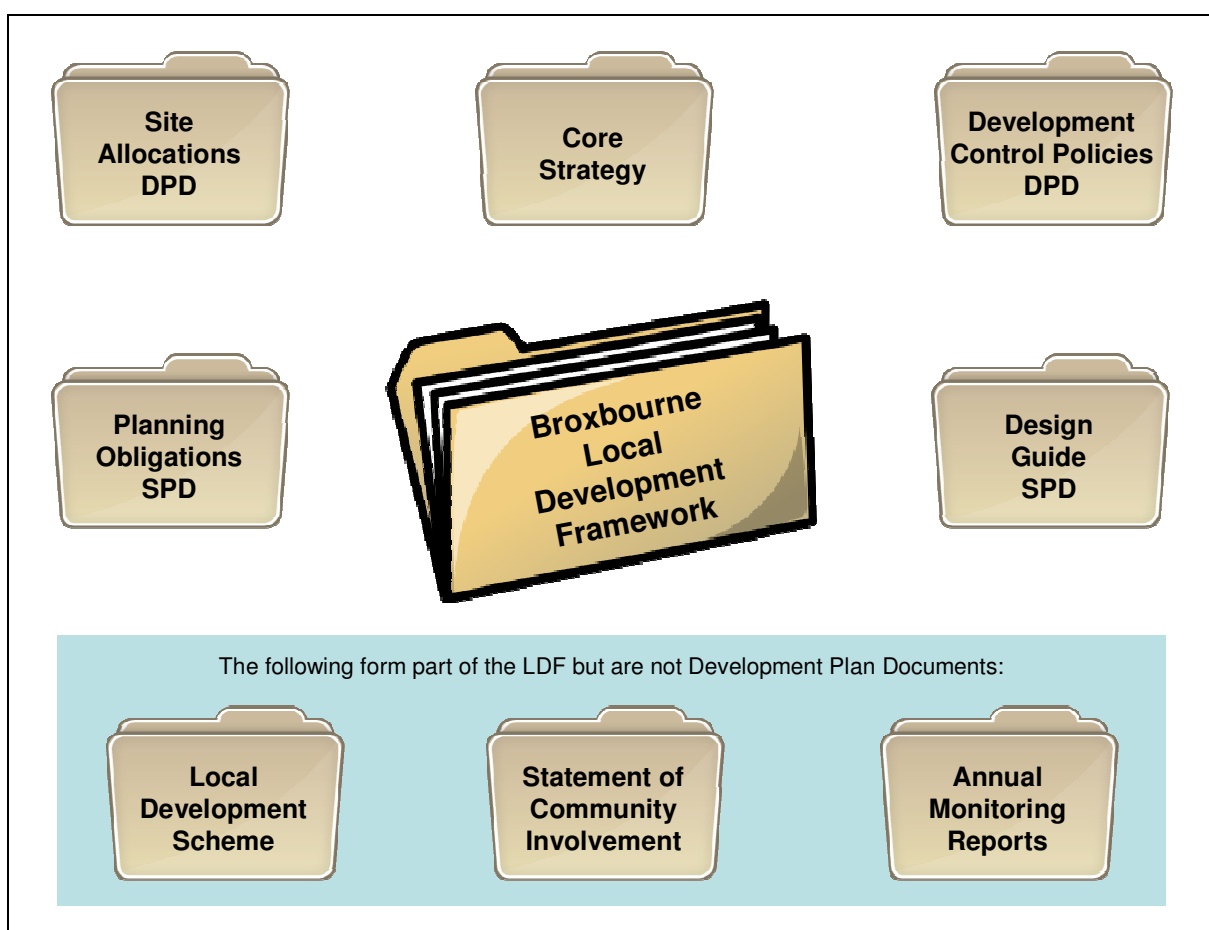


## Core Strategy FAQs

### ■ **What is the Core Strategy?**

The Core Strategy is a short and easy-to-read document which sets out a vision for the future of Broxbourne as a prosperous and sustainable community. It is one of the documents which will together form the Broxbourne Local Development Framework. Future documents that will also form part of the LDF include a Site Allocation DPD, a Development Control Policies DPD plus various supplementary documents covering issues such as design and planning obligations.



### ■ **What does the Core Strategy do?**

It is written for local residents to understand where and when development will take place, for landowners and developers to understand the rules governing development proposals and for service providers to understand what infrastructure and facilities are needed. The planning system requires all local authorities to prepare such a document as it forms part of the Local Development Framework which will ultimately replace the Broxbourne Local Plan 2005.

