proportion of shoppers and spend 'leaking' out of the district to other competing centres
  - Diversification is needed in the town centre through mix use development comprising entertainment, leisure, food, drink and residential uses to help strengthen the town's evening economy
  - Town-centre regeneration especially to the northern part of town-centre should be supported
  - Restructuring of the town-centre is needed to address service access, poor edge quality and the nature of the public realm to include possible re-introduction of through vehicle movement
  - Improvements to the public realm in the neighbourhood centres and hatches to make them more attractive to local residents and operators

- Redevelopment of the neighbourhood centres particularly Bush Fair and The Stow and the hatches to help underpin their overall vitality and viability
- 2.11.2 Before the recession Harlow had a strongly performing economy with high value industries and a productive workforce. Although the studies also show there is a high presence of knowledge intensive employees which is a key indicator of economic prosperity, there is also strong evidence that residents did not benefit from previous prosperous conditions. Findings also show that:
  - Harlow has a poorer skills profile and lower average earnings, and resident earnings are significantly below average workplace earnings in Harlow. This indicates problems in local residents getting high quality jobs and a lack of willingness of high earners to locate in the area
  - Harlow has slow employment growth in comparison to the East of England region and Essex as a county
  - Growing business sectors and firms in the East of England are not normally locating in Harlow
  - There is a need to exploit the benefits of existing economic clusters including Research and Development
  - Although there are vacant industrial and commercial buildings there is still a demand for quality and accessible industrial and commercial space
  - Harlow is not seen as a desirable office location because of the poor quality of office stock in the town and a lack of town centre amenities

- Some employment locations have poor access to infrastructure and local amenities that can reduce their attractiveness
- To meet future employment requirements land for high value and high skilled jobs will need to be allocated within and beyond Harlow District boundary

# 2.12 Lifestyles

2.12.1 Ensuring that Harlow residents have a high quality of life now and in the future is one of the key aims of the Core Strategy. This includes improving leisure and recreation opportunities, making people feel safe and promoting a healthy way of life for residents living in the town. The Core Strategy will also need to ensure that the cultural heritage of the town including its high quality public art collection is maintained and enhanced as this is one of Harlow's important features and strengths.



The key findings of the evidence base in relation to lifestyle issues are set out as follows:

# 2.12.2 Recreation, Sport, Leisure and Open Space

- Review the location and quality of existing facilities in the Town Park including cyclepaths
- Protect, enhance and extend the District's green infrastructure network
- Ensure open spaces and sport and leisure facilities are equitable, accessible to all, safe, proportional (for current and future needs) and of high quality
- Encourage access to the urban fringe and Green Belt for recreation and leisure
- Ensure that when sites for playing pitches are lost through development or closure, new facilities of an equal or improved standard are provided
- Ensure all new sports pitches include changing rooms and quality ancillary facilities
- Accommodate the provision of a modernised rugby facility in the town
- Promote the River Stort and its floodplain as areas for recreational use
- Provide more innovative play opportunities for children and young people that are within easy access (including in the Town Park and other local green spaces), and more activities and places to go for teenagers
- The town lies in a "cold spot" for theatre provision and could support a regional scale theatre

### 2.12.3 Safety (Crime and Violence)

- Address perceived safety issues in the Town Park
- Carefully design the links from open spaces to surrounding housing to reduce crime and the fear of crime

# 2.12.4 Quality of Life

- Ensure development or activities that contribute to lower air quality are not located within inappropriate locations
- Tackle the high pockets of deprivation in Harlow
- Meet the needs of the disabled population in Harlow

### 2.12.5 Health and Healthy Lifestyles

- Address health issues including a higher prevalence than the national average for all chronic diseases, significant levels of child mental health morbidity, obesity, diabetes and poor levels of healthy eating which are all worse than the national average
- Tackle low levels of physical activity in children and high levels of teenage pregnancy which are worse than the average in England
- 2.12.6 Through both the informal consultation and the ongoing development of the evidence base (listed in Appendix 2), the issues that have emerged will be taken forward and developed throughout the preparation of Core Strategy. Some of these are related directly to land use planning issues whereas others will need to be addressed through partnership with a range of other agencies and organisations.



2.12.7 It is important that the Council understands all the relevant issues affecting Harlow as these will be important in the development of alternative policy options.

# Question 1:

Do you think the Council has identified all the relevant issues that need to be addressed by the Core Strategy?

Question 2: If you disagree, what additional issues need to be considered by the Core Strategy?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.





# **3** The strategic challenge



# 3. The strategic challenge

- 3.1 This section looks at the issues identified in the previous section and pulls them together to produce a broader picture of the issues facing the town.
- 3.1.1 Harlow suffers from a range of complex and interrelated socio-economic issues that have affected the town. Continued economic restructuring has resulted in industrial decline and the loss of a number of big employers that were once the cornerstone of the town and its community. A lack of investment and population stagnation in recent years has also taken its toll. For the town to maintain its sub-regional role it needs to be an attractive location for investment. To do this the town needs to remain competitive and responsive to the evolving needs of business.
- 3.1.2 The needs and aspirations of the community have also changed since the New Town was conceived. Increased mobility and changing consumption habits have impacted on the success of neighbourhood centres and the town centre. Changing needs and aspirations have also altered the type of environment people want to live in. The Core Strategy also needs to ensure that the town is able to evolve to meet changing community needs.
- 3.1.3 It is important that the Council provides the right conditions to enable these underlying issues to be addressed.

#### 3.2 A'do nothing' approach

3.2.1 The Council could adopt a 'do nothing' approach by carrying forward the policies and plans of the existing Replacement Harlow Local Plan (adopted 2006). However, the current policies and plans would fail to provide the much needed stimulus to deliver the regeneration of the town and address the issues which have been identified so far by the community and by the evidence base. Furthermore, the current Local Plan does not provide a robust framework to coordinate investment across the town. As a result of the low level of growth proposed in this scenario Harlow would stagnate, its economy would decline and the underlying socioeconomic issues affecting the town would not be tackled.

Tackling these issues will require sustained and coordinated investment to regenerate and renew the town.

#### 3.3 Instigating change

- 3.3.1 The Council believes that there is a need for a significant increase in homes and jobs to support regeneration. Growth led regeneration will enable the town to generate the critical mass needed to attract and sustain investment ensuring Harlow secures its role as a key subregional centre. A substantial increase in growth will sustain a dynamic and vibrant town, will sustain a higher level of retail provision, will provide greater employment opportunities and cultural functions as well as supporting higher level services and facilities in health and further education.
- 3.3.2 Current research highlights that for Harlow to fulfil this role and to successfully secure the regeneration and renewal of the town an increase in economic and demographic growth and hence employment and housing growth is necessary.

#### 3.4 Overall level of growth

3.4.1 The withdrawal of the East of England Plan allows the Council, in collaboration with the wider community to reconsider the overall level of development for the district, from the bottom up. However, it is important that the Council prepares a strategy that adequately addresses the existing issues and development needs facing Harlow. The strategy for Harlow needs to include growth in housing and employment, regeneration, transportation improvements and enhancements to the green space network.

