

Press Release from HDC - 24 February 2010

Leading Change in Partnership to 2026 and Beyond: Update on the Core Strategy Review

IN AUTUMN last year, Horsham District Council invited comments on the Core Strategy Review Consultation document from people who had an interest in the District's future. It set out some of the key issues in planning the future of the District and put forward, for consultation, nine potential options for how the development requirements could be met.

Around 2400 comments were received on the issues raised in the document from a mixture of individuals and organisations. Over 1,500 of these related to the potential strategic development site options.

The Council has now reviewed and considered carefully all the comments received, as well as preparing further technical work to assist and inform the preparation of the proposed Preferred Strategy document, to be published in the summer, for further consultation.

As part of this process of consultation and technical work, it has been decided that some of the development site options should be excluded from further investigations because their locations meant it would be harder to create cohesive communities with sufficient services to meet the needs of future residents.

Instead, attention will be focussed on a 'short list' of the site options to ascertain from the further work whether they are appropriate and deliverable for inclusion in the preferred strategy. Of the nine original site options, the Council will **not** now proceed with further work on sites Faygate, Chesworth Farm (South Horsham), Adversane/North Heath and Pulborough as potential strategic development locations in the period to 2026. It **will** now focus its attention on sites West of Ifield, North Horsham, West of Southwater, and East of Billingshurst, with parallel feasibility work taking place on a possible new market town in the Gatwick Sub-Region, jointly with neighbouring authorities.

Cllr David Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning at Horsham District Council, said:

"We indicated our commitment to a thorough public debate on the issues and options available to us at the early stages in the process. As a result of the response to the Consultation Document and our further assessments we have been able to refine our initial assessment process and indicate those options on which we now need to concentrate our attention. I am convinced that this is the appropriate way forward and, although not everyone will be happy with the position reached, it may help to allay the fears of some residents in those areas where we are not now looking to proceed with further studies."