### ■ **Where can I get a copy of the Core Strategy from?**

A copy of the Core Strategy will be available to view and respond electronically via the Council's website ([www.broxbourne.gov.uk](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk)). Paper copies will also be available to view at the Council's offices at Bishops College, at One Stop Shops in Hoddesdon, Waltham Cross and Cheshunt and in public libraries. If you would like to be informed when the Core Strategy is published for comment then please send your contact details to the Planning Policy Team at the Council's postal address or [planningpolicy@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@broxbourne.gov.uk).

■ **How do I comment on the Core Strategy?**

The Core Strategy will be issued for six weeks of pre-submission publication at the end of August 2010. Anyone wishing to comment on the Core Strategy should read through it carefully and decide whether they consider it to be "sound" or "unsound". Anyone who believes that the Core Strategy is unsound should explain this view by stating whether policies are not sufficiently justified (i.e. they are not founded on a robust or credible evidence base or they are not the most appropriate option when considered against reasonable alternatives) or they are not sufficiently effective (i.e. they are not deliverable, they are not flexible, they are not able to be monitored or they are not consistent with national policy). All comments received by the Council within the six week publication period will be reviewed to determine whether there are any matters which make the Core Strategy unsound. If the Council is confident that the Core Strategy is sound then all comments will be sent to the Government at the same time as the document is formally submitted. They will then be taken into account by an independent inspector appointed to host an examination.

■ **What is the timetable for the adoption of the Core Strategy?**

The anticipated timetable for the adoption of the Core Strategy is as follows: pre-submission publication from the end of August until early October 2010, submission to the Government in November 2010, public examination in January 2011, receipt of the inspector's binding report in March 2011 and adoption in May 2011. A public examination is a process which examines the Core Strategy and considers whether it is a "sound" document which provides a suitable framework for the future of the borough in accordance with national guidance. A binding report is the document that the inspector will produce at the end of the public examination stating whether the Core Strategy is "sound", "unsound" or setting out what changes must be made to make it sound. Once the Core Strategy is adopted the Council will begin detailed work on the Site Allocation DPD and Development Control Policies DPD.

■ **What relationship does the Core Strategy have to other documents?**

The planning system states that the Core Strategy should reflect national guidance set out in Planning Policy Statements prepared by the Government and should seek to deliver local objectives set out in the Broxbourne Sustainable Community Strategy. When the Council

first started preparing the Core Strategy it was also expected to accord with policies set out in the East of England Plan, but this document has now been revoked by the new coalition Government and no longer forms part of the development plan for Broxbourne.

■ **How is the Core Strategy informed by evidence?**

The planning system states that the Core Strategy should be informed by a robust and comprehensive evidence base. The Council has therefore worked with relevant statutory organisations and qualified consultants to prepare evidence studies on important topics such as housing, green belt, employment, retail, transport, the environment and infrastructure. The Core Strategy has also been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that there are no undesirable or unintended environmental, economic or social effects and a Habitats Assessment to ensure that important wildlife sites are protected. All of the evidence studies and assessment that have been used to inform the Core Strategy are available to view on the Council's website ([www.broxbourne.gov.uk](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk)). Printed copies can also be viewed at the Council's offices at Bishops College and purchased on request.

■ **What is the Spatial Vision?**

The Spatial Vision is a description of how Broxbourne will change by 2026 and beyond. It describes the Council's overall ambitions for the borough to be a pleasant, prosperous, safe, healthy and green place. It explains how Broxbourne will be a more desirable community with a strong sense of community and a strong sense of place.

■ **What is a Key Diagram**

The Key Diagram is a visual representation of the Spatial Vision and strategic objectives of the Core Strategy. It shows in map form exactly where new development will take place and where important green spaces will be protected from development.

■ **What are Strategic Objectives?**

Strategic Objectives are actions that will be carried out to deliver the Spatial Vision and the themes of the Broxbourne Sustainable Community Strategy, particularly those four themes that deal with development issues.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about sustainability?**

The Core Strategy seeks to create sustainable neighbourhoods by planning for beneficial growth and regeneration in and around towns and villages. Development should provide high quality housing and job opportunities, protect open spaces, design out crime, provide habitats for wildlife and exhibit high standards of design. Development in urban areas should reduce the need to travel and development in small edge-of-urban and large green belt sites

should encourage more journeys by public transport, walking and cycling. All homes and other buildings should seek to improve their sustainability by minimising energy, water and waste, avoiding flood risk and reducing the impacts of climate change.

- **What does the Core Strategy say about housing?**

The Core Strategy sets a target to build an average of 240 homes a year. It focuses on development in urban areas in the short term but accepts that development will also need to take place on green belt sites in the medium and longer term. New housing in urban areas should respect the design, density and local character of surrounding buildings and open spaces in order to avoid cramped development. New housing in green belt locations should focus on larger family properties such as detached, semi-detached and bungalows. The Key Diagram identifies a number of green belt locations where large-scale housing development may be appropriate. These are called Areas of Search and include land to the West of Hoddesdon and land in the Goff's Oak area. The Core Strategy also seeks to resolve affordability issues by setting a target for 40% of homes to be available for social rent or to purchase through an intermediate scheme. Housing policies also support the provision of specialist housing for the elderly and disabled and guidance for gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople sites to grow or relocate.