- 3.4.2 The baseline for the strategy is to ensure that the future needs of the entire community are met. This includes ensuring the necessary homes and jobs are available in the town to allow today's children and young people to live and work in the town as well as ensuring there is adequate provision of homes for the growing elderly population. It also means that a range of services and facilities that will be required to meet these needs are provided. The Council believes that providing for the current and future needs of community provides the starting point for the Core Strategy.
- 3.4.3 The evidence supporting the now withdrawn East of England Plan considered that the provision of 16,000 new homes and approximately 8,000 jobs in the Harlow area would help address the underlying issues affecting Harlow by stimulating the regeneration and renewal of the town. The Council believes that this level of growth would not only meet the needs of the existing community but help address a number of the other complex issues affecting the long term prosperity of Harlow. The Council recognises that growth is not an end in itself and needs to be linked to a range of initiatives to address economic stagnation and current social issues. However, growth can provide the much needed stimulus to propel the

regeneration and renewal of Harlow. By taking this opportunity to be bold and transformational the Council and the community can recreate the spirit on which the town was founded.

- 3.4.4 The Council also recognises that delivering growth and regeneration will be challenging. This will need to be delivered in a phased and coordinated way to ensure the appropriate and timely delivery of a range of infrastructure necessary to support growth.
- 3.4.5 These conclusions are supported by contributions and technical studies that informed the production East of England Plan as well as the technical studies that informed the Council's Regeneration and Social Inclusion Strategy. Information relating to the East of England Plan can be found on the Council's website at **www.harlow.gov.uk/planning**, following the link to 'Forward Planning' and then 'Regional Planning'. Information relating to the Regeneration and Social Inclusion Strategy can be found on the Council's website and searching 'Harlow Regeneration Strategy'.

### **Question 3:**

Would the provision of 16,000 new homes in and around Harlow meet the current needs of the local community and help secure the regeneration of Harlow?

### **Question 4:**

If you disagree/strongly disagree, what do you think the scale of growth should be, ensuring that the Core Strategy addresses the particular issues facing Harlow?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.





# 4

# The vision, themes and objectives


# 4. The vision, themes and objectives

#### 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The key to developing an effective Core Strategy is setting out a clear vision for Harlow. This will help the development of core policies and a robust delivery strategy. It needs to address the critical issues affecting the area and set out the broad strategy for addressing these issues. The overarching strategic direction for Harlow is the regeneration of the town.
- 4.1.2 This section outlines the Council's initial planning framework for the Core Strategy. The draft planning framework for Harlow consists of the vision, the themes and objectives.
- 4.1.3 The draft planning framework has been constructed on the basis of the initial consultation and frontloading exercises which have already been undertaken. However, the current vision, themes and objectives will be adapted throughout the preparation of the plan to reflect the results of ongoing consultation as well as the findings from other technical work.

#### 4.2 The vision

4.2.1 The Core Strategy will provide the spatial expression of the currently adopted Community Strategy Vision which is set out below:

"A clean, safe, sustainable and healthy town with good educational prospects for its citizens, a variety of homes and jobs to meet local needs, and a range of sporting, leisure and cultural opportunities contributing to a higher quality of life."

4.2.2 This acknowledges the need to integrate planning and community strategies and highlights the importance of the LDF to



delivering the objectives of other plans and strategies. The Community Strategy will be reviewed in 2011. The Core Strategy vision will also need to reflect the specific regeneration issues affecting the town. Some of these specific issues are set out in the Council's adopted Harlow Regeneration and Social Inclusion Strategy (2010-2015) and the Council's Corporate Plan which both take forward the Council's top corporate priority of regenerating the town. The Regeneration and Social Inclusion strategy sets out the following vision:

"Harlow as the place to choose for a better way of life and a smarter place to do business:

- a place of aspiration and a university town
- a prime business location
- a gateway to Europe
- a cultural hub and
- a sub regional centre and retail destination"

- 4.2.3 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the following priorities:
  - Regenerating the town
  - Promoting enterprise
  - Promoting a clean, green, healthy and safe environment
  - Tackling housing need and improving housing choice
  - Developing good citizenship through promoting aspiration and enabling responsibility
- 4.2.4 Copies of the Community Strategy, the Corporate Plan and the Regeneration and Social Inclusion Strategy can be found on Harlow Council's website or can be made available on request.

# **Question 5:**

Do the visions and priorities set out in the Community Strategy, the Council's Regeneration Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan provide the basis to develop the vision for Harlow's Core Strategy?

# **Question 6:**

If you disagree/strongly disagree, what do you think the vision for the Core Strategy should be based on?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

# 4.3 The strategic approach - putting the vision into practice

- 4.3.1 The next step is to develop the Core Strategy themes and objectives that will address the range of issues affecting Harlow and subsequently deliver the overarching vision for Harlow.
- 4.3.2 Although the Core Strategy will need

to be responsive to Harlow's wider role it is important that the approach developed recognises the sensitivities associated with development and change. This is particularly important given the coordination necessary between Harlow, East Herts and Epping Forest District Councils. It is important to develop a common policy approach for future development in the Harlow area. Ongoing consultation between the authorities will be important particularly as the policy approach is being finalised.

## 4.4 Identifying key themes

4.4.1 A key element in the preparation of the Core Strategy is identifying themes that reflect the broad range of issues affecting Harlow. This provides a more co-ordinated approach to the development of objectives, policies and proposals and ensures issues are effectively addressed.

> Five themes have been identified that provide the basis for the development of the spatial strategy policy options and are identified below.

- Placeshaping Enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment
- Housing Delivering housing at the right scale, of the right type and in the right location to meet the needs of the whole community
- Prosperity Securing economic growth and regeneration in order to improve employment and educational opportunities in the town and reflect its strategic role
- Infrastructure Ensuring growth and regeneration is supported by appropriate levels of infrastructure provision

 Lifestyles - Meeting the leisure, recreational and cultural requirements of the community in a sustainable manner

## **Question 7:**

Do you think the Core Strategy Themes cover the range of planning issues in Harlow?

## **Question 8:**

If you disagree/strongly disagree, what changes would you make to the Themes to ensure they address the range of planning issues in Harlow?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

# 4.5 Strategic objectives to underpin themes

4.5.1 The strategic objectives are the goals to be met over the plan period in order to help deliver the vision. They will underpin the development of policies and proposals to deliver the vision for Harlow. The objectives have been developed to address the range of issues identified within Part 2 of the document.

