

Have your say:

Help to plan
your future

What is the Core Strategy?

The Core Strategy will set out the broad policies and proposals for shaping development in the Borough, including general locations for new housing and employment growth up to 2031. It will form part of the Local Development Framework, which will replace Brentwood's existing Local Plan.

What is the Sustainable Community Strategy?

This document is produced by Brentwood's Local Strategic Partnership, which brings together public, private, community and voluntary sectors in creating a shared vision and action plan to achieve mutual objectives for the Borough.

Why and how you should get involved

Nothing has been decided at this early stage and your views and comments are therefore very important in determining the way in which these strategies are taken forward. This leaflet refers to a number of questions set out in a separate comment form. Simply read through this leaflet or, preferably, the main consultation document, and then send us your comments following the instructions on the back page.

The Council is at an early stage in the process of preparing two important strategies that will assist in managing future change in the Borough up to 2031. These two documents are the review of the existing Sustainable Community Strategy and the Core Strategy, part of the new Local Development Framework. We want to ensure that these documents reflect, as far as possible, the needs, expectations and views of everyone in the community.

This is your opportunity to get involved in shaping the future of Brentwood. This leaflet explains briefly the key issues and some of the options that need to be considered. These are more fully set out in a consultation document (see details on the back page). The Council is keen that you take this opportunity and actively engage in drawing up the new framework for managing the future growth and development of the Borough.



The Vision

Both strategies should be based on a shared vision for Brentwood that reflects the issues, values and challenges facing the Borough. The following vision is set out for discussion:

To build on and enhance all that is best and valued of the existing character and environmental qualities of the town and its surrounding rural areas, ensuring that it is a place that provides a high quality of life for those that live, work and relax in the Borough, both now and in the future.

What do you think?

Please see section 1 of the comment form.



Strategic Objectives

An important part of this process is to identify a set of objectives that will assist the delivery of the overall vision and provide the context for more detailed policies and proposals. The following are suggested objectives for consideration, but there may well be others which you feel are as or more important (these are fully set out in the comment form).

- Direct growth to the most sustainable locations
- Maximise the use of available brownfield land
- Encourage the prudent use of resources, reduce pollution and waste and encourage the use of renewable energy
- Preserve and enhance the natural and historic environment, biodiversity and visual character of the Borough
- Seek to provide everyone with access to appropriate local housing
- Promote social inclusion through equality of access
- Provide high quality shopping, leisure, cultural and community facilities
- Improve public transport and encourage sustainable transport choices
- Ensure a prosperous and vibrant local economy
- Enhance the attraction of Brentwood Town Centre as the focus for shopping, employment and cultural activities in the Borough
- Encourage all residents to lead healthy lives
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime and ensure safe and secure living and working environments.



What do you think?

Please see section 2 of the comment form.



Themes for a Sustainable Brentwood

We have identified five themes that the Core Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy should address. These should provide a framework for the policies that will deliver the vision and the strategic objectives.



Theme 1 - Sustainable Use of Resources

Minimising climate change together with safeguarding natural resources are important global issues and therefore we need to ensure that development takes place in an environmentally sustainable manner. We need to look at ways to minimise our use of energy and natural resources and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. We also need to reduce pollution and waste, promote recycling and improve air and water quality within the Borough.

Promoting sustainable and innovative design and construction, the use of low carbon technologies, renewable energy schemes and alternatives to the use of the private car will assist in reducing our environmental impact.



What do you think?

Please see section 3 of the comment form.



Theme 2 - Protection of the Natural and Built Environment and Local Character



It is important to protect the Borough's historic and natural environments, as these form a key part of its character and local distinctiveness. The Borough has a large number of listed buildings, 13 conservation areas, three Historic Parks and Gardens, and 12 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest, many County Wildlife Sites and other areas important for biodiversity. However, we must also ensure that, whilst protecting our environment, we allow development opportunities for new houses, businesses and other facilities to meet the Borough's needs.

What do you think?

Please see section 4 of the comment form.



It is important to achieve high quality design that allows for innovation but is sensitive to the local character and environmental qualities.