- **Why should we provide more land for houses now that the East of England Plan has been revoked?**

The East of England Plan – which set a target of about 280 homes a year for Broxbourne – has recently been revoked by the new coalition Government. The abolition of this document does not mean that the need for new homes has disappeared however. Local evidence clearly demonstrates that new homes are needed for a variety of reason. Firstly the need for more homes is being fuelled by people living longer and by a decline in average household size as people choose to live on their own and as marriages and relationships end. Secondly, there are about 2,200 households on the Council's housing waiting list. This is something that the Council would like to tackle by building more affordable homes in areas where they are most needed. Thirdly, the emphasis on urban sites over the past decade has greatly increased the number of apartments and smaller properties in the borough, with far fewer larger family homes coming forward. This is something that the Council would like to address by building new homes for families in desirable locations.

- **When will we know which sites will be developed?**

The Council will be preparing a Site Allocation DPD in 2011 once the Core Strategy has been adopted. This document will consider all of the potential housing sites that have been promoted to the Council and will make a decision about which are most appropriate for

development in light of the need for housing and the particular merits or constraints of each site. Just as with the Core Strategy this document will be open to public consultation and must undergo sustainability appraisal and an examination before it can be adopted. The Site Allocation DPD is likely to be adopted in 2012.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about employment?**

The Core Strategy considers that Broxbourne will become a more prosperous community if it seeks to attract office-based companies and cluster activities such as biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and environmental industries. Employment policies therefore support development proposals which retain and create jobs in existing employment areas such as Essex Road in Hoddesdon and Delamare Road in Cheshunt and in town centres. It also supports new retail and leisure jobs at Greater Brookfield, new service and tourism activities associated with the presence and legacy of the Olympic Games and new high-value jobs in the Park Plaza area.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about the environment?**

The Core Strategy seeks to conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment in the borough. It sets out environmental policies to protect the green belt and to carry out a detailed review for any future releases for housing or employment development. It recognises the importance of open spaces and green links and seeks to enhance them as places for leisure and recreation, as valuable habitats for wildlife and as areas to store flood waters. Policies also seeks to protect sites which are protected for their landscape, wildlife, scientific, archaeological or heritage value. All development proposals should exhibit a high quality of design and construction.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about town centres and retail?**

The Core Strategy sets out a retail strategy to ensure that retail centres grow and develop relative to their size and status. Brookfield Farm (which comprises M&S and Tesco), Brookfield Retail Park (which comprises Argos, Next, River Island, etc) and a strategic allocation at Greater Brookfield will together form Brookfield Borough Centre as a non-food and leisure destination for local residents. Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross town centres will remain lively and attractive centres for food shopping, non-food retailers, eating/drinking opportunities and other community facilities. Cheshunt Old Pond District Centre and the network of Local Centres will continue to provide a range of smaller food and non-food shops.

■ **What is Greater Brookfield?**

Greater Brookfield is a strategic allocation for land to the north of Brookfield Farm and Brookfield Retail Park for in the order of 50,000 sq.m. of retail floorspace and in the order of 15,000 sq.m. of leisure floorspace as well as about 300 new homes. It will be a prestigious development that will bring high quality shops, a multi-screen cinema, bowling alley, restaurants, a hotel and other facilities into Broxbourne. It will also create over 2,000 new jobs and generate £22 million of additional wages for local people, much of which will be spent locally, further bolstering the local economy. Major transport improvements will help to resolve many of the access and circulation problems that currently exist in the area and provide attractive new public transport, walking and cycling links from residential areas.

■ **Will Greater Brookfield destroy existing town centres?**

The simple answer is no. The Council has retail evidence which clearly demonstrates that Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross town centres and Cheshunt Old Pond district centres will remain viable shopping areas for local residents. The Council has recently published a Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy which sets out short, medium and long term actions to attract new traders and shoppers and improve the street scene. The Council is also working on a Waltham Cross Town Centre Strategy which will contain ambitious options to redevelop some of the underused and vacant areas of the town centre. There is a clear role for Greater Brookfield to offer local residents high-value shops and leisure activities which are not currently available in Broxbourne and for Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross town centres to continue providing food and non-food shopping, eating/drinking and community facilities.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about transport?**

