Report on the
Wealden District Council
Core Strategy Workshops
November 2008 – January 2009

Addison & Associates

March 2009
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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy Member/Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) workshops undertaken in Wealden between November 2008 and January 2009 were part of the process in seeking to produce a robust sound Core Strategy. These workshops were seen as an important part of the LDF “journey” that will have a major impact on the future strategy for Wealden. The “journey” will continue through the wider public consultation on the possible alternative spatial options planned for May-June 2009, leading on to the publication of the submission Core Strategy in 2010, prior to its examination.

1.2 A key measure of the soundness of the Council’s LDF Core Strategy will be the extent to which its eventual chosen strategic approach is the most appropriate given the alternatives that may exist. It will therefore be important to be able to demonstrate that a range of reasonable alternatives has been considered and that there are good reasons why the preferred strategy for future development is eventually chosen.

1.3 To be found sound the LDF Core Strategy for Wealden will need to be:
   • Consistent with national policy, aligned with the Sustainable Community Strategy, and in general conformity with the SE Plan
   • Justified by:
     o A robust and credible evidence base
     o The most appropriate strategy given reasonable alternatives
   • Effective, in that it is:
     o Deliverable
     o Flexible, and
     o Able to be monitored

1.4 This series of workshops therefore provides one important input to the Core Strategy process. It cannot be the sole determinant of the approach eventually taken by Wealden – but it can form an integral part of the assessment and evaluation process that Wealden needs to follow.

1.5 The workshops followed on from an LDF diagnostic evaluation undertaken by Addison & Associates on behalf of PAS in July 2008. The diagnostic report identified a number of areas in which both the Council and external agencies could support improvements in the LDF process at Wealden. The workshops
were arranged to help implement a number of these recommendations. These included - increasing the understanding of spatial planning by all those involved; enhancing the role of the Local Strategic Partnership; improving informal contact with Members and enhancing their engagement and community leadership role. Through the facilitated workshops, it was felt that progress on these aspects would support the development and refining of the spatial vision towards the next phase of consultation.

1.6 The workshops have been developed and undertaken as a joint exercise between Wealden District Council and Addison & Associates. They were designed as a series, to enable each subsequent workshop to build on the understanding and output of the previous workshop. Through this process, all those involved have had an input into the development of the Council’s emerging spatial vision. This process has also supported the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Corporate Plan and Local Area Agreement.

1.7 The key aims of the three workshops were:

- To help Members understand the nature of the difficult choices they face in the context of the evidence and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (the South East Plan)
- To provide participants with an opportunity to contribute to the development of the strategy direction and priorities
- To facilitate members’ understanding of the evidence gathered to date and its implications
- To narrow down the wide range of development options previously presented at Issues and Options stage (in July 2007)
- To increase ownership of the LDF process by increasing participants’ understanding of the value of the process
- To share the vision and objectives for the future
- To test elements of that vision against possible spatial delivery options
- To involve Members in the identification of key issues and options
- To show the alternative ways of delivering what the SE Plan requires – the what, when, where and by what means of housing and business development
- To assess the implications of these alternative distribution choices and to explain why something may be preferred or indeed may be rejected
- To allow others to respond and to suggest what they wish to see in the Core Strategy

1.8 The workshops involved councillors and officers, both from Wealden District Council and the County Council, and also members of the Local Strategic Partnership including the Environment Agency, Primary Care Trust and representatives of Parish Councils. It was recognised that these partners play a key role within the LDF process. Lists of the attendees are set out in the Appendices.
1.9 Each workshop focused on a different aspect but together they built towards the development of a spatial vision as follows:

- **Workshop 1**  
  *Evidence and its implications overall and spatially*

- **Workshop 2**  
  *Debating possible spatial options*

- **Workshop 3**  
  *Clarifying the vision and developing spatial options*
Section 2: The process followed

2.1 The three workshops were run between November 2008 and January 2009 to ensure the outputs were able to directly feed into the formal decision making processes of the Council.

2.2 The dates were:
- 21 November 2008 Crowborough - in the morning
- 15 December 2008 Hailsham - in the afternoon
- 14 January 2009 Halland near Uckfield - in the afternoon and also the evening (the latter repeated the afternoon session with different participants)

2.3 The workshops were designed to facilitate each workshop building on the results of the previous one. To support this, the sessions were arranged on charrette principles. The charrette process is action orientated with achieving consensus the goal through a process of continual development and refinement of ideas. The work should be built on by all those involved. Achieving consensus does not necessarily mean total agreement, but it does embrace acceptance. Where consensus cannot be achieved, democracy is usually an effective mechanism of bringing closure to the issue but it is always important to record all opinions since the points may be invaluable at a later time. One of the basis assumptions is that no one has the entire answer, but rather everyone has part of the answer.

Workshop 1 (November 2008) Evidence and its implications overall and spatially

2.4 This workshop focused on providing attendees with background information on the local, regional and national context. It covered the linkages between different policies, both regional and local, e.g. the South East Plan and the Core Strategy. The specific national requirements for the area were also explained.

2.5 The objectives of this workshop were:
- To ensure Members were part of the process of developing the core strategy: i.e. contributing not just responding, giving guidance not just receiving it, and taking responsibility for and ownership of the outcome;
- To share an understanding of the current position reached by Wealden and the implications of the evidence gathered so far and to identify any gaps in knowledge;
- To plan for the next generation over the next 20 years by understanding the area now and developing a vision of what it should look like in the future.

2.6 Officers presented the evidence gathered providing those present with the opportunity to identify and debate the implications. Attendees identified the issues they believed to be the most important within the plan for Wealden. This was followed by a group session with each group discussing one of four themes:

1. The role of Wealden within the wider London and SE region
2. The role of Wealden’s urban areas
3. The role of Wealden’s countryside/rural areas, and
4. The inter-relationship with neighbouring Local Authority areas (including Eastbourne, Tunbridge Wells and East Grinstead)

2.7 Each theme was broken down into a series of relevant questions for discussion. These included strategic issues within the South East, ideas of how attendees would like an area to ‘feel’ in 20 years time and how to achieve this, the issues affecting rural areas and the influence of the neighbouring Districts and Boroughs. Following the charrette approach, groups then moved to the next table to discuss and add comments to the original group’s notes and then to consider the remaining tables work. The plenary session disseminated this information via feedback from each group on their three key points.