#### 4.5.2 Placeshaping

Enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment

- Objective 1: Protecting, enhancing and promoting access to/use of the Green Infrastructure network (including Green Wedges, landscape and sites of nature conservation importance)
- Objective 2: Creating accessible, safe and attractive public spaces
- Objective 3: Delivering high quality urban design and

architecture and protecting and enhancing buildings and places of heritage value

- **Objective 4:** Promote growth in sustainable locations
- **Objective 5:** Secure regeneration at key locations, such as the town centre and neighbourhood centres to improve environmental character and economic prosperity

#### 4.5.3 Housing

Delivering housing at the right scale, of the right type and in the right location to meet the needs of the whole community

- Objective 6: Identify sites in Harlow to meet local needs and aspirations
- Objective 7: Meeting the housing needs of the community both now and in the future
- Objective 8: Providing homes for a range of tenures
- Objective 9: Providing a range of house types
- Objective 10: Improve the quality of homes in the district
- Objective 11: Regenerating existing neighbourhoods including priority estates

#### 4.5.4 **Prosperity**

Securing economic growth and regeneration in order to improve employment and educational opportunities in the town and reflect its strategic role

Objective 12: Enhancing and reinforcing Harlow's sub regional role and improving the town's image

- Objective 13: Meeting the employment needs of the town
- Objective 14: Reinforcing Harlow's reputation as a key centre for Research and Development
- Objective 15: Enhancing and diversifying educational and skills training opportunities in the town
- Objective 16: Encourage diversification and investment in the town's employment base
- Objective 17: Regenerating the town centre and reinforcing its retail role in the wider sub region
- Objective 18: Protecting and enhancing neighbourhood centres and hatches

#### 4.5.5 Lifestyles

Meeting the leisure, recreational and cultural requirements of the community in a sustainable manner

Objective 19: Protecting and enhancing sporting, leisure and recreation opportunities

Objective 20: Provide and enhance cultural opportunities in the town

#### 4.5.6 Infrastructure

Ensuring growth and regeneration is supported by appropriate levels of infrastructure provision

Objective 21: Reduce need to travel by ensuring new development is located close to existing or new neighbourhood centres and good public transport networks

- Objective 22: Improve transport links to secure good access to a range of community facilities, neighbourhood centres, employment areas and green spaces
- Objective 23: Secure new and enhanced community infrastructure including educational facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents
- Objective 24: Enhance and promote the role of Harlow as a transport interchange along the M11
- Objective 25: Work with key providers to ensure that the infrastructure requirements to serve new development can be met
- Objective 26: Ensure new development is provided through a phased approach in order not to overload existing infrastructure capacity
- 4.5.7 At this stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy the Council is seeking views on the appropriateness of the strategic objectives to deliver the vision for Harlow.

It is important that the strategic objectives provide the appropriate framework to deliver the overarching vision for Harlow.

## **Question 9:**

Do the Strategic Objectives provide the necessary framework to deliver the regeneration of Harlow?

## **Question 10:**

If you disagree/strongly disagree, what changes would you make to the Strategic Objectives?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

#### 4.6 Linking Community Strategy and Core Strategy themes

4.6.1 The following diagram illustrates the relationship between the strategic themes in the Community Strategy and those themes emerging in the development of the Core Strategy. This ensures that the objectives and policies developed through the Core Strategy have regard to the wider community aspirations set out in the Community Strategy and provides a mechanism to address these through the LDF.





#### 4.7 Developing policies

- 4.7.1 This section sets out the Council's initial view on the possible core policy areas that could be developed to help achieve the strategic objectives described above. The core policies will guide how development and change will be managed across the District. They will also be used to develop more detailed development management policies that will be used in the assessment of planning applications.
- 4.7.2 The policies were developed in response to national planning guidance and

the identified local issues that have emerged from the consultation events and evidence base completed to date. This consultation provides the initial opportunity to comment on the proposed policy areas and inform the Council of any changes that should be considered throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy.

4.7.3 The chart above sets out the relationship between the vision, themes, objectives, policies and proposals in the Core Strategy. 4.7.4 The following tables show the themes and strategic objectives, together with potential core policy areas the Council considers need to be developed in order shape future development in the district.

Theme	Strategic objective	Policy area to be considered
<b>Placeshaping</b> Enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment	1. Protecting, enhancing and promoting access to/use of the Green Infrastructure network (including Green Wedges, landscape and sites of nature conservation importance)	<ul> <li>Designation of sites important for nature conservation purposes and biodiversity</li> <li>Define the role and function of Green Wedges</li> <li>Protection and enhancement of the setting of the River Stort and other significant landscape features</li> </ul>
	2. Creating accessible, safe and attractive public spaces	<ul> <li>Creation and enhancement of footpath and cycleway links between green spaces, adjoining neighbourhoods and the countryside</li> <li>Ensuring public spaces are safe and accessible for the community</li> <li>Promotion of Secure By Design within new development</li> <li>Promotion and integration of good quality public art within development and appropriate public spaces</li> <li>Definition and protection of the network of green spaces in the district</li> <li>Provision of new and enhancement of existing public spaces across the town</li> </ul>
	3. Delivering high quality urban design and architecture and protecting and enhancing buildings and places of heritage value	<ul> <li>Protection and enhancement of listed buildings and Conservation Areas</li> <li>Protection of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens</li> <li>Protection of the distinct architectural</li> <li>character and design of Harlow Acknowledging the role of the design</li> <li>principles established by Gibberd in securing sustainable development</li> <li>Encouraging and promoting best practice</li> <li>in the design of new buildings to include energy conservation measures, renewable energy technologies and the provision of lifetime homes</li> </ul>

Theme	Strategic objective	Policy area to be considered
		Use of appropriate materials in new buildings
		<ul> <li>Promotion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to alleviate flooding</li> </ul>
		Encourage crime prevention measures to be incorporated into the design of new development
	4. Promote growth in sustainable locations	<ul> <li>Promotion of the development of brownfield land at appropriate locations within the town</li> </ul>
		• Establish criteria to guide development to the most sustainable locations
		• Definition of the extent of the Green Belt
		<ul> <li>Avoid development in areas identified at risk from flooding and support flood retention initiatives</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Promotion of mixed use development in neighbourhood centres and, where appropriate, at hatches</li> </ul>
	5. Secure regeneration at key locations, such as the town centre and neighbourhood	Promoting urban renewal measures to secure regeneration within the town
	centres, to improve environmental character and economic prosperity	<ul> <li>Promotion of the regeneration of the town centre, neighbourhood centres and priority estates</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Provision of appropriate mechanisms to secure funding to assist regeneration</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b> Delivering housing at the right	6. Identify sites in Harlow to meet local needs and	• Provision of housing to meet local needs and aspirations
scale, of the right type and in the right location to meet the	aspirations	Indication of location of growth
needs of the whole community		• Ensuring infrastructure provision keeps pace with house completions
		<ul> <li>Where possible build on previously developed land first (sequential approach)</li> </ul>
		• At appropriate locations regenerate existing residential areas to improve the quality and supply of housing
	7. Meeting the housing needs of the community both now and in the future	<ul> <li>Provision of affordable housing to meet Harlow's needs now, and in the future reflecting the viability of sites</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Provision for elderly and disabled people and other special needs housing</li> </ul>