Theme 3 - Local Economy and Economic Development

Prosperous Economy

Economic prosperity is as important as social and environmental issues. There is a need to make provision for additional local jobs and suitable premises to support local economic development. The East of England Plan requires Brentwood to contribute to the need for some 56,000 jobs across mid Essex between 2001-21.

Brentwood is a relatively prosperous Borough with high average incomes and low levels of unemployment. However economic activity is relatively low. Jobs in the Borough are predominantly in the service sector as well as business activities and financial services.

More than 50% of the working population travel outside of the Borough to work, particularly in to London. There is an inflow of workers into unskilled jobs, particularly the service sector.

Shopping, Leisure and Culture

Brentwood town centre is the focus for shopping, leisure and cultural provision, but is constrained by limited development opportunities and congestion. It will need to develop its distinctive shopping offer to maintain its viability and off-set the competition from larger centres. The Borough's other district and local centres also have an important role in providing accessibility to local facilities.



What do you think?

Please see section 5 of the comment form.



Theme 4 - Meeting People's Needs



Housing

Brentwood is required to build 3,500 additional dwellings between 2001 and 2021. So far, 1400 dwellings have been built (2008) and many more have planning permission, but we must determine how and where the remaining properties should be provided and then how to accommodate further provision to 2031. We also need to consider the appropriate mix of dwellings types and sizes.

High house prices mean that some people cannot afford to buy or rent their own homes. The Council would like to see more affordable housing in the Borough and we need to decide on how this can best be achieved.

What do you think?

Please see section 6 of the comment form.





Transport & Infrastructure

Brentwood is well connected by both road and rail transport networks, but there is a high level of peak hour congestion. The Crossrail proposal will assist in increasing rail capacity.

Large numbers of people travel by car to work, school and shops. The Council believes that it is important to try to reduce the levels of car usage and to promote other forms of travel, such as public transport, walking and cycling.

The provision of community and health facilities, roads and other infrastructure has not necessarily kept pace with development. With tighter public spending, funding of infrastructure is a growing concern. We need to find ways to improve the delivery of infrastructure improvements to meet current and future needs.

What do you think?

Please see section 6 of the comment form.



Theme 5 - Healthier and Safer Communities

A high proportion of Brentwood's population enjoys a good quality of life and has a high life expectancy, but there are areas of deprivation. The Borough has a relatively high number of elderly people over 65 and this is expected to continue to increase, which will give rise to challenges for social and health services, and housing provision.

Although incidences of crime are relatively low in the Borough, there is a need to reduce the fear of crime and to develop a safer and healthier environment, which could lead to a better quality of life for all.



What do you think?

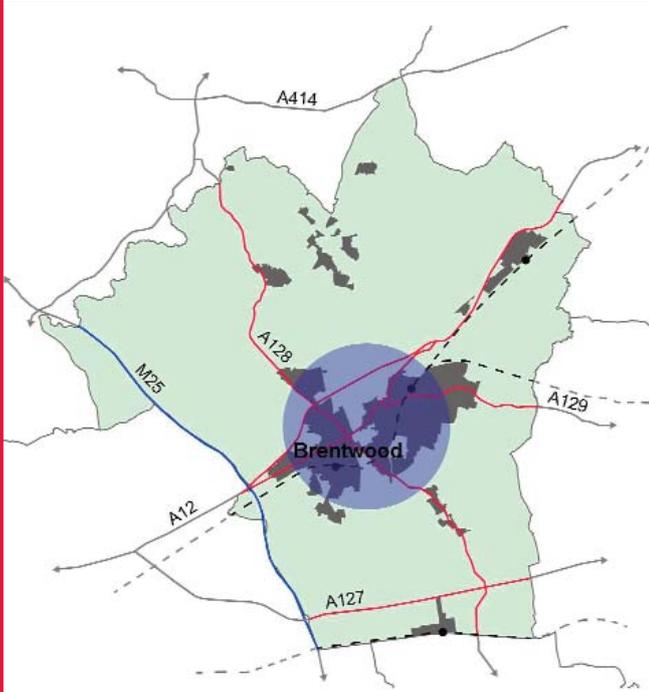
Please see section 7 of the comment form.



Spatial Options

The Core Strategy will need to determine where additional development should take place over the period to 2031. Four different spatial options are suggested for you to consider.

Option 1: Centralised Growth – development