2.8 The session therefore began to identify key objectives and priorities, which were pursued in the subsequent workshops.

**Workshop 2 (December 2008) Debating possible spatial options**

2.9 This workshop explored the different ways of addressing the key issue of growth in the context of the evidence basis and sustainability appraisal. It used the material generated in the first workshop with the aim of continuing to build on the knowledge and earlier information, together with an update on the evidence. The context was explained in relation to national requirements, regional (South East Plan) and the locally agreed Sustainable Community Strategy. The role of the sustainability appraisal process, the outcomes so far and the further steps required were highlighted, as were the issues to consider, e.g. construction, energy, transport, food, waste, retail and infrastructure. Attendees were asked to visualise the future role and vision for Wealden.

2.10 The objectives of the workshop were:

- To provide the opportunity for Members and the LSP to debate possible spatial options that would respond to the needs of the existing and future needs of the area and the draft vision
- To build on the outcomes of Workshop 1 in developing a locally distinctive core strategy
- To identify the areas of consensus in relation to possible spatial options

2.11 Subsequent to the presentations, participants were split into groups to discuss three of the following questions.

1. *Where would you distribute the housing requirement (both affordable and market housing), taking into account the current and future needs of our communities and over what timescale during next 20 years? (0-5, 5-10, 10-15, 15-20 years)*
2. *How and where do you see the main changes occurring in the provision of economic activity? Describe type, location and scale of different types of jobs including e.g. services, offices, manufacturing, rural workshops, working from home, etc.*
3. *How and where would you use the changes likely to occur in the future to meet the community and business needs of our communities? For example, schools, hospitals, GPs, shops, public open space etc.*
4. What changes would you like to see that would reduce the need to travel: how and where would you increase accessibility through changes to the transport and movement infrastructure, for example, public transport, cycling etc?

5. What key changes do you want to see in that part of Wealden within the Sussex Coast sub-region in order to promote economic growth and regeneration and where?

6. How would you use change to support and enhance the roles and functions of the five main market towns; where and in what timescale?

2.12 All groups discussed the housing question (Q1) either by responding to the question directly, or indirectly by considering the work of another group. In addition, each group discussed two of the other five questions. To enable the work to be mapped each group was given two maps of the district and they marked the maps up relating to their questions/answers. Each group fed back to a plenary session on five key points from their questions.

Workshops 3 & 4 (January 2009) Clarifying the vision and developing spatial options

2.13 The focus of both these workshops (Workshop 3 was re-run in the evening for those members who were unable to attend a daytime event) was on Members exploring the work undertaken in the previous two workshops, and focusing on subsequent officer analysis which took the outcomes of these further. These were a critical point in the Workshop series as Members had the first opportunity to consider some of the spatial development implications of pursuing particular strategic choices.

2.14 The workshop was based around the concepts of defining the participants’ vision, prioritising elements of that vision, and then considering what spatial development strategy best met those priorities.

2.15 Drawing on the work of the previous workshops the aims were to:
- Clarify the strategic components of the vision for Wealden in 2026
- Identify a set of strategic development options for the Core Strategy consultation document in terms of their contribution to meeting the emerging vision for Wealden
- Understand how the next phase of Core Strategy work would be taken forward

2.16 Initial presentations covered a summary of the previous workshops and the relation of them to the development of the Core Strategy. Groups of participants then discussed the 14 "Elements of the vision" drawn from the earlier workshops and consultation. The groups considered the scope and content of the vision and completed a pro-forma ranking each element of the vision and adding elements they felt were missing.

2.17 This was followed by the groups discussing eight possible spatial development options. To test these alternatives, a house building requirement was used to illustrate the different development options and the indicative amount based on the level of house building in the latest SE Plan. The groups selected their three
preferred spatial options to deliver their vision by 2026 in a pro-forma. In addition, each group discussed additional options for spatial development, either entirely new options or mixtures of elements of the eight suggested options, for inclusion in the pro-forma.

2.18 Through this series of workshops, all those involved have assisted in developing elements of the core strategy - from expressing wishes and desires in Workshop 1, to the production of a coherent vision and basis for objectives through Workshops 2 and 3/4. These last workshops enabled participants from each group to contribute to the narrowing down of the spatial vision and seeing that expressed in terms of a range of development options. It is the intention that these options will be further refined and elaborated upon prior to the next phase of public consultation scheduled for May/June 2009.
Section 3: Key messages from the workshops

3.1 The key messages from the four workshops are listed below to highlight the journey followed and the progression of ideas from workshop one to workshops three and four.

3.2 Full details of each workshop, and summaries of the group work responses, are contained in a separate appendix to this report

Workshop 1

3.3 A number of key issues were raised and these focused around four main themes:

i. The need to retain and enhance the District’s existing distinctive character, including that of the AONBs, whilst adapting to social, economic and environmental pressures

ii. The need to ensure the right balance between development and the environmental quality of the place

iii. The need for improved infrastructure – in existing and new development

iv. A desire to achieve sustainable development through local jobs, housing, transport etc.

3.4 The subsequent group sessions focused on a number of more detailed key issues for the area:

- The economic viability of the area and its growth, the poor economic base and low incomes
- Poor transport and social infrastructure
- Wealden being predominantly a rural area providing amenity space and housing for a much wider area
- Commuter and retirement housing and the impact on other households
- The need for more affordable housing (including houses that are affordable - not simply local need housing)
- High level of environmental issues/assets/constraints within the District
- Better provision of services required to try to counter competition from towns outside district

3.5 The groups also listed a variety of suggested improvements to the area to deal with the current concerns, the main ones being:

- The provision of facilities for tourism and recreation, and their promotion
- The provision of affordable housing
- The greater provision of a variety of employment types/ business parks, industrial units, and increasing the skills base
- The importance of keeping villages viable through a variety of actions e.g. better provision for the young and the elderly, provision of affordable housing and local services and improved transport infrastructure
- Use of villages as hubs to services and through this increasing the sense of ‘community’
- More diverse and sustainable countryside economy – perhaps rural food hubs?
Wealden District Council
Core Strategy Workshops – Evolving Options