The Core Strategy seeks to reduce the need to travel and the length of journeys by locating development in places that are well related to services and facilities and supported by public transport, walking and cycling opportunities. There is a particular emphasis on links between residential area and key destinations such as employment areas, town centres and train stations. This will include safe and attractive walking and cycling routes. The Council will work with the local highway authority and transport providers such as rail and bus companies to provide new infrastructure and services. This will include work on an A10 Route Management Strategy to avoid congestion at key links and junction. There will also be a review of car parking standards to ensure that key destinations such as town centres and train stations have a decent level of car parking and to avoid on-street parking problems in residential areas.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about infrastructure?**

The Core Strategy recognises that new housing, employment, retail, leisure and other development will create a demand for new infrastructure such as utilities, schools, healthcare

centres and sports facilities. Policies seek to work with relevant service providers to ensure that infrastructure items are in place to support development and to ensure that all areas of the borough are well served by community facilities. This will ensure that such services and facilities are not over-burdened by population growth. The Core Strategy also contains a number of tables listing the range of strategies and documents that will be used to deliver the objectives of its policies, the monitoring indicators that will be used to measure success against policy objectives and the lead agencies who will pro-actively or indirectly help to implement the policy objectives.

■ **What does the Core Strategy say about planning contributions?**

The Core Strategy recognises that the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities are vital to create sustainable neighbourhoods. One way of providing these things is by securing planning contributions from developers. The policy therefore states that the Council will prepare an Infrastructure Schedule of items that are needed to support development and will use this to establish standards, targets and costs for planning contributions.

■ **When is development likely to take place?**

The Core Strategy plans for an average of 240 homes a year. In the short term the main emphasis will be on the 900 homes that have already have planning permission as well as about 475 homes in other suitable sites in existing towns and villages. This approach will be supported by about 300 homes at Greater Brookfield. It is anticipated that a planning application for this site will be submitted soon after the Core Strategy is adopted in 2012. In the medium and long term after 2016 it is likely that the Council will need to complement housing development for about 1,140 homes on urban sites with small edge-of-urban and/or large green belt sites. This approach will lead to the provision of about 3,840 new homes in the 15 year period to 2026. The Council hopes that land at Park Plaza North will be brought forward for employment development in the short or medium term and that this will be complemented by business park development at Park Plaza West.

■ **What other documents and strategies is the Council producing?**

To take forward the policies of the Core Strategy the Council will also produce a Site Allocation DPD which will formally allocate sites for development and a Development Control Policies DPD which will sets out detailed guidance for development proposals. The Planning Team has recently produced the Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy to guide the future of the town centre and is currently working with landowners and others to look at development opportunities in Waltham Cross town centre. The Planning Team has also and will continue to prepare development briefs to guide proposals for important or complex sites. The vision and objectives of the Core Strategy will also be delivered through other documents such as

the Broxbourne Sustainable Community Strategy, the Broxbourne Housing Strategy and the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan.

- **Why do the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Assessment criticise the Core Strategy?**

The Core Strategy has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that there are no undesirable or unintended environmental, economic or social effects and a Habitats Assessment to ensure that important wildlife sites are protected. Both documents identify issues that might arise as a consequence of development, notably that housing policies could divide the community along socio-economic lines, that independent shops could be replaced by clothing brands and leisure goods that are only accessible to higher paid sections of the community and that important wildlife sites may be affected within suitable interventions. These are important issues that the Council is fully aware of and will seek to address through other Local Development Framework documents. Ultimately however the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Assessment conclude that the Core Strategy is “sound” and will have positive sustainability merits.

- **Why didn't the Council change its policies to respond to the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Assessment?**

The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Assessment is to identify consequences that may arise as a result of policies and development proposals. The Council is confident that its affordable housing policy will help to provide affordable housing throughout the borough and in areas of particular need. New affordable housing sites will be allocated through the Site Allocation DPD process and this will give the Council and its stakeholders the opportunity to consider the merits and downsides of development in particular locations. The Council is also confident that its retail policies will provide opportunities for high-value shops and leisure activities at Greater Brookfield and the retention and establishment of new independent shops in Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross town centres, Cheshunt Old Pond district centre and the network of Local Centres located around the borough. All of the consequences identified in the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Assessment will be considered as the Council progresses its other DPDs and when determining individual planning applications.

- **Who can I contact for more information?**

If you would like further information on any of the topics raised by the Core Strategy please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01992 785559 or [planningpolicy@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@broxbourne.gov.uk).

- **Glossary**

Local Development Framework (LDF) is the name of the suite of planning and non-planning documents which establish the planning policy framework for Broxbourne.

Development Plan Document (DPD) is the name for planning documents which allocate land or establish policies to determine planning applications.

Site Allocation DPD is a document which allocated sites and areas of land for development

Development Control Policies DPD is a document which sets out detailed local policies that will be used to determine planning applications.