Theme	Strategic objective	Policy area to be considered
		Provision of additional pitches for Gypsies     and Travellers
	8. Providing homes for a range of tenures	<ul> <li>Addressing issues associated with dwellings in multiple occupation</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Securing a mix of housing tenures to reflect Harlow's current and future needs</li> </ul>
	9. Providing a range of house types	<ul> <li>Ensuring new housing development provides a range of dwelling types to cater for all the community</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Making the best use of land by developing minimum density requirements</li> </ul>
	10. Improve the quality of homes in the district	<ul> <li>New development in existing areas to reflect the character of the area</li> </ul>
		Provision of Lifetime Homes
		• Ensure all homes are built in accordance with the "Building for Life" criteria
		<ul> <li>Ensure all homes are built in accordance with the "Code for Sustainable Homes" criteria</li> </ul>
	11. Regenerating existing neighbourhoods including	<ul> <li>Identification of areas that are a priority for regeneration</li> </ul>
	priority estates	<ul> <li>Provision of a planning policy framework to support regeneration initiatives within the town</li> </ul>
<b>Prosperity</b> Securing economic growth and regeneration in order to	12. Enhancing and reinforcing Harlow's sub regional role and improving the town's image	<ul> <li>Develop and diversify the role of Harlow as a gateway to Europe and as a major location for employment, retail and leisure</li> </ul>
<i>improve employment and educational opportunities in the town and reflect its</i>		• Reinforce the role of the Town Centre as a major destination
strategic role		<ul> <li>Preparation of Area Action Plans and/or development briefs to reinforce the role and viability of neighbourhood centres</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Promotion of mixed use development and higher densities within and around existing centres</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Securing environmental improvements around neighbourhood centres including upgrades to the public realm</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Restructuring the town centre to create permeability across town-centre and</li> </ul>

Theme	Strategic objective	Policy area to be considered
		linkages with other centres
		<ul> <li>Improving the quality of employment space</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Promoting enterprise and business start ups</li> </ul>
	13. Meeting the employment needs of the town	Promotion of Harlow as a strategic     employment location
		<ul> <li>Identification of new employment areas to meet current and future needs</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Retaining existing employment sites in their existing uses</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Provision of a range of sites to meet employment needs</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Enhancing transport linkages and other infrastructure to support business development</li> </ul>
	14. Reinforcing Harlow's reputation as a key centre for Research and Development	<ul> <li>Securing investment by strengthening and identifying opportunities for growth in the town</li> </ul>
		• Facilitating research and development and growth at appropriate locations
	15. Enhancing and diversifying	Promotion of Harlow as a university town
	educational and skills training opportunities in the town	<ul> <li>Facilitate and support the expansion of existing and the provision of new educational facilities in the town</li> </ul>
		• Recognising the links between the further education and emerging sectors to meet the future skill requirements of employers
	16. Encourage diversification and investment in the towns employment base	<ul> <li>Identification of locations within the existing town and urban extensions to attract new employment opportunities to the town</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>Promote mixed use development at appropriate location</li> </ul>
	17. Regenerating the town	• Defining key retail areas within the town
	centre and reinforcing its retail role in the wider sub-region	Identify sites in the town centre to     accommodate new retail development
		<ul> <li>Recognising the role other uses can play in reinforcing and adding vitality to the primary retail function of the town centre</li> </ul>

Theme	Strategic objective	Policy area to be considered
	18. Protecting and enhancing neighbourhood centres and hatches	<ul> <li>Protecting and reinforcing primary, secondary and specialist retail areas in the town, neighbourhood centres and hatches</li> </ul>
<b>Lifestyles</b> <i>Meeting the leisure,</i> <i>recreational and cultural</i> <i>requirements of the</i> <i>community in a sustainable</i> <i>manner</i>	19. Protecting and enhancing sporting, leisure and recreation opportunities	<ul> <li>Ensure adequate provision of facilities for formal and informal recreation in new and existing developments which are accessible</li> <li>Provision of public spaces for events and other community uses</li> <li>Protecting and enhancing allotment provision at appropriate locations</li> <li>Create, protect and enhance green space provision in the town, in particular, improvements to the Town Park</li> <li>Enhance the setting of and access to waterways and ponds in particular the River Stort</li> </ul>
	20. Provide and enhance cultural opportunities in the town	<ul> <li>River stort</li> <li>Provide a comprehensive range of social and recreational facilities for young people in new developments</li> <li>Ensure new community facilities are flexibly designed to accommodate a broad range of activities and are accessible to all</li> <li>Secure appropriate developer contributions for public art and entertainment provision in new developments</li> <li>Secure the retention of cultural and entertainment facilities in the town, including a new theatre</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b> Ensuring growth and regeneration is supported by appropriate levels of infrastructure provision	21. Reduce need to travel by ensuring new development is located close to existing or new neighbourhood centres and good public transport networks	<ul> <li>Consider the location of new development in a sequential manner</li> <li>Addressing traffic congestion in the town</li> <li>Make appropriate provision for car parking in development</li> <li>Enhancing public transport provision to meet the needs of the community</li> </ul>

Theme	Strategic objective	Policy area to be considered
	22. Improve transport links to secure good access to a range of community facilities, neighbourhood centres, employment areas and green spaces	<ul> <li>Improving bus, cycleway and footpath links in the town</li> <li>Encourage provision of community facilities on good transport corridors</li> </ul>
	23. Secure new and enhanced community infrastructure including educational facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents	<ul> <li>Ensuring new development is supported by a range of infrastructure including education, health, social and other uses to meet community needs</li> <li>Securing developer contributions for infrastructure provision</li> <li>Ensure there is appropriate provision of primary care and public health facilities</li> <li>Support the expansion of health facilities in existing health centres</li> </ul>
	24. Enhance and promote the role of Harlow as a transport interchange along the M11	<ul> <li>Securing improvements to rail and bus capacity to meet existing and future needs</li> <li>Refurbishment and/or redevelopment of the rail and bus stations</li> <li>Ensuring strategic and other road capacity can meet future development requirements of the town</li> <li>Enhancement of public transport and cycleway links to rail and bus stations</li> </ul>
	25. Work with key providers to ensure that the infrastructure requirements to serve new development can be met	<ul> <li>Development of policies and initiatives to secure the provision of planned infrastructure</li> <li>Promotion of innovative transport measures such as Travel Plans</li> </ul>
	26. Ensure new development is provided through a phased approach in order not to overload existing infrastructure capacity	<ul> <li>Development of phasing policies</li> <li>Delivery of mechanisms to secure provision</li> <li>Encouraging partnership working to prioritise delivery and funding</li> </ul>

- 4.7.5 The Council would like to hear views on the potential core policy areas outlined to date as well as any additional policy areas that have been missed. It is important that the Council develops policies that cover the range of issues affecting Harlow as these policies will guide the future development across the District.
- 4.7.6 Once the Council has established what issues need to be addressed it will use future consultation opportunities to present more details on the alternative policy options available to address the range of issues that have been identified.

### **Question 11:**

Do you think the policy areas identified cover the range of issues that are relevant to the regeneration of Harlow?

Question 12: If you disagree/strongly disagree, what changes would you make to the policy areas?





# 5 Guiding future development



Harlow's Local Development Framework

# 5. Guiding future development

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section of the Issues and Options document seeks your feedback on a number of issues that will help to inform the ongoing preparation of the Core Strategy, particularly the principles that should direct new development. It is important to note that the Council is at the beginning of the plan making process and as such there may be other options available to address the issues facing Harlow.
- 5.1.2 The regeneration of the town is a key corporate priority and the Council strongly believes that investment and growth will be the catalyst for delivering this regeneration and renewal.
- 5.1.3 To deliver this there will be a need to provide a range of housing, employment and community uses along with appropriate services and facilities. This will need to be supported by a range of infrastructure, including health care, education facilities and improvements to transportation. However, regeneration will not be delivered simply by building, there needs to be a coordinated effort to address a range of underlying socioeconomic issues affecting the area.



