

# Topic Paper 1

## Core Strategy Review

### Vision, Objectives and Development Strategy

Crawley Borough Council adopted its Core Strategy back in November 2007, providing the spatial vision, objectives and development strategy for Crawley up to 2016. The Council has now begun preparing the successor to the Core Strategy – the Core Strategy Review – which will cover a much longer period up to 2026. Although there are aspects of the original Core Strategy that can be retained there are other areas where significant change has occurred in the intervening years and this will need to be reflected in the new document.

This consultation period is the first of the Review and further consultation stages are planned before the document is adopted in early 2012. This is your opportunity to shape the way the town develops over the next 20 years and the Council would appreciate and value any comments you have on this Topic Paper or any of the others that form part of this consultation.

#### Summary of the Current Context

The Core Strategy Review will include the spatial vision, objectives and development strategy for Crawley, but has to be set within the framework of national policy, Government planning policy statements, regional policy in the South East Plan Proposed Modifications and Economic Strategy, Crawley's Local Strategic Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy and also the existing Crawley Borough Core Strategy. Each individual Topic Paper details the key implications of this hierarchy of policy as well as setting out the issues, options and potential policy direction.

#### Indication of the Key Issues Relating to the Core Strategy Review Vision, Objectives and Development Strategy

- Ensuring the sustainable development of the town and responding to the threat of climate change, encouraging low carbon development, overseeing the most appropriate sustainable design and construction is employed and development is located in sustainable locations.
- Ensuring development is supported by the appropriate provision of services, facilities, utilities, community infrastructure, sustainable transport infrastructure, and its delivery programme and funding is included in the Core Strategy Implementation Plan.
- Accommodating sufficient housing to meet the requirements of the South East Plan Proposed Modifications. The South East Plan Proposed Modifications requires the Council to plan for at least 7,500 dwellings from 2006 to 2026. However, there is uncertainty over the deliverability of a new neighbourhood at the North East Sector (NES). Should the NES remain unavailable as a consequence of possible Gatwick expansion the challenge will be how to ensure a continued and

strong supply of appropriate housing (market and affordable), which may include the identification of sites beyond the Borough boundary.

- The need for and implications of strategic employment provision at Crawley, or across the Crawley/Gatwick sub region.
- Securing the growth, vitality and viability of the Town Centre to meet the needs of the sub region and managing the potential longer term delivery of Town Centre North (TCN).
- Continued conservation and enhancement of the town's social, natural, environmental and built quality and character in the context of increased sub regional growth and development pressure.
- Continued uncertainty regarding the possibility of a second runway at Gatwick and the need to establish robust policy for growth of the airport as a one runway two terminal airport.
- Short term, the implications of the current economic climate to drive forward the objectives, vision and development strategy of the town to 2026, particularly in terms of economic development, town centre renewal and residential development.

### **Indication of the Options for Addressing the Key Issues Outlined Above**

In terms of planning for the town to 2026 three broad scenarios/options are considered to exist. However, there are a number of policy approaches that are considered to remain sound and should form part of any scenario/option. These policy approaches are outlined below.

- The New Town and neighbourhood principle continue to be adopted.
- The town's character and heritage will continue to be conserved and enhanced.

- Sustainable transport, including rail station improvements, and further Fastway development will support the town.
- Development will be expected to maximise opportunities for sustainable development, design, and construction, and will strive for low carbon energy efficiency.

### **Scenario 1 - A sub region with a South East regional focus**

- Allocate sufficient land to accommodate 7,500 dwellings to 2026 and accept further residential development at Crawley beyond the Borough boundary to enable Crawley to meet and perform a wider sub regional function. Ensure sites are allocated to secure affordable housing provision and an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet Strategic Housing Market Assessment guidance.
- Allocate sufficient land and outline policies to maintain Crawley's sub regional economic position, support the town's existing main employment areas and accommodate substantial strategic employment provision to cement Crawley's economic strength in the sub region and increase competition with other regions in the South East.
- Positively encourage development of a university / Higher Education provision at Crawley to address skills issues.
- Continue to facilitate the delivery of Town Centre North and town centre renewal to ensure the town centre's vitality and viability, and sub regional and regional dominance and position.
- Continue to safeguard for a possible second runway at Gatwick.
- Ensure development is delivered to high sustainability standards.

