

# Blaby District Council

## Guidance for completing the Core Strategy representation form

### 1 Introduction

This guidance is designed to help you comment on the Blaby District Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) (submission version) 2012. The representation form can be found on our website at [www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk) or at main Council offices and libraries.

The representations will be considered by the Planning Inspector alongside comments received at the previous submission stage of the Core Strategy (consultation held July 2009 - September 2009). The purpose of the examination is to consider whether the Core Strategy is Legally compliant (if it has been prepared in accordance with regulations) and is Sound (this is explained below).

Your comments should be made on the representation form provided and be received before the closing date. We will not be able to accept comments received after **Thursday 1st March 2012 (5.15pm)**.

### 2. Filling in the Representation form

#### **Part A: Contact information**

You must complete all your contact details in the first part of the form. We use this to identify who has made the comment(s), so it is important you complete this fully.

If you have a representation number from the previous Draft Core Strategy Consultation (2009) please include this. **Part A** will only need to be completed once.

Column 1 relates to representations made by individuals, column 2 should be completed where an agent is being used.

**Parts B** is the section where you will make comments. It is important that you use a separate sheet for each comment you want to make and keep your comments clear and concise.

Please include your name/organisation at the top of each 'Part B' form that you use.

### **Question 3**

Please state which Policy / paragraph your representation relates to in the space provided.

### **Questions 4 – 7**

This should be used for comments / representations on the policies / paragraphs. You will need to identify whether your comments relate to legal compliance or soundness, and your reasons for this. There is also space for you to propose alternative wording to the change sought in light of your comments. More information on legal compliance and soundness is found at sections 2 and 3 of this guidance note.

### **Questions 8 and 9**

This asks whether you wish to be heard by the Inspector at the Examination and why. Please note that the Inspector will decide who will be invited to appear at the Examination sessions.

## **2 Legal Compliance**

2.1 The Inspector will first check that the DPD meets the legal requirements under s20(5)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 before moving on to test for soundness.

### **You should consider the following before making a representation on legal compliance:**

- The Core Strategy should be within the Council's programme of work or 'Local Development Scheme' (LDS) and the key stages should have been followed. If the DPD is not in the current LDS it should not have been published for representations. The LDS is on the Council's website [www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk) and available for inspection at the Council Offices, (Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire, LE19 2EP).
- The process of engagement with the community in preparing the Core Strategy should comply with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document which sets out the Council's strategy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of Planning Documents (including Core Strategies) and the consideration of planning applications. The SCI is on the Council's website [www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk) and available for inspection at the Council Offices, (Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire, LE19 2EP).
- The Core Strategy should comply with the Town and County Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended). On publication, the Council must publish the documents prescribed in the regulations, and make them available at their principal offices and on

their website. The Council must also place a local advertisement and notify the DPD bodies (as set out in the regulations) and any persons who have requested to be notified.

- The Council is required to provide a Sustainability Appraisal Report when it publishes a Development Plan Document (DPD). This should identify the process by which the Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out, and the baseline information used to inform the process and the outcomes of that process. Sustainability Appraisal is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect social, environmental, and economic factors.
- The Core Strategy must have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for the area. The SCS is usually prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership which is representative of a range of interests in the Council's area. The SCS is on the Council's website [www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk) and available for inspection at the Council Offices, (Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire, LE19 2EP).

### **3.0 Soundness**

Soundness means that the Inspector has to be satisfied that the Core Strategy is justified, effective and consistent with national policy. To be sound a DPD should be:

#### **3.1 Justified**

This means that the DPD should be based on a robust and credible evidence base involving:

- Research/fact finding: the choices made in the plan are backed up by facts.
- Evidence of participation of the local community and others having a stake in the area; and
- The DPD should also provide the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives. These alternatives should be realistic and subject to sustainability appraisal. The DPD should show how the policies and proposals help to ensure that the social, environmental, economic and resource use objectives of sustainability will be achieved.

#### **3.2 Effective**

This means the DPD should be deliverable, embracing:

- Sound infrastructure delivery planning;
- Having no regulatory or national planning barriers to delivery;
- Delivery partners who are signed up to it; and
- Coherence with the strategies of neighbouring authorities.

- The DPD should also be flexible and able to be monitored.
- The DPD should indicate who is to be responsible for making sure that the policies and proposals happen and when they will happen. The plan should be flexible to deal with changing circumstances, which may involve minor changes to respond to the outcome of the monitoring process or more significant changes to respond to problems such as lack of funding for major infrastructure proposals. Although it is important that policies are flexible, the DPD should make clear that major changes may require a formal review including public consultation.
- Any measures which the Council has included to make sure that targets are met should be clearly linked to an Annual Monitoring Report. This report must be produced each year by all local planning authorities and will show whether the DPD needs amendment.

### **3.3 Consistent with national policy**

The DPD should be consistent with national policy. Where there is a departure, the Council must provide clear and convincing reasons to justify its approach. Conversely, you may feel that the Council should include a policy or policies which would depart from national policy to some degree in order to meet a clearly identified and fully justified local need. In this instance it will be important for you to say in your representations what the local circumstances are which justify a different policy approach to that in national policy and support your assertion with evidence.

### **3.4 Representations supporting the soundness of the Core Strategy**

It is important that if you support the policies of the Core Strategy that you express your support so that the Inspector has the full picture in considering the Core Strategy.

### **4.0 General advice and information**

- Make clear why you feel the strategy does / does not meet the legal compliance check and / or the three tests of soundness;
- Ensure you are clear and to the point;
- Ensure that you back up your points with clear evidence to justify your comments;
- Note that after this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector.

### **5.0 Group responses**

Where you are part of a group with a common view, then it would be helpful if the group could submit a single representation outlining its concerns, rather than submitting a large number of individual comments repeating the same

points. The group should also make clear how many people it is representing and how it has been authorised.

## **6.0 Further assistance**

If you require assistance with completing the representation form or with any aspect of this guidance note please do not hesitate to contact the planning policy team on 0116 272 7765 or [planning.policy@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@blaby.gov.uk) and we will make arrangements to assist you.

Further detailed guidance on the preparation, publication and examination of DPDs is provided in Planning Policy Statement 12:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pps12lsp.pdf>

and in 'The Plan Making Manual':

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=109798>