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Issue no.3 Special Edition

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www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/ldf

Welcome to a special edition of the Sedgemoor Local Development Framework Newsletter. This edition sets out a brief summary of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report, including details of the Preferred Spatial Strategy, and gives you the opportunity to have your Say.

Why is Planning important?

It's important because planning affects many aspects of our lives – from where we live to where we work, from where and how we shop to where and how we spend our leisure time. Good planning is central to improving our quality of life and the social, economic and environmental sustainability of our District.

Why does it matter to me?

We want the new Framework to meet the needs and aspirations of all people who live and work in Sedgemoor, or may do so in the future. Although the LDF talks of 'policies' and 'strategies' regarding the number of houses and jobs we need to accommodate, it is really about people. It's about how we want to live in the future and the quality of life we, and our children and grandchildren, will enjoy here.

Haven't you asked us all this before?

The short answer is NO. We have been consulting on the Core Strategy since the end of 2006, but we have moved on a great deal since then.

Previously, we have consulted with you on the Issues & Options report, where we asked you to comment on a range of planning issues facing Sedgemoor and the best options for dealing with them. Since then, we have been busy carrying out a lot of additional work, particularly on the evidence needed to underpin the Core Strategy and on assessing the various options with regard to their sustainability. Based on all the knowledge gained from those previous steps, we have selected what we believe to be the best options for future development, and we are now asking you to tell us what you think about the options we have chosen.

Your comments on the Preferred Options document (see opposite) will inform the draft Core Strategy which we hope to be consulting on next year.

HOT NEWS

PREFERRED OPTIONS REPORT PUBLISHED! The Council has today (30th September) published the Preferred Options Report. You can access the report via the LDF homepage www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/ldf or alternatively, reference copies are available for you to review at your local library.

CONSULTATION BEGINS The publication of the Preferred Options report today launches a formal eight-week Public Consultation on the document, during which we are inviting you to tell us what you think about some or all of the options we are proposing to take forward into the Core Strategy. You will be able to comment on the report throughout the consultation period via a range of options, including our newly launched Online Consultation Portal, and you can also talk to us face-to-face at one of our numerous exhibition and drop-in events. See back page for more details.

What exactly is the Preferred Options Report?

The Preferred Options Report is a major step towards producing a Core Strategy, which is the most important document in the Local Development Framework, as it provides the overall Vision for the District and then establishes the Objectives that a planning strategy must work towards if this Vision is to materialise.

The Core Strategy Preferred Options Report carries forward and builds on the Issues & Options consultation we carried out in 2007, which identified the main strategic spatial planning issues facing Sedgemoor and suggested options for addressing those issues. The Preferred Options Report sets out details of the options that we are intending to take forward to the final Core Strategy document, and the Public Consultation on the document provides the opportunity for anyone to say whether they agree with these options and, if they wish, to submit alternative options for consideration.

The most important of all the Options is the Preferred Spatial Strategy, because it says *what* should happen *where* in Sedgemoor, and most of the more detailed options in the report build upon it. Our Preferred Spatial Strategy is summed up inside this Newsletter for you to consider.

If you would like to comment on the Spatial Strategy electronically you can do so via the link above. If you'd prefer to comment on this Option on paper, please fill in the questionnaire accompanying printed issues of this Newsletter.