#### 5.2 Growth principles

5.2.1 To deliver the Council's overarching objectives for Harlow new development should maximise wider regeneration goals. The Council believes that this guiding principle will ensure the Core Strategy effectively delivers the vision and strategic objectives for the District

## **Question 13:**

Do you agree that new development should be directed to areas that will maximise regeneration of the town?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

5.2.2 As the Core Strategy develops the Council will set out in more detail the principles for directing development across the district.

#### 5.3 Existing capacity

- 5.3.1 The Council has identified approximately 5,000 dwellings within Harlow's existing urban boundary. This figure consists of:
  - Allocated housing sites where planning permission has been granted
  - Unallocated housing sites where planning permission has been granted
  - Allocated housing sites contained in the 2006 Local Plan which are awaiting planning applications
  - Sites where the principle of development has been accepted

5.3.2 The Council will also consider other opportunities to maximise the use of land within the 'Urban Area Boundary' through selective renewal, and by examining the role and function of other land before looking to release land in the Green Belt. A definition of the 'Urban Area Boundary' can be found in Appendix 1. Possible development opportunities within the 'Urban Area Boundary' will be discussed in more detail below.

#### 5.4 Density

5.4.1 There may be opportunities to increase the densities in certain parts of the town, particularly in areas that benefit from good access to passenger transport and have good access to a range of services and facilities. Increasing densities helps to inject vitality to an area as well as supporting shops and services. Improvements in design mean that density can be increased without detracting from the existing visual character of the area. Furthermore, increasing densities within the urban area boundary could minimise the amount of other open land, including the Green Belt, required to meet the development needs of the community.

### **Question 14:**

Please rank, in order of priority, where you think higher densities of development should go within the District.

- (1 = highest priority, 5 = lowest priority)
- Around public transport hubs (railway station, bus station and bus stops)
- At appropriate locations within neighbourhood areas
  Hatches
- Neighbourhood Centres
- Within the Town Centre



#### 5.5 Other opportunities within the town

- 5.5.1 It is important that the Council carefully considers all possible options for locating new development within the 'Urban Area Boundary'. This includes assessing the role and function of open spaces and other areas of undeveloped land to determine whether there are any areas that no longer meet the needs of the community and could be released for a range of alternative uses. It is important to note that the Council has not made any decisions on the use of land and wishes to hear the views of the community and other stakeholders before developing options further. These discussions will give the Council a better understanding of what particular assets should be protected, what assets could be enhanced and what assets no longer meet the changing needs of the community and could be released for other uses. The definitions of Open Spaces can be found in Appendix 1.
- 5.5.2 Ultimately, the outcome of these discussions will enable the Council to determine the scale of any future releases of the Green Belt necessary to accommodate the town's development needs.



Question 15: Should the Council consider underused open spaces and other undeveloped land for development before considering releasing land in the Green Belt?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

#### 5.6 Green Wedges

5.6.1 The development of Harlow and its distinctive visual character has been shaped by its Green Wedges. These comprise a network of green spaces, generally free of buildings, except for school and leisure buildings, and contain space for formal and informal leisure activities, landscaped and wooded areas, sites of nature conservation importance, agricultural land and other predominantly open space uses.

> The Green Wedges also serve as green access corridors, containing footpaths and cycleways, linking the town centre, employment areas and residential neighbourhoods as well as the town's roads. They are widely regarded as a valued and important amenity within the town.

5.6.2 The preparation of the Core Strategy provides an opportunity to review the role and function of Green Wedges to ensure they remain relevant to Harlow's current and future needs. It also gives the opportunity to set out how Green Wedges should be recognised in shaping future growth in the area.

# **Question 16:**

The Green Wedges have performed a variety of roles in shaping Harlow. Should the roles of Green Wedges be reviewed to meet future development needs in the Harlow area?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

#### 5.7 Other proposals

- 5.7.1 The Council has a number of strategic initiatives that are central to the regeneration of the town. These include the regeneration of the town centre and the continued redevelopment of existing Neighbourhood Centres and Priority Estates. Proposals for the redevelopment of the Town Centre North will be developed throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy and will form a key component of the final strategy.
- 5.7.2 The Council will maximise the potential of these initiatives to deliver a range of benefits to Harlow, revitalising these areas and providing additional homes.

#### 5.8 Urban extensions

5.8.1 It is unlikely all Harlow's future development needs will be met through the options described above. Additional housing and land for other uses will need to be accommodated through urban extensions. A careful balance will need to be struck between delivering development to meet community needs and to sustain regeneration whilst recognising environmental assets and the town's setting in the Green Belt. Potential approaches are discussed in Part 6.

# Question 17:

Please rank, in order of priority, the most important things that you think should direct new development in and around Harlow

- (1 = highest priority, 8 = lowest priority)
- Areas with good access to public transport and other services and facilities
- Developing underused green spaces
- Maximising the use of previously developed land
- Meeting regeneration goals
- Protecting Green Wedges
- Protecting important landscapes
- Protecting the Green Belt
- Where there is existing infrastructure capacity

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

#### 5.9.1 Employment

Regenerating the town requires more than just housing. As mentioned there are complex socio-economic factors involved that require addressing. These include improving employment opportunities, enhancing the town's retail offer and addressing health and education issues.

- 5.9.2 Providing for a substantial increase in employment opportunities would assist regeneration objectives and secure growth in key sectors and clusters. The town has a number of opportunities to capitalise on growing and emerging industries. The location of Stansted Airport and the position of the town on the M11 corridor are key strengths. It is important that Harlow remains competitive, responds to changing market demands and capitalises on emerging sectors.
- 5.9.3 Harlow currently has five significant employment sites, Templefields, Pinnacles, Edinburgh Way, Bush Fair/

Staple Tye and the Town Centre. Whilst all are well established and meet a range of different roles in the local economy, they have reached a stage where some form of intervention may be required to enable them to reach their full potential and adapt to changing economic structures and business needs. For example some sites have deteriorated and are no longer attracting the level of investment needed to sustain the town. It is important that the town's employment land remains attractive to investors.

- 5.9.4 The evidence base studies prepared so far indicate Harlow has a good supply of employment land. However, the Council is considering what impact the regeneration and economic development objectives will have on this assessment. The Council may also need to review the role and function of existing employment sites to ensure that the Council's regeneration and economic development goals are achieved.
- 5.9.5 The Core Strategy will need to ensure that the existing employment sites are responsive to changing economic

patterns and business needs. As such the Council will consider the role, function and location of future employment land.

- 5.9.6 Consequently, areas of search to accommodate new employment may need to be identified. Options include locations:
  - within existing employment areas and those identified in the Adopted Local Plan
  - within the urban extensions being considered to accommodate growth in the area
  - identification of new employment areas at appropriate locations
  - the promotion of live-work units at appropriate locations
  - a combination of these approaches
  - within existing employment areas and within urban extensions.
- 5.9.7 The diagram below shows the current broad locations of employment sites in the town:



#### Harlow's Local Development Framework

## **Question 18:**

Do the existing employment areas meet current and future employment needs?