• Improved infrastructure: both social and transport, and recognising the need for connections to services and facilities outside the district
• Clustering of development to support facilities; the need for "critical mass"
• Investigate possibilities of a new village
• Greater involvement and partnership with communities and other agencies to achieve the goals

Workshop 2

3.6 The key issues that arose through the further discussion on housing and communities included:
• Broad agreement on providing for local housing need including both affordable and market; that affordable housing should be provided where needed, including villages and rural areas and including in AONBs.
• Need to ensure provision linked to infrastructure, either current or new
• Clear differences in the way market housing may be delivered - some groups focused on an even distribution across district; others on growth in different towns or villages: mixed tenure development seemed to be preferred
• Advantages seen to providing new housing/ communities in the Isfield area to support re-opening of Uckfield to Lewes railway line and in the Berwick Station area
• Some preference for Hailsham town development over Polegate/ Willingdon
• Need for good data on housing to enable accurate assessment of need and to promote growth and support new housing

3.7 The groups’ work on transport and infrastructure together with employment raised the following key messages:
• Improved integrated public transport infrastructure needed linking towns & villages
• Better IT connections in all development
• New major employment opportunities to be primarily related to transport infrastructure; other employment dispersed around district
• Not practical to attract all types of employment, so need to assess what is practical as there will always be a need to travel to work
• Varied improvements to all community infrastructure needed; significant constraints to be overcome
• Develop the local population’s skills
• Need to change job market available - away from low income employment and small industries thereby bringing in more revenue
• Recognition that we need more information to reach a view on best way forward
• Support for the promotion of local agriculture, both in terms of local jobs and increased sustainability
• Improve local networks; cycling, walking, road, public transport, rail and IT
• Reduce need to travel through provision of local services
• Need improved links within catchment areas, and integrated transport solutions

Workshops 3 and 4
3.8 The final workshops focused on developing spatial options from the elements of
the vision evolved through the previous workshops. A draft vision including 14
elements and a set of 8 mapped possible development options were provided,
derived from the previous work.

3.9 **Part 1** of the workshop involved considering the 14 elements of the vision. Some
variations were suggested to several of the suggested "Elements of a vision"
which are summarised in **Table in Section 4** below.

3.10 From these discussions there was a consensus that the following four elements
of the vision should be supported:

**Element 1** Wealden's attractive AONB and wider landscape character, and the
overall sense of rural tranquillity, will have been protected and the
countryside will have been maintained as a resource for local
residents and those from further away to enjoy.

**Element 4** The housing market in the district will be better balanced, by the
provision of the right types of housing, in sufficient quantities, at the
right locations. This housing will better meet the needs of all the
community and include affordable housing, and housing suitable for
the elderly and to meet other specialist needs.

**Element 7** Improved accessibility by public transport services, and connections
between transport modes, will have made it easier for Wealden's
population, particularly in rural areas, to take advantage of jobs,
services and facilities in the five main towns, and in adjacent centres
such as Tunbridge Wells and Eastbourne.

**Element 14** The new development that has taken place has been supported by
adequate infrastructure. Where possible it will have been focussed
where service capacity already existed, or will have provided
infrastructure which is of wider benefit to the local community.

3.11 The above four elements were felt to reflect the ethos of Council and its key aims
for the Core Strategy. The other elements of the vision attracted different scores
in the assessment and these are summarised in the tables below. A number of
groups also thought the vision needed to include additional comments on climate
change, rebalancing the population throughout the district, and promoting vibrant
communities. A number of more detailed changes were suggested to the
wording of the vision elements. These are also summarised in the table below.

3.12 **Part 2** of the workshops involved assessing eight suggested spatial development
options for the future. The groups focused on putting their vision into practice
through the use of the 8 mapped spatial development options. The development
option (with some variations) that was identified with most strongly by a
substantial margin was option 3 aimed at meeting affordable housing needs in
Wealden. This option was considered most frequently to match the vision and
was felt to be a realistic option of strategic approach. It was not perceived as
dependent on new infrastructure. It would also address elements 2 and 4 of the
vision i.e. improving the economic prosperity and the housing market
respectively.
3.13 An opportunity was provided for each group to consider other alternative options – perhaps combining elements of those presented. Many of the groups suggested a refined version of option 3 (based on affordable housing needs) or combining this option with a range of elements from the other options (see details in section 4 below).

3.14 Participants’ responses to the 14 elements of the vision and their ranking of the eight options are covered in greater detail in the sections below.
Section 4: Outcomes

4.1 The outcomes from Workshops 1 and 2 have been summarised above. The detailed work from each group at those workshops is contained in the separately published appendix.

4.2 This section focuses on the outcomes from Workshops 3 and 4. Using the charrette principles on which the workshop series was based, the work of the groups at these two workshops builds on what has gone before, and provides direction for officers as they develop the next stages of the Core Strategy process.

4.3 This section contains two schedules. The first schedule considers the 14 elements of the vision put forward at workshops 3 and 4 and shows the rankings given to them by the participants over the two final sessions, and the alterations suggested to each. In addition, the schedule includes other issues which participants felt needed to be covered within the visioning part of the Core Strategy document.

4.4 The second schedule lists the eight mapped development options shown at the workshop. There were nine groups of participants in all. The schedule sets out how many groups ranked each of the options as their first, second or third choice. It also includes reference to the additional development options which the participants thought might warrant development, either through the merging of the initial options suggested or via an entirely new option.
The table below shows the rankings given to the fourteen “2026 visions” presented at workshops 3 and 4. These visions were put together following the work done at workshops 1 and 2. The 9 groups (covering both workshops 3 and 4) were asked to rank these visions by priority. Please note that some groups however chose to rank most or all of the elements as a high priority rather than grading them and the results are therefore skewed towards the high ranking.