### **Scenario 2 - A sub regional focus**

- Allocate land within the Borough that does not undermine the neighbourhood and masterplanning principles of the town.
- If insufficient land can be allocated within the Borough boundary to meet the South East Plan requirement the Council acknowledge that development at Crawley (beyond the Borough boundary) may be acceptable to contribute to the Borough's requirement.
- Ensure sites are allocated to secure affordable housing provision and an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet Strategic Housing Market Assessment guidance.
- Allocate sufficient land and outline policies to maintain Crawley's sub regional economic position and work with neighbouring authorities to examine the potential for strategic employment to establish a sub regional spatial economic vision, which may equate to allocations at Crawley, or application of smart growth. A university, or improved Higher Education provision may form part of this approach.
- Continue to safeguard for a possible second runway at Gatwick.
- Continue to facilitate the delivery of Town Centre North and town centre renewal to ensure the town centre's vitality and viability and sub regional dominance.

### **Scenario 3 - Crawley Borough focus**

This approach would largely be the same as Scenario 2, however there would be the following variations.

- Allocate land within the Borough that does not undermine the neighbourhood and masterplanning principles of the town.
- In the event that planning permission is



## Main Issues for Consultation

- Should the Council favour, for the purposes of this Core Strategy Review, a combination of the sub regional focus and the Crawley Borough focus scenarios? This should ensure the town's continued vitality, sustainable growth and position at the heart of the sub region, whilst acknowledging the uncertainties regarding the current economic climate (in terms of town centre development, economic development and residential development), the possibility of a second runway at Gatwick and the availability of the North East Sector.
- Alternatively, do you believe the Council should favour an alternative approach?

refused for the North East Sector at the June Inquiry and insufficient land can be allocated within the Borough boundary to meet the South East Plan requirement, the Council seek to exclude the North East Sector from the Borough's requirement on the basis that the Airport White Paper is preventing the Council meeting that requirement within its boundary.

- Ensure sites are allocated to secure affordable housing provision and an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet Strategic Housing Market Assessment guidance.
- Advocate and employ policies that protect the town's main employment areas and ensure growth in accordance with solely smart growth, which would cement sub regional dominance, but do little in terms of achieving sub regional competition.

### Indication of the Potential Direction at this Stage

#### Crawley 2026 Vision

At this stage, a combination of the sub regional focus and the Crawley Borough

focus scenarios is favoured. This approach is the most appropriate and sensible in light of several key uncertainties, which significantly influence the approach the Council can adopt in planning to 2026. The uncertainties include the possibility of a second runway at Gatwick, the availability of the North East Sector, the current economic climate and its implications for economic development and the role of the Gatwick Diamond, the nature of town centre development, and the residential market and rate of development.

On this basis it is likely that by 2026:

- The town would have accommodated 7,500 dwellings, but only with development of the North East Sector, with a notable proportion of affordable housing and a dwelling mix that reflects the town's requirements.
- The New Town and neighbourhood principle will have remained at the heart of development within and at Crawley.
- The town's character and heritage would have been conserved and enhanced and new innovative design and

masterplanning would have delivered the next generation of character.

- West of Bewbush and possibly up to two further neighbourhoods may have been developed, or be under construction, possibly including the North East Sector.
- Town Centre North would be complete and the town will be operating as a regional retail destination.
- Selected neighbourhood centres would have undergone a programme of regeneration and renewal and all would still be performing their everyday convenience role.
- Crawley will be still at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond economically.
- Manor Royal will have undergone Council supported environmental improvement and would have maintained, perhaps enhanced its sub regional economic function through smart growth.
- The town may have accommodated strategic employment development to increase the sub region's position/competition against other sub regions within the region.
- Employment development would have been of a form to address the Gatwick



Diamond's economic weaknesses and deficiencies.

- Higher Education opportunities within the town would have been increased to provide skills opportunities.
- The Council would have formulated and implemented a comprehensive transport strategy for the Borough, with a strong focus on sustainable transport.
- The Government would have made a definitive decision regarding the requirement for a second runway at Gatwick, whilst the Council would have continued to support Gatwick as a single runway two terminal operation.
- The town would be supported by improved access to sustainable transport, including rail station improvements, and further Fastway development, which is likely to have been predominately development funded.
- Development would have maximised opportunities for sustainable development, design, and construction, and will have strived for low carbon energy efficiency.

### **Evidence Base**

The evidence base informing this early stage of the formulation of Core Strategy Review is outlined in detail under the relevant Topic Papers, but includes:

- Annual Monitoring Report
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- Employment Land Review - Part 1
- At Crawley Study 2009
- Sustainability and Climate Change Feasibility Report
- Infrastructure Position Statements
- Draft Crawley Transport Strategy Baseline Information Report