## **Question 19:**

If you disagree/strongly disagree, please explain what changes you think should be made to Harlow's employment areas?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

#### 5.10 Retailing

5.10.1 The Core Strategy will consider the role and function of the town's retail centres at all scales (including the Town Centre, Edinburgh Way, Neighbourhood Centres and Hatches).

> The Core Strategy will define the role of these centres so that they can continue to meet the changing needs of the community as well as contributing to the regeneration of the town.

- 5.10.2 The Town Centre should remain the main focus for retail development and initiatives to regenerate and improve the retail offer of the Town Centre are essential to its success and will be supported. The retail core of centres will be reinforced through the identification of primary and secondary frontages.
- 5.10.3 Edinburgh Way is a significant out of town retail destination. The Core Strategy will need to consider the role of this centre particularly given the proposals to regenerate the Town Centre and Neighbourhood Centres.







Question 20: How do you think Harlow Council should shape future shopping development within the town?

# Harlow's Local Development Framework



# 6 Spatial options for growth around harlow



Harlow's Local Development Framework

# 6. Spatial options for growth around harlow

#### 6.1 Identifying potential areas of search

- 6.1.1 One of the requirements of Policy HA1 of the now withdrawn East of England Plan was for Harlow, Epping Forest and East Hertfordshire District Councils to appraise the possible growth options around the town. Consultants Scott Wilson were appointed to undertake this work. The main aims of the study were for the Consultant to:
  - 1. Identify sustainable locations for growth and new Green Belt areas
  - 2. Provide evidence of spatial options for growth
  - 3. Inform the scale and phasing of growth
  - 4. Provide a framework for on-going planning, monitoring and management
- 6.1.2 The study sought to identify the most appropriate location for 11,000 new homes through urban extensions due to the requirements of the now withdrawn Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The study assumed that this housing growth would be delivered by 2021.
- 6.1.3 Although the report was required by the East of England Plan the Council believes that the assessment remains relevant and informative for the purposes of examining a range of alternative options for accommodating growth that may be required around Harlow. However, it should be noted that the Options Appraisal is the view of Scott Wilson and is a technical study which forms part of the LDF Evidence Base.

A full copy of the report can be obtained from **www.harlow.gov.uk/ldf** (follow link to 'Evidence Base'). 6.1.4 The Scott Wilson study states that should opportunities for further development within Harlow's boundary arise, then there could be a reduction in the extent of urban extensions in the Green Belt (see part 5 of this document).

#### 6.2 Harlow Options Appraisal methodology

6.2.1 The methodology used by the consultant can be split into two stages. During the first stage, the consultant sought to identify potentially 'developable land' and generate different spatial options. During the second stage, the consultant tested each spatial option in order to determine how realistic and sustainable the options were. Following this assessment the consultant was able suggest whether or not each option was reasonable and to produce a suggested spatial approach.

#### 6.3 Generating spatial options

- 6.3.1 The Consultant divided the land surrounding Harlow into 32 Spatial Land Areas. Spatial Land Areas were designed so that they were smaller than Council wards but were sufficiently small to be analysed in sufficient detail. Of these Spatial Land Areas, 10 are in Harlow, 10 in East Hertfordshire and 12 in Epping Forest.
- 6.3.2 To establish the amount of 'developable land' in each Spatial Land Area, consultants first excluded all urban areas, employment areas, national and local nature and wildlife designations and areas in Flood Zone 3.
- 6.3.3 The Consultant then tested the remaining developable land in each Spatial Land Area against a criteria based on a range of transport,

environmental and regeneration related issues. From this assessment, the consultant developed the following spatial options:

Option A - RSS: Northern-led

Option B - Policy-led 2

Option C – Combined criteria-led

**Option D** – Regeneration-led

Option E – Sustainable transport-led

#### 6.4 Testing spatial options

- 6.4.1 In accordance with guidance on testing spatial options produced by the Planning Advisory Service each spatial option underwent a Reasonableness Test and a Sustainability Test. The Reasonableness Test involved establishing whether the option is realistic and can be genuinely implemented in practice. In assessing the reasonableness of spatial options, the following questions were asked:
  - 1. Will the implementation of the option assist in fulfilling the objectives of the plan (East England Plan)?
  - 2. Where may the necessary resources come from to deliver the option?
  - 3. Will there be sufficient time within the plan period to implement the option?
  - 4. Is there an acceptable risk that the option might not be fully implemented for one reason or another?
  - 5. Is the option sufficiently flexible to accommodate changing circumstances?
  - 6. Does the option generally conform to national policy and the RSS?
- 6.4.2 During the Sustainability Test each option was assessed in order to determine the likely positive and negative sustainability effects. This

process complements but does not replace the full Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy Issues and Options document. The Spatial Options were assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options.

### 6.5 The withdrawal of the Regional Spatial Strategy

6.5.1 When the study was produced there was a statutory requirement for spatial options to be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy. As a result, each option was assessed against this requirement. Some options did not satisfy this requirement and scored negatively as a result. However, the withdrawal of the Regional Spatial Strategy means that the Council is reconsidering the appropriateness of all options, including the consultants' suggested approach. The Council has decided to consult on the range of spatial options produced by the consultant in order to ensure all the potential approaches that could be used to meet Harlow's development needs are considered.

#### 6.6 Infrastructure requirements

6.6.1 The Council is at an early stage in the production of the Core Strategy and as such does not yet have a complete picture of the specific infrastructure requirements needed to support the individual growth options.

The Council is continuing to gather this information and will present this alongside the Preferred Option(s). This work not only covers the transportation needs but also includes a range of other physical and social infrastructure including open space, utilities and services.

#### 6.7 Harlow spatial options

#### 6.7.1 Option A – RSS: Northern-led



Please note distributions of development are purely illustrative. Source: Scott Wilson Consultants.

6.7.2 This approach is based on requirements set out in the now withdrawn Policy HA1 of the East of England Plan. This places the bulk of growth to the north of Harlow together with some growth to the east and smaller elements to the south and west. The larger distribution to the north with the smaller distributions in the other locations would avoid coalescence with Sawbridgeworth and other smaller settlements.

#### **Consultant's findings:**

6.7.3 The Consultant's suggested that this is not a reasonable option as there is an unacceptable risk that it would not be delivered during the plan period. This is largely a reflection of the constraints imposed by such high levels of development to the north of Harlow and the key transport infrastructure required to deliver the scale of growth in this location. The Consultant's considered that there would be insufficient time available for the transport infrastructure required for this spatial option to be delivered.

Question 21: What is your view on the consultant's recommendations regarding Option A?

#### 6.7.4 Option B – Policy-led 2



Please note distributions of development are purely illustrative. Source: Scott Wilson Consultants.

6.7.5 This approach reflects the broad directional and distributional elements of the growth requirements set out in the withdrawn policy HA1 of the East of England Plan, as described above, but does not focus the bulk of the new housing provision to the north of Harlow. Instead it provides an opportunity to examine the relative opportunities and constraints associated with a number of potential alternative locations around Harlow but which still reflect the general overall approach set out in the guidance of the now withdrawn policy. The scale of development in this location would ensure that the prominent ridgeline to the south of Harlow is not breached.