1. High - *reach it at all costs*
2. Medium - *achieve it if possible*
3. Low - *get as close as you can.*

Number of groups ranking each vision element as high, medium or low priority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of vision (see below for full text)</th>
<th>High priority - <em>reach it at all costs</em></th>
<th>Medium priority - <em>achieve it if possible</em></th>
<th>Low priority - <em>get as close as you can</em></th>
<th>No consensus</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>6½</td>
<td>2½</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>8</td>
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### Suggested amendments to the vision elements from Workshops 3 and 4 (afternoon and evening sessions combined)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of the Wealden vision “By 2026...”</th>
<th>Suggested changes/amendments by individual groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Wealden’s attractive AONB landscape character and the overall sense of rural tranquillity will have been protected and the countryside will have been maintained as a resource for local residents and those from further away to enjoy. | • This was felt to be the most important by everyone with the qualification that the opening phrase was felt to be ambiguous.  
• It is considered that the protection of the Ashdown Forest from recreational impact should be included.  
• Ambiguous - suggests no dev in AONB  
• There is a need to clarify that the AONB includes the High Weald AONB and South Downs AONB (proposed National Park). In addition other (undefined) landscapes which are considered attractive should be included. Specific reference to retaining the countryside between settlements to prevent coalescence is also considered important and not covered by this statement.  
• There should also be a requirement for the enhancement (as well as the maintenance) of the character of the landscape with regards to the AONB  
• The group considered that this Vision element should also include "enhancement" of the AONB and that it should relate to valuable landscape and countryside across the District (not just within the AONB).  
• Broaden to include a wider variety of landscapes  
• Plus maintaining countryside gaps. Local residents and tourists |
| 2. Wealden’s economic prosperity will have been enhanced allowing more residents to choose to work locally as higher paid jobs are provided through the successful diversification of the economy within existing towns and villages, and through a lively rural economy. | • A group considered that the phrase 'existing towns and villages' be deleted to allow for the possibility of new towns/settlements. This element should include the development of skills and education. It should also include the generation of more jobs & a greater variety of jobs and not just higher paid jobs  
• This statement requires identification of the types of economic sectors to be introduced or enhanced.  
• Revive local agriculture and renewable energy – have self |
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<tr>
<th>Elements of the Wealden vision</th>
<th>Suggested changes/amendments by individual groups</th>
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<tr>
<td>“By 2026…”</td>
<td>sufficiency</td>
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| 3. There will have been a greater emphasis on improving the economic performance of the Hailsham/ Polegate area relative to other areas of Wealden, by providing substantial development opportunities for housing and employment development. | • Cross reference to No 2; this needs to be not instead of nor at expense of helping rural economy / diversification  
• A group considered that there should be an holistic approach to development (implicitly including infrastructure) and not just housing and employment development. |
| 4. The housing market in the District will be better balanced, by the provision of the right types of housing, in sufficient quantities, at the right locations. This housing will better meet the needs of all the community and include affordable housing, and housing suitable for the elderly and to meet other specialist needs. | • The emphasis should be in relation to balance, based on local need and local issues.  
• And with better transport connections  
• Adaptability of buildings for future needs i.e. older people and sustainability e.g. heating |
| 5. While each of the five towns will be thriving commercial centres serving their respective local areas, Uckfield and Hailsham will have seen relatively more substantial investment in enhancing their commercial and environmental attractions and in providing opportunities for planned and managed development of their town centres. | • There should be a requirement for five thriving towns, which reflects a historical emphasis in Wealden.  
• There is a need to ensure thriving communities in all five towns and rural settlements. No one town should be favoured for investment over another. |
<p>| 6. The network of villages in the District will continue to support the day to day needs of existing local communities, where desirable or necessary having accommodated additional population | • The view was expressed by one member that this element should be split into two elements - the first ensuring support to the existing communities, the second providing for additional population where necessary or desirable. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of the Wealden vision “By 2026...”</th>
<th>Suggested changes/amendments by individual groups</th>
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| growth to allow the opportunity to enhance services and facilities, and to create more sustainable settlements. | • Explain by & refer to vision element 1 about AONB - vitality of villages to be promoted but not at expense of AONB / landscape quality  
• Differentiate between villages |
| Improved accessibility by public transport services, and connections between transport modes, will have made it easier for Wealden's population, particularly in rural areas, to take advantage of jobs, services and facilities in the five main towns, and in adjacent centres such as Tunbridge Wells and Eastbourne. | • This should relate to all forms of public transport with the main aim being to increase connectivity between rural areas and central transport hubs within the District and connectivity between transport hubs and areas outside of the District.  
• Lewes should also be included as an adjacent centre.  
• Particular attention needed to young, elderly, and those with no access to a car |
| There will have been measurable improvements in the safety records on Wealden's roads, and noticeable improvements for those people making trips on foot, by bicycle or by public transport in the towns and rural areas of the District. | • Widen e.g. different forms of transport – electric?  
• Too “woolly” |
| The historically more deprived neighbourhoods of the District will have experienced significant improvements in their quality of life and they will enjoy standards of health and well being which help reduce disparities and measurably improve their position relative to other places in Wealden. | • One group considered that we should not be solely concerned about 'historically' more deprived areas.  
• It is considered that the Indices of Multiple Deprivation hide deprivation taking place outside of Hailsham wards (which are defined as ranking high in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation) and therefore the wording should be changed to reflect this.  
• Too woolly; clarify, just neighbourhoods or people? |
| The new development that is required to meet changing needs will have been sensitively designed and managed, | • This is seen as being related to Element 1  
• It is considered that the combination of vision statement 1 and 4 would encompass the sentiments of statement 10. In addition to |
| Elements of the Wealden vision  
“By 2026...” | Suggested changes/ amendments by individual groups |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| and incorporated into existing communities - both towns and villages - in a way which people feel reflects the character and local distinctiveness of each place. Taken overall, local people will be pleased with the result. | general design it is considered that environmental issues should also be included such as reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.  
• And maintain historical continuity  
• Reflect higher density and new sustainable standards. Hi-tech. Reflect this in urban and rural architecture. Too much aspic – seek to enhance/improve character |
| 11. There will be a more comprehensive and accessible high quality network of open spaces and other facilities which provide opportunities for sport, leisure, recreation and the arts. | This is also seen as being part of Element 1.  
• There should be a distinction between open spaces/ playgrounds and the arts (which may not achieve such a high priority).  
• And include allotments |
| 12. People will recommend Wealden as a place to live, visit and do business in - particular because of the quality of life it offers and because they recognise that it's a place where sustainable communities are supported and sustainable development happens. | The statement is considered too ambiguous – one group felt it was unclear whether people currently 'do business in Wealden' and the meaning of the term. The statement may imply physically doing business in the area or utilising businesses in the area.  
• Vision statement 12 should be an outcome as opposed to a priority vision element. |
| 13. The re-instatement of the Lewes-Uckfield railway line will be brought demonstrably nearer, for example by the enhancement of the business case by focussing new housing development in appropriate locations and achieving developer contributions. | Include the Polegate/ Hailsham line, plus other lines in district so broaden this vision element  
• Concern about this element giving a rationale to housing |
| 14. The new development that has taken place has been be supported by adequate infrastructure. Where possible it will have been focussed where service capacity already existed or will have provided infrastructure which is of wider benefit to the local | Concern is raised over the use of the word adequate and it is considered that infrastructure should relate to what is needed as opposed to what is adequate.  
• In addition infrastructure should be defined and should include: leisure facilities (including open space), road networks, public transport and public services.  
• The 2nd sentence does not have the correct emphasis (on current
| Elements of the Wealden vision  
“By 2026…” | Suggested changes/ amendments by individual groups |
| --- | --- |
| community." | service capacity)  
• Clarification is required with regards to the types of infrastructure. |
| Additional elements of vision identified |  |
| Additional statement to include tackling climate change |  |
| The need to protect and enhance biodiversity and the need to manage resources (in particular to minimise the use of non-renewable resources) should be incorporated into other elements of the Vision. These could possibly be incorporated within element 1. |  |
| Rebalance structure of population |  |
| Better transit facilities between Crowborough and Tunbridge Wells required  
Note: Recognition of out-commuting as a means of bringing wealth to the district | • Limited amount to alter  
An additional statement is required with regards to addressing climate change and the reduction of carbon emissions. |