A Spatial Strategy for Sedgemoor

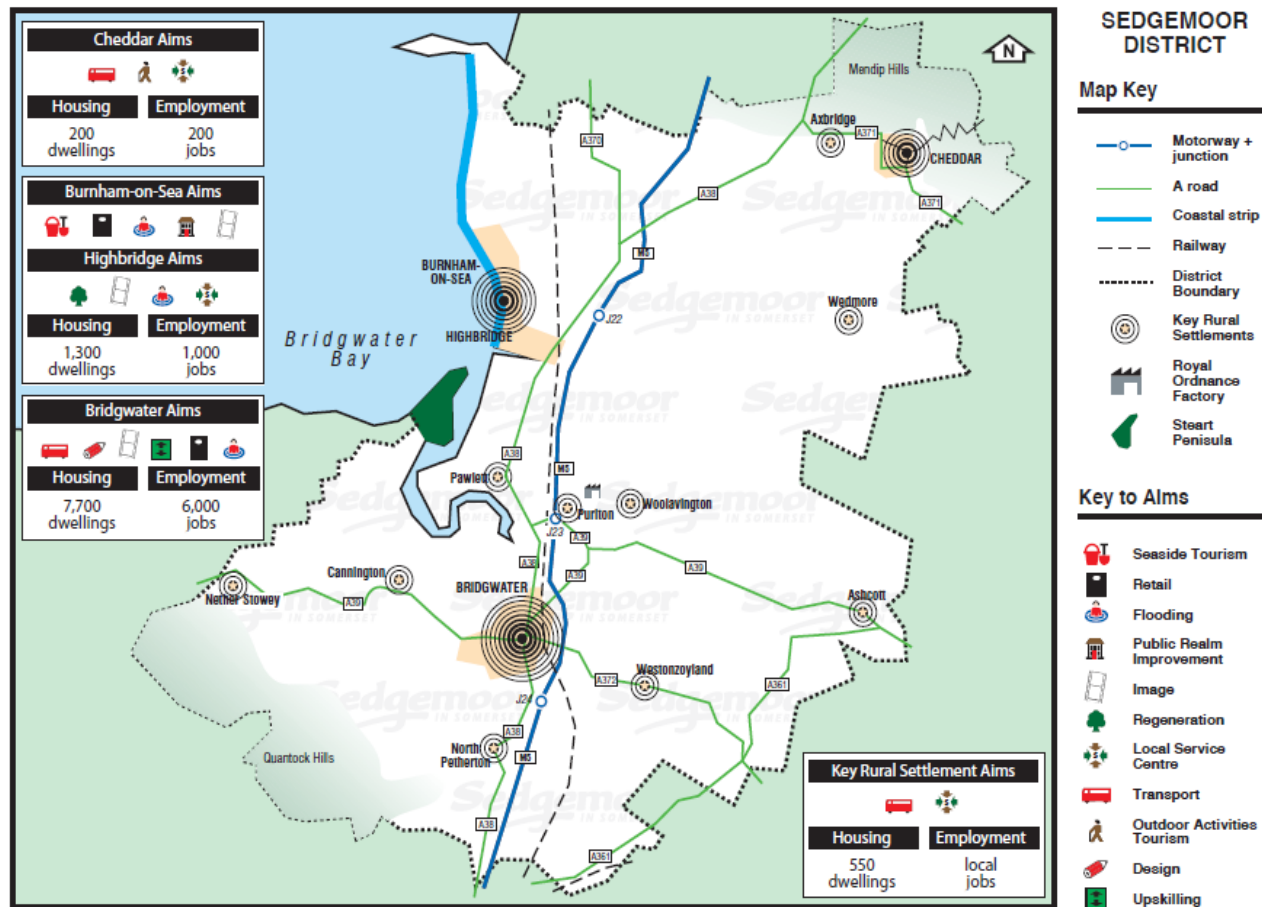
The Spatial Strategy of the new Framework will define what role the Towns, Key Rural Settlements, Villages and Countryside will play in building a more sustainable Sedgemoor. The roles set out in this strategy will largely determine the strategic aims for each place, the amount and distribution of new housing and employment development, the part to be played by the town centres and the provisions for sustaining the rural economy. The diagram below outlines the Council's preferred Spatial Strategy of delivering sustainable new homes and creating a thriving economy whilst protecting and improving existing environmental, social and economic assets over the next 20 years.

Bridgwater

- Main focus for housing growth providing 7,700 new homes on Brownfield land and at an urban extension in North East Bridgwater and other well related Greenfield locations
- Main focus for employment growth providing 6,000 new jobs
- Transformational town wide regeneration strategy
- Town centre will be the focus for new retail growth, other complimentary shopping functions, leisure uses and office development

Cheddar

- Focus for local housing and employment growth within existing settlement providing about 200 new homes
- Maximising Brownfield opportunities
- Potential extension and enhancement of existing employment areas to provide about 200 new jobs
- Appropriate affordable housing schemes for local people



Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge

- Focus for locally significant housing and employment growth that contributes to regeneration objectives and should provide about 1,300 new homes and at least 1,000 new jobs
- Growth will be located within existing urban area, maximising Brownfield opportunities
- Potential extension and enhancement of existing employment areas
- Burnham town centre will be focus for locally significant retail and tourism growth
- Highbridge town centre will focus on the needs of its local community