#### **Consultant's findings:**

6.7.6 The Consultant's suggested that this would be a reasonable option if

lower levels of housing growth were prescribed for the area west of Harlow with greater growth explored to the east and south.

6.7.7 The Consultant's suggested that a proportionate distribution between the locations to the north and south may help provide sufficient critical mass to assist the regeneration of the town. The smaller growth distributions to the south and west may assist regeneration initiatives in adjoining neighbourhoods to the south of Harlow. However, the consultant did express concern that significant housing development to the south in close proximity to Junction 7 of the M11 may encourage private car use.

# **Question 22:**

What is your view on the consultant's recommendations regarding Option B?

#### 6.7.8 Option C – Combined criteria-led



Please note distributions of development are purely illustrative. Source: Scott Wilson Consultants.

6.7.9 This approach is based on an assessment of a range of specific environmental criteria including Green Belt, landscape sensitivity, flood zones, regeneration objectives and transport accessibility but disregards the specific strategic directions for growth set out in the withdrawn East of England Plan. This distribution focuses on locations to the east of Harlow as the main area of search with less development to the south and west.

#### **Consultant's findings:**

- 6.7.10 The Consultants suggested this is not a reasonable option, primarily because it did not conform to the Regional Spatial Strategy. In particular, the spatial option does not include an extension to the north. The Consultants also questioned whether the spatial option would contribute towards regeneration and sustainable transport objectives.
- 6.7.11 They considered that situating significant numbers of new dwellings close to Junction 7 of the M11 would encourage private car use within an area unable to cope with increased traffic without a southern bypass. The consultant also concluded that significant levels of development to the south could increase traffic levels along Southern Way and effectively undermine neighbourhood renewal plans at this location. Growth to the south could impact on the ridgeline that provides a southern edge and setting for the town.

# Question 23: What is your view on the consultant's recommendations regarding Option C?

#### 6.7.12 Option D – Regeneration-led



Please note distributions of development are purely illustrative. Source: Scott Wilson Consultants.

6.7.13 An alternative approach examined the identification of areas of search and distribution of new housing based upon securing the greatest potential regeneration benefits for locations within Harlow. This again focused on growth to the north of Harlow but with smaller but similar distributions to the east and south with a small amount to the west.

#### **Consultant's findings:**

- 6.7.14 The Consultant's suggested that this option is not considered a reasonable option due to transport and sewerage constraints associated with high levels of development to the north. As a result, the consultant concluded that there is an unacceptable risk that the option might not be fully implemented.
- 6.7.15 The Consultants also suggested that the limited capacity for the local road

network to the south of Harlow to accommodate the levels of growth prescribed for this option may not be feasible unless a southern bypass or an extremely innovative solution to transport could be provided.

6.7.16 The Consultant also questioned whether the scale of development to the east would be of sufficient size to bring forward a new link road providing access to an M11 junction to the north west of Harlow.

# Question 24: What is your view on the consultant's recommendations regarding Option D?





Please note distributions of development are purely illustrative. Source: Scott Wilson Consultants.

6.7.18 This approach is based upon the identification of potential broad locations for new housing and distributions based upon areas that can benefit from existing or enhanced transport provision. This focuses growth to the east of Harlow with smaller distributions to the west and north. It shows distributions that have sufficient critical mass that would support regeneration and the provision of key infrastructure close to existing rail stations together with enhancement of cycleways and footpath links.

#### **Consultant's Findings:**

6.7.19 The Consultants suggested that this option is not a reasonable option primarily in light of transport and sewerage constraints associated with high levels of development allocated to urban extensions in the northern half of Harlow's urban fringe. As a result, the Consultants suggested that there is an unacceptable risk that the option might not be fully implemented. The Consultants also raised concern that this option could also lead to coalescence between Harlow and Roydon.

# Question 25: What is your view on the consultant's recommendations regarding Option E?



#### 6.7.20 The Consultants' suggested approach

Please note distributions of development are purely illustrative. Source: Scott Wilson Consultants.

6.7.21 Having examined the range of potential options as described previously and assessed their implications against socio-economic and environmental considerations, the Consultant's suggested the spatial approach (above) to accommodate housing growth around the town.

# **Question 26:**

What is your view on the consultant's suggested approach to accommodating growth around Harlow?

**Question 27:** Doyou have any other comments on the approach to growth around Harlow?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

6.7.22 Once the overall level of growth in the district has been established the Council will use the information in the Options Appraisal, alongside the views of the wider community and other evidence, to set out the overarching principles for accommodating growth in and around the town. The Council will set out its preferred approach in subsequent drafts of the Core Strategy.

Once the Core Strategy has confirmed the broad approach to growth and the key delivery mechanisms (including infrastructure provision) the details of growth will be set out in a separate Development Plan Document. Any urban extension(s) will need to deliver a range other uses and infrastructure to support the new community uses including open space, education and health facilities.





# 7 Developing a delivery strategy



Harlow's Local Development Framework

# 7. Developing a delivery strategy

### 7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 A key element of the Core Strategy will be the identification of a delivery and implementation strategy which outlines what key infrastructure is needed to support the Core Strategy, when this will be delivered and who will deliver it. The Council appointed a consultant to prepare the Harlow Infrastructure Study in order to examine the scale, phasing and timing of the delivery of infrastructure to underpin the Core Strategy. This work will need to be refined in line with the continued preparation of the Core Strategy.
- 7.1.2 Infrastructure does not just relate to transport but to the range of other facilities necessary to support the needs of the community. The work to date has identified the following key pieces of infrastructure necessary to support the growth proposed for the area:
  - Road transport New road links and improved junction arrangements could include a road link and new junction on the M11 to serve development to the north of Harlow
  - Public transport Enhanced rail and bus services to serve the Harlow area including new bus lanes and improvements to Harlow Mill and Town stations to enhance capacity
  - Cycleway/footpaths New and enhanced links to serve new and existing development throughout the town
  - Education provision Expansion of existing and provision of new schools in the Harlow area
  - Health Expansion of existing and provision of new centres where appropriate

- Green Infrastructure -Improvements and enhancements to the network at all scales to meet future needs
- Social/Community Making provision to reflect Harlow's age distribution, educational needs and health care needs
- Utilities Enhancements to existing and provision of new facilities to meet water supply, waste water and energy supply requirements
- Waste management Making appropriate provision to meet the needs of the growth requirements for the area
- 7.1.3 These will need to be considered against the background of the Council's other strategic objectives and refined as the Core Strategy develops.

#### 7.2 Securing provision

- 7.2.1 Working in partnership with key stakeholders the Council will examine a range of measures including; bidding for funding from appropriate sources, the introduction of tariffs linked to the grant of planning permission for new development, and secured by appropriate legal agreements together with developing the role of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 7.2.2 A tariff based approach would reflect the specific requirements of stakeholders, and will be directly related to the additional infrastructure identified as necessary to serve new development. This approach would be developed through a Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations which will be published for consultation. It can also provide developers and stakeholders with a greater degree of certainty.

7.2.3 The ability to secure appropriate funding will be influenced by the performance of the wider economy. The economic downturn will have a major impact on the availability of funding to secure infrastructure provision. The Council will need to prioritise the infrastructure projects that are key to unlocking development potential and delivering regeneration in Harlow.