Further general issues raised in the group discussion:  
• The vision does not reflect importance of youth issues in the area
• The vision does not address environmental issues, especially with regard to environmental design of buildings and impact of development upon the Ashdown Forest
• Tackling Climate change is of high priority (this includes carbon emissions and surface water management)
• The delivery of the vision statement must be ensured before it is used as a basis for policy
Schedule 2 Matrix of preferred spatial development options 1 – 8 from Workshop 3 and 4 (afternoon and evening)

Following on from the first session of these workshops the 9 groups were tasked with prioritising their preferred spatial development option from eight options developed by officers from the workshops 1 and 2. They were asked to identify their three ‘preferred’ options which would best meet the elements of the vision for 2026 identified during the first session. The rankings are set out below. In one case a group choose to rank its three preferred options jointly as first choice with another group choosing, as its third choice, to create a new hybrid option therefore giving the slightly skewed results below. A number of groups whilst choosing an option did so with variations (see alternatives below). In addition the groups were asked to consider whether there was an alternative option which would better meet their vision – see alternatives below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial Development Options presented</th>
<th>Rankings given by Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New option</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Alternative spatial development options suggested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative 1</th>
<th>Integrate 6 and 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 2</td>
<td>Based on option 3 but balanced against option 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 3</td>
<td>Expansion in villages in south of district outside Polegate and Hailsham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 4</td>
<td>Overlay 1, 2 and 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 5</td>
<td>Hybrid between 3 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 6</td>
<td>Combined option 3 and 5, if sewage capacity an issue combine 3 and 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Reasons for preferences for development options 1 – 8 from workshops 3 and 4 (afternoon and evening)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Options</th>
<th>Rankings given</th>
<th>Reasons for choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Option 1. Proportional growth – maintain existing settlement hierarchy** | 1. | • Proportional  
• Deliverable  
• Respects AONB except at Heathfield |
|                     | 2. | • Takes account of AONB  
• Proportional growth  
• Deliverable  
• Less risk  
• Will still work without new infrastructure if realistic and the infrastructure does not happen |
| **Option 2. Proportional growth – taking into account the AONB constraints** | 1 | • Addresses Element 1 of the Vision (protection of the AONB) which is viewed as high priority.  
• The pattern of development is quite similar to Option 1 and therefore in this respect contributes towards an equitable spread of development.  
• Very close to Option 3 in terms of the spatial pattern of development.  
• Allows regeneration of Eastbourne/ Hailsham Triangle and Uckfield. By allowing regeneration of Eastbourne/ Hailsham Triangle this helps to contribute to economic prosperity in this area and therefore helps to contribute to the achievement of Vision Element 2.  
• Contributes to Lewes-Uckfield railway line re-instatement.  
• Helps create infrastructure in some settlements as opposed to spreading growth thinly across the district and not being able to carry out some improvements. However, the equal distribution across the villages outside of the AONB was not fully supported; and perhaps should go for growth at Isfield to offset need for growth in more sensitive locations. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Options</th>
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<th>Reasons for choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Option 2.** Proportional growth – taking into account the AONB constraints. Cont. | 3. | • Favoured by majority in this group (minority view of 1 member was not to support as this would stifle prospect of increasing vitality of villages in AONB and of meeting affordable housing/social needs).
• This option is not visionary and some current 'settlements' in the AONB could take limited growth. |
| **Option 3.** Meeting affordable needs throughout Wealden | 1. | • Satisfies needs – but need to refine the assessment to be more realistic and reflect true need
• Private sector demand survey and affordable housing need assessment needs to be taken into account – must be accurate with the widest definition
• Reflects vision though meeting affordable housing needs
• Puts more affordable housing in villages and therefore schools – look at parish housing needs/ infrastructure needed. Stops places dying and supports the rural economy/sustains villages
• Opportunities for people wanting to move within villages
• AONB retained and the pattern of development is quite similar to options 2 and 4 - in this respect it is considered that this option would also contribute to protecting the AONB
• Hybrid of this option is what is required, too purist but affordable housing high priority
• Keep pot boiling – keep options and arguments open re: rail, doesn't conflict with Lewes - Uckfield railway re-instatement (Option 7)
• Contributions needed for railway and towards business case
• Makes sense in overall terms for development – distribution.
• Contributes to regeneration |
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</table>
| **Option 3. Meeting affordable needs throughout Wealden Cont.** | 1. cont. | • Not dependent on major infrastructure delivery but does not block improvements to railway and roads. Avoids some of deliverability issues - in particular infrastructure issues in the South (in particular need for A27 improvements and Wastewater Treatment Works) and related concerns over achieving the Eastbourne/Hailsham Triangle objectives in the medium term. Also avoids some of the deliverability issues in relation to re-instatement of Lewes-Uckfield railway line  
• Locks in more delivery  
• The pattern of development is quite similar to options 2 and 4 - in this respect it is considered that this option would also contribute to protecting the AONB (Option 2) and enabling the regeneration of Uckfield and Hailsham (Option 4).  
• More balanced  
• It is considered that the dispersal is appropriate, meeting the needs of the 5 main towns in an equitable manner.  
• Helps to address Vision Element 4 (provision of the right types of housing), which is viewed as high priority, and, in particular, the issue of the over-riding affordable housing need within the District. |
| | 3. | • Option 3 spreads the growth between the five main towns and the surrounding rural villages. In addition the sewage treatment works capacity is addressed in the Hailsham/ Polegate area, ensuring the delivery of new housing. |
| **Option 4. Uckfield and Hailsham regeneration focus** | 2. | • Achieves regeneration for two of our significant towns. Opportunity for proportionate distribution elsewhere - maybe use of S106 monies from development in these towns to address affordable needs elsewhere in district. What of Frant & Wadhurst potential?  
• However, do not ignore potential of Parishes (e.g. those with rail links) to take more development. |
<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| **Option 5. Uckfield and Polegate regeneration focus** | 2. | • Picks up Triangle issues, and degeneration and economic problems  
• Infrastructure problems more likely to be resolved than with Option 7.  
• Deliverability  
• Risk is not too great re infrastructure provision  
• Concern about balance in north of Wealden  
• Influence on Eastbourne views – do they want it? Provides better infrastructure and potential employees.  
• Was sink estate approach right for Eastbourne? Draws away from needy communities. |
| **Option 6. Proportional growth with new settlement (initial phase)** | 1. | • Berwick Station close to A27, and rail links  
• Dicker – not favoured; rejected by Group  
• Isfield fits in with railway line, but perhaps a dream? And not as good railway links as Berwick Station  
• Need to consider in relation to adjacent boroughs and employment patterns  
• Query impact on Uckfield town centre regeneration  