Key Rural Settlements (KRS) and the Countryside

- The KRS will be the focus for limited housing growth through infill and redevelopment opportunities and should collectively provide about 550 new homes. Within the KRS, appropriate small-scale employment growth that will create or retain local jobs to reduce the need to travel, diversify the rural economy and promote sustainable communities will be encouraged.
- Elsewhere in rural areas options seek to support the rural economy, retain local service provision and promote much needed affordable housing, particularly in those settlements with a range of services.
- The wider countryside options positively seek to enhance and protect the environment whilst supporting the specific needs of the activities that require a countryside location, such as the agricultural industry and recreation.

How to have your Say!

The formal consultation period for the Preferred Options is now underway and will run until 24th November.

How can I see it?

The complete document is available from our website www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/ldf Reference copies are available in your local library, as well as at any of the drop-in events we are holding in the coming weeks (see opposite). If you require the document on a disc or in any other format, please use the contact details below to get in touch with the LDF team.

How can I make comments?

The easiest way to tell us what you make of our Preferred Options is to add your comments directly into the report via our brand new Online Consultation Portal. To get there just follow the link from our LDF homepage. Alternatively, send us a free hand response by letter or email and send it to the address below.

Who do I ask if I've got questions?

The exhibitions and drop-in events we are holding across the District in the coming weeks are an ideal opportunity for you to come along, get more information and have a chat with us. If you can't make any of these, do check the website to see if your questions are answered there, or contact us on the number or at the address below.

Consultation diary

September

30th Publication of Preferred Options Report and start of consultation

October

1st Bridgwater Town Council meeting, 7.30pm

5th Burnham on Sea and Highbridge Town Council Meeting, 7pm

12th Nether Stowey Village Hall Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-6.30pm
Nether Stowey Parish Council meeting, 7pm

12th Westonzoyland Community Centre, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
Westonzoyland Parish Council meeting, 7.30pm

13th Cannington Village Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-6.30pm
Cannington Parish Council meeting, 7pm

13th North Petherton Community Centre, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
North Petherton Town Council Meeting, 7.30pm

19th Axbridge Town Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
Axbridge Town Council meeting, 7.30pm

21st Wedmore Council Room, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
Wedmore Parish Council meeting 7.30pm

23rd Burnham, Morrisons foyer, Exhibition and Drop-in, 10-4pm

24th Burnham, Morrisons foyer, Exhibition and Drop-in, 10-4pm

27th Cheddar Parish Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
Cheddar Parish Council meeting, 7pm

27th Woolavington Village Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
Woolavington Parish Council meeting, 7.30pm

30th Bridgwater Angel Place, Exhibition and Drop-in, 10-4pm

31st Bridgwater Angel Place, Exhibition and Drop-in, 10-4pm

November

6th Highbridge Asda, Exhibition and Drop-in, 10-4pm

7th Highbridge Asda, Exhibition and Drop-in, 10-4pm

9th Pawlett Village Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-6.30pm TBC
Pawlett Parish Council meeting 7pm TBC

10th Puriton St Michael's Church Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-7pm
Puriton Parish Council meeting, 7.45pm

16th Ashcott Village Hall, Exhibition and Drop-in, 2.30-6.30pm TBC
Ashcott Parish Council meeting, 7pm

Finding out more

Please use our re-invigorated website to keep in touch with what is happening.

www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/ldf

South West Planning Aid provides free, independent advice on planning matters to community groups and individuals who cannot afford professional fees. To find out more go to www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Or to find out more about planning generally, go to www.planningportal.gov.uk

Not on our List?

Would you like to receive this newsletter and other information about the LDF regularly? Please let us know if you would like to be on our database.

Prefer email?

It is more efficient and environmentally friendly to send this newsletter to you by email. So please let us have your email address if we don't already.

Change of address?

Don't forget to let us know if your address or email changes so we can keep our database up-to-date.

Can't read this Newsletter?

This document is also available in Braille, large print, on tape and disc, and we can translate it into different languages.

Contact us

For any queries not answered on the website, please contact us:

By phone: 01278 436436

By email: ldf@sedgemoor.gov.uk

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