## **Question 28:**

Do you think all the key elements of infrastructure necessary to support the emerging Core Strategy have been identified?

#### **Question 29:**

If no, what additional infrastructure do you think is needed to support the emerging Core Strategy?

To respond please use the separate Issues and Options consultation questionnaire.

7.2.4 Harlow is well served by the strategic road network (M11 and M25) providing good access to London, Cambridge and beyond. However, the roads in and around Harlow do experience chronic congestion during peak times. There are a number of factors contributing to congestion which include relatively high car ownership, large commuting flows and a number of other local factors. For example, the strategic road system has evolved quite differently from that envisaged in the Gibberd Masterplan. Furthermore, the original structure and circulation system of the new town is ill adapted to today's traffic. The self contained and isolated nature of the different uses (i.e. neighbourhood areas, employment areas and the town centre) make quick and easy movement

across the town difficult, particularly for pedestrians. The railway stations are also situated in the northern part of the town and are not easily accessible to large parts of the population. Congestion in some parts of the town is also exacerbated by conflicts between users, particularly HGVs and cars along Edinburgh Way.

- 7.2.5 It is vital that the Council understands the existing transportation issues in Harlow and also how these issues are likely to change in the future. This is particularly important given the scale of development and change being discussed. Without a coordinated approach to addressing these transportation issues the successful regeneration of Harlow could be affected.
- 7.2.6 The Council would like your views on the measures it should explore to tackle congestion in Harlow.

#### **Question 30:**

### Please rank, in order of priority, how Harlow Council should tackle Harlow's congestion problems

- (1 = highest priority, 9 = lowest priority)
- Encourage use of public transport for work and leisure (Travel Planning)
- Improve access to the town centre by sustainable modes of transport (cycle/bus)
- Improve connections from Harlow to the Strategic Road Network (M11, A414)
- Improve walking and cycling routes within the town
- Manage future parking provision across the town
- Measures to improve traffic flow along strategic routes and at roundabouts within the town
- Public transport improvements
- Rail enhancements
- Other, please state below

#### 7.3 Monitoring framework

- 7.3.1 Monitoring plays a crucial role in the overall planning process assessing the implementation and effectiveness of policies and proposals in delivering the plan's strategic objectives. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will be the main mechanism for assessing the performance and effectiveness of the LDF. A set of indicators and targets are developed for each strategic objective and will link to Sustainability Appraisal objectives in order to identify the significant effects of policy implementation. If, as a result of monitoring, areas are identified where a policy is not working, or key policy targets are not being met, this may give rise to a review of some elements of the Core Strategy or other parts of the LDF.
- 7.3.2 Different types of indicators will fulfil different tasks in the monitoring framework:
  - **Core Indicators** a group of indicators set nationally for all local authorities to provide data in a consistent format
  - Local Indicators selected to complement the information provided by Core Indicators and highlight key issues in Harlow
  - Contextual Indicators show the baseline position of the wider social, environmental and economic circumstances against which the policies operate
  - Significant Effect Indicators assess the effects of the adopted policies against the sustainability appraisal targets

- 7.3.3 Monitoring housing development progress is a key factor. A framework will be put in place to implement a 'plan, monitor, and manage' approach and coordinated with the adjoining districts. This framework will ensure that housing can be implemented at the required pace and ensure that regeneration and growth are balanced and sustainable.
- 7.3.4 Infrastructure provision will be monitored and linked to the housing monitoring framework, to help reinforce the importance of infrastructure provision being provided in a timely fashion.

Question 31: Do you have any further comments to make, at this stage, on how Harlow should be developed?





# Appendices



Harlow's Local Development Framework

# **Appendix 1 - Glossary**

**Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** = Monitoring report recording the delivery of policies in the adopted plan.

**Brownfield land** = Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

**CIL** = Community Infrastructure Levy, a charge placed on developers to fund infrastructure in an area.

**Critical mass** = Provision of a sufficient quantity of something (i.e. development) that could support a venture (i.e. the provision of new infrastructure).

**DPD** = Development Plan Document, the documents that the Council must prepare which outline the key development goals of the district's Local Development Framework.

**Evidence base** = A range of technical reports and studies that have been or are being prepared to support the policies and proposals being developed in the Local Development Framework.

**Green Belt** = A national planning designation aimed at preventing urban sprawl and keeping land open.

**Green Wedge** = Areas of land kept generally open in nature that separate the neighbourhood areas. The land covered by the Green Wedge designation provides a number of leisure, recreational and biodiversity functions.

**Hatch** = A small collection of shops within neighbourhood areas providing 'top up' shopping needs.

**LDF** = Local Development Framework, collection of documents that will form the statutory planning framework for Harlow.

**Open Space** = These are defined in Planning Policy Guidance 17 as parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural greenspace, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, amenity greenspace, provision for children and teenagers, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas and civic spaces.

**SCI** = Statement of Community Involvement, a document explaining to stakeholders and the community how they will be involved in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

**Sustainable Drainage Systems** = Management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable fashion than some conventional techniques.

**Sustainability Appraisal** = A statutory assessment undertaken on Core Strategies and DPDs to identify and evaluate the impacts of a plan on the community, economy and environment.

**Urban Area Boundary** = This refers to all land in the District that is not designated as Green Belt. It includes both developed and undeveloped land.

**Urban extensions** = An extension of the existing built up area that provides sufficient critical mass to support a range of new infrastructure.

The Council has assembled a range of information to inform the preparation of its Local Development Framework. These documents form part of the evidence base and are available on the Council's website **www.harlow.gov/ldf** 

#### LDF Evidence Base

1.	Harlow Area Study - Masterplanning Principles and Sustainability Criteria (2005)
2.	Desmoulin Whorl Snail Survey (2004)
3.	Harlow Area Landscape and Environment Study (2004)
4.	Green Infrastructure Plan for the Harlow Area (2005)
5.	Harlow Transportation Study (2005)
6.	Harlow Urban Capacity Study (2006)
7.	Stort Valley Harlow - Tree Bat Survey (2006)
8.	Stort Valley Feasibility Study (2007)
9.	Harlow Area Investment and Renewal Framework (2007)
10.	Retail Study and Town Centre Health Check (2007)
11.	Great Crested Newt Study Report (2007)
12.	Employment Land Utilisation Study (2008)
13.	Harlow Infrastructure Study - Stage 1 & 2 Reports (2008 & 2010)
14.	Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2009)
15.	Harlow Labour Market Statistics (2009)
16.	Rye Meads Water Cycle Strategy (2009)
17.	Harlow Play and Youth Activity Strategy (2009)
18.	Generating and Appraising Spatial Options for the Harlow Area (2010)
19.	London Commuter Belt (East) / M11 Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010)
20	
20.	London Commuter Belt Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Analysis: Viability Assessment (2010)
21.	Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA Directive (2010)

#### **Supporting Documents**

1.	Harlow 2020 Vision 2006 - 2009	
2.	Harlow Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 – 2010	
3.	Harlow Regeneration and Social Inclusion Strategy 2010 - 2015	
4.	Harlow Council Corporate Plan 2010/11 – 2014/15	





HARLOW-see something different