• Will help make case for infrastructure/schools  
• Isfield/ Berwick Station have railway line potential |
| | 2. | • It is considered that this option would help deal with the sewage treatment works capacity in Hailsham/ Polegate, depending on the location of the new settlement.  
• Issues of deliverability recognised. |
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</table>
| **Option 6. Proportional growth with new settlement (initial phase) Cont.** | 3. | • Like the idea of a new settlement with proportional growth elsewhere  
• Do it properly rather than adding in stuff to existing centres and provide access to facilities  
• Isfield would meet aspirations for business case for Lewes/ Uckfield line  
• Improve the sustainability of the areas  
• Potential tourist attraction (Lavender Line)  
• But Dicker supports Hailsham, main road and jobs (with PP). Also within 3 miles of station at Berwick so has merit  
• Not seen as a full solution and group would only support Isfield because of its location. Other locations would have too great a visual impact and would thereby also reduce the recreational value of the area. |
| **Option 7. Supporting the re-instatement of the Uckfield –Lewes railway line** | 1. | • It is considered that refinement is required of this option to ensure that it is viable for the reinstatement of the Lewes- Uckfield Railway Line. This may include considering a new settlement at Isfield but less development further up the track (Uckfield, Buxted and Crowborough).  
• Preference for this option does take into consideration the sewage treatment works capacity in the Hailsham/ Polegate area, however it remains desirable for the business element required for the regeneration of the Sussex Coast Sub Region to remain in the south of the District.  
• Concern is raised on the impact of the quantity of development on the Ashdown Forest, especially with regard to recreational impact.  
• Reinstatement of Lewes-Uckfield railway line a major infrastructure plus/advantage and sustainability is the only way for the future  
• Good opportunity to get other benefits and release pressures elsewhere.  
• Proportionate growth at Crowborough though in light of fact that it’s surrounded by AONB.  
• Accept radical option.  
• This option will require study in greater detail. |
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<tr>
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</table>
| **Option 7.** Supporting the re-instatement of the Uckfield –Lewes railway line Cont. | 1. Cont. | • Concern about option is that it doesn't address the town regeneration issues and aspiration of the Towns.  
• Principle supported but could it be done with less housing because, as presented, it would possibly reduce the scope to support Hailsham and Polegate/the Triangle? |
|                     | 2. | • May deliver the railway line but also needs access from surrounding areas  
• Uckfield reasonable economic centre  
• Doubts about Buxted  
• Aspirational and less practical than Option 6  
• Shading on plan needs to be removed and replaced by railway line  
• Need to consider Eridge and Tunbridge Wells line as well  
• Re-instate railway – but concerns about concentration and impact on the South.  
• More villages/ hinterland to get distribution – particularly those with schools/ facilities  
• Focus on houses in towns |
|                     | 3. | • Re-enforces focus on transport issues as important  
• Need to look at cross boundary issues and relevance of potential benefits  
• More environmentally friendly  
• Concern – high risk – therefore a gamble  
• Put Isfield growth at back end of plan period  
• Useful as focus on Crowborough and Uckfield. Isfield growth less important  
• Use option 3 (affordable housing needs) northern element to allow the south of the District to grow. |
| **Option 8.** Selected expanded villages – taking into account AONB constraints | 3. | • With modifications – an amount in Buxted, but too little in Uckfield. More balancing between N/S needed  
• Principle quite good  
• This covers amalgam of Polegate/ Hailsham regeneration options  
• A few villages would like some expansion. Strategically quite like it but figures flawed - like “super village” concept. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Options</th>
<th>Rankings given</th>
<th>Reasons for choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative options suggested by Groups</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Integration of option 6 and 7 in terms of a new settlement at Isfield but not so much development along the corridor (in Option 7). However, need to consider the needs and requirements of village settlements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Alternative 2 | 3. | • This option is based on Option 3 but balanced against Option 2 (AONB). This option therefore takes into account AONB constraints in North and would be closer to SE Plan target than Option 3.  
• This would include a growth point in the following area - Polegate, Westham, Pevensey - as this area has good railway links (recognising Vision element 7 which relates to accessibility by public transport) and there is significant affordable housing need in this area. The group did not consider that Option 6 provided appropriate growth points as the locations chosen did not reflect affordable housing needs and did not relate to the location of main centres and the provision of services.  
• This Option acknowledges that there are delivery issues in South Wealden due to infrastructure issues in the short to medium term. This helps to address Vision element 14 which relates to development and infrastructure provision being 'in tandem'.  
• This Option allows for a reasonable level of development within the villages which will enable villages to retain their vitality. |
<p>| Alternative 3 | | • Consider expanded villages in the south of the District outside of Polegate and Hailsham with some development in and around Polegate and Hailsham towns. |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Development Options</th>
<th>Rankings given</th>
<th>Reasons for choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 4</td>
<td>• Overlay Options 1, 2 and 3 – combine and integrate&lt;br&gt;• Reflects need and AONB/ other landscape issues&lt;br&gt;• Better evidence-base needed&lt;br&gt;• Some infrastructure needs to be included – reflect current infrastructure provision – but must improve current infrastructure&lt;br&gt;• Hailsham short on all infrastructure though major area within Wealden – need for infrastructure in Hailsham to be reinforced, plus other areas as development happens&lt;br&gt;• Need to take into account need for rail infrastructure – try and include</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative 5</td>
<td>• Hybrid between Options 3 and 7&lt;br&gt;• Could switch to Polegate from Hailsham&lt;br&gt;• Opportunity to leave Isfield out as new town but allow more limited growth&lt;br&gt;• Expand Crowborough but concerns re potential impact on AONB&lt;br&gt;• Put flats in Crowborough&lt;br&gt;• Heathfield should grow&lt;br&gt;• All development i.e. not just affordable housing required&lt;br&gt;• Sort out transport problems for area especially around new development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 6</td>
<td>• The need for regeneration along the A22 corridor (with the emphasis on Polegate as stated in the Hailsham/ Eastbourne Triangle report) shown in Option 5 should be combined with increased development in Crowborough and Heathfield as shown in Option 3.&lt;br&gt;• A hybrid option providing an economic case for Polegate and redressing the affordable housing need in Crowborough, Uckfield and Heathfield&lt;br&gt;• If the sewage capacity is an issue in Polegate and Hailsham, and cannot be overcome, then an alternative for Option 5 is Option 6, with an expanded settlement at Berwick Station.</td>
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</table>
| **Alternative 7** | • Preferred Option: Mixture of 7 and modified 2  
• The preferred option would be based on 7, with a reduction in the north of the corridor and development at Isfield of say 2500; the aim would be to do what is strictly necessary to get the line opened.  
• The amount of development at Uckfield could possibly be reduced in recognition of the flood plain issues together with a reduction in the amount of housing at Heathfield (max 250) and some other sensitive villages in the AONB in particular. This would allow for some development at Hailsham and Polegate to support regeneration.  
• It was considered that 120 at Horam would be acceptable.  
• It was considered that opening this railway line would improve the quality of life for all. |

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*Addison & Associates*  
*Final March 2009*
## Additional written comments from Groups on spatial development options presented:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Options</th>
<th>Comments from Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1                   | Considered impracticable  
|                     | Eliminated as an option - no change, too theoretical, doesn’t meet vision |
| 2                   | Not enough development to meet regeneration need. Considered to be too many constraints to villages and towns within and surrounded by the AONBs.  
|                     | Eliminated as an option – doesn’t meet affordable housing needs  
|                     | Want to provide Affordable Housing but not as in option 2. |
| 3                   | Assume affordable housing on back of development, therefore key strategic approach is to find land for affordable housing without making Wealden a developers’ paradise  
|                     | The view was expressed that using the waiting list as a proxy was not useful because people ask to be where they know there is already council housing. Whilst it was recognised that some people would want to remain near their existing council homes it maybe the case that this would not necessarily be in their best long term interests if a change of location was supportive of employment prospects etc. |
| 4                   | Doesn’t meet vision  
|                     | Too concentrated on the South – affordable housing and economic prosperity issues exist elsewhere |
| 5                   | Too concentrated on the South – affordable housing and economic prosperity issues exist elsewhere |
| 6                   | Isfield better therefore potential for railway line. Berwick sensitive landscape but good because of links to Brighton OK. |
| 7                   | Should be balanced by option 3  
|                     | Answers vision element 14 well – Local Strategic Partnership – growth also within defined area so easy to provide infrastructure for. However this is too high risk so dismissed as a realistic option  
|                     | Cost implications concerns |
| 8                   | Too purist |
Additional comments

- Villages are important in terms of change and therefore careful consideration is required between rural/urban split of new development.
- Need to look at urban fringes e.g. Crowborough to see the extent that other development could take place over current planning permissions and *not* affecting the AONB
- Must have infrastructure e.g. issues presented by sewage treatment capacity in South and A27 capacity
- Need to have system of developer contributions and of distribution of the money to agency partners etc. System needs to be open to show where the money has gone and how it is spent
- Hailsham/ Hellingly Parishes should not be grouped together
- Consider merging Polegate/Hailsham as a regeneration focus
- No basis in the regeneration options for regeneration - as nothing to regenerate! Hailsham/Polegate/Uckfield options very high risk as development would come with no infrastructure
Section 5: What happens next?

5.1 In a place like Wealden there is a broad range of possible alternative ways of accommodating future growth. In many respects the choices are quite wide. These four Member workshops were an important part of the process towards developing the key elements of the Core Strategy consultation document to be published in May 2009, and ultimately the completion of a sound Core Strategy. They provided the opportunity for Members, officers and other key stakeholders informally to engage jointly in evolving a core strategy that meets their aspirations for Wealden over the next twenty years.

5.2 Having undertaken this process we consider that all key players should feel more engaged in the LDF process and have a greater sense of ownership of its outcomes. This in turn should help them to continue the discussion and dialogue as the process moves towards the ultimate submission of a core strategy to the Secretary of State in 2010.

5.3 Speakers at the Workshops emphasised that refinement of the various options would continue and the number of separate options would probably be reduced before the next consultation document is published. Following on from these workshops, the authority and partners will therefore need to continue to develop the priorities, firm up their vision, and evaluate the various ways of meeting it through different spatial options. These spatial development options and the vision will together form an important part of the next document for public consultation in May/June this year.

5.4 This forthcoming consultation document is not a draft Core Strategy. However it will examine possible alternatives and invite comments on each option proposed, and suggestions about others that may exist. It will set the options in the context of the SE Plan and the evidence accumulated, which will include not only quantitative and research evidence but the outcomes of the workshops, and the sustainability appraisal of the alternatives.

5.5 This whole process will be undertaken as a way of clarifying aspirations and deliverability, and narrowing down the spatial choices. The process will be in part a technical appraisal, in part about choices, preferences and judgement. It will ultimately need to be guided by the national, regional and local requirements (e.g. the adopted SE Plan, the Local Area Agreement, and the Sustainable Community Strategy), and by considering responses from key stakeholders and the community.

5.6 It is our view that the overall LDF process has to be both a “top down” and a “bottom up” process. It should be inclusive and provide opportunities for all members of the community to contribute and help obtain the ‘best fit’ Core Strategy which will provide an effective spatial framework for decision-making and investment for Wealden over the period to 2026. From the way that the workshops evolved with the findings from earlier sessions used to inform the content of the next one, it is our belief that the workshop series has contributed positively to that engagement process. We believe that it has provided a strong foundation for the next stages of plan making.
Section 6: The lessons learnt and observations

6.1 In our experience Wealden District Council has taken a very positive step in seeking to respond to the challenge of involving Members and key stakeholders actively in the generation and assessment of development options for its Core Strategy. There is limited best practice experience to draw on, and in our view the format and delivery of the workshop series worked well in its primary objective of involving Members, officers and other key stakeholders.

6.2 Overall the feedback has been very positive and the charrette style seemed to suit the early stages of the workshop process, particularly as it gave an opportunity for all groups to comment on the other groups' work. Many councillors and other stakeholders have come to all three workshops, and contributions from attendees have been substantial. The outcomes produced have provided the authority with a robust basis for moving forward on developing their strategy. Participants have included not only councillors but also the Chief Executive and the Council’s Corporate Management Team. In our view, this demonstrates clearly that the importance of the LDF to the authority as a whole is recognised. The workshops also involved several representatives of the Wealden LSP and there was good integration of these partners from the start of the process. We understand that as a result of the success of the workshop series, a separate workshop is to be run on similar lines to Workshops 3 and 4 for all LSP partners later in February 2009.

6.3 The development of the agendas and content of the workshops has been a joint effort between Addison & Associates and officers of the authority strongly supported by the Planning Portfolio Holder. This combination has ensured that the sessions reflected the needs of the Authority, both at member and officer level and fully utilised the skills and knowledge of the different parties. Officers from the authority were a key part in the success producing excellent visual and written material for the various events without which the progress achieved would not have been possible. In our view the outcomes will provide sound evidence for the development and refinement of the Council's Core Strategy.

Observations

6.4 Notwithstanding the overall success of the series, there are a number of lessons that we consider need reinforcing or given further consideration in any future similar process.

- In order to maximise the impact it is very helpful to encourage the attendance of councillors, key officers, and representative LSP partners.
- When running a series of workshops the greatest potential benefit is gained if these participants are able to attend all the sessions – this obviously creates problems for some, particularly with competing diary commitments. The decision to repeat Workshop 3 as an evening event (as Workshop 4) was a helpful response to this problem.
- The ground covered by the workshops was substantial. Each workshop in this series was limited to three hours in length. Almost inevitably there was a tendency to attempt to do too much in the time available. This made it more difficult to keep the programmes running exactly to schedule. Consequently, the plenary sessions
did not always take place and there was limited time for questions and answers. Being realistic in what can be covered in the time available is essential. We would suggest that the programme is kept as simple and straight forward as possible.

- Whilst it is important to have the opportunity to deal effectively with questions so that time needs to be allocated to do this, it is equally important to ensure that questions do not sidetrack the Workshop from its main strategic purpose. Firm question-management is therefore essential.
- When agendas are being developed, it is important to know what Member engagement has taken place previously and ensure that this is explicitly recognised at the event.
- It should be recognised that although most participants may have experienced training and workshop events previously, they may not have undertaken such focused group work before nor will they necessarily have worked with other partners from outside the Council. The role of facilitators is crucial and should not be under-estimated. Oral and written briefings about background information, Workshop format and desired outcomes, are essential. Explanation of and agreement to the “ground rules” must be provided.
- Overall we feel that there are benefits to splitting officers and members when constructing groups so that they are in different groups. This helps ensure both can participate effectively and objectively. In this Workshop series, combining LSP partners with Members worked effectively in the later stages.
- The nature of the subject is such that it is essential that the level of discussion is kept strategic and does not become too detailed. Using external experienced facilitators makes this approach easier. Conversely, the use of officer facilitators does run the risk that participants will get distracted and focus on detailed matters that those officers may be aware of.
- Depending on the nature of the groups and the subject, it was beneficial to have both a scribe and a facilitator working together in each group to allow the facilitator to build a rapport with the group, maintain eye contact and keep the discussion focused.
- The use of templates for recording information was helpful as was the ability to pin the sheets to the boards.
- There was a lot of information presented and key words for identifying the “elements of a vision” and the “spatial development options” on the templates would have been useful.
- Overall, the timetable didn’t provide a great deal of opportunity between Workshop sessions to take stock and evolve the content and programme for the following workshop. This is made more challenging when local authority officers and external facilitators need to liaise and communicate between workshops to share reactions and agree plans.
- When covering a subject as complex as Core Strategy preparation, where there are many variables and a wide range of potential opinions, extensive preparation between Workshops is essential to ensure each session is presented at the right level and with sufficient information. It is difficult to plan a series of workshops with a high degree of certainty as the outcomes from the earlier workshops are unknown – and it is those outcomes, on the charrette principles, which feed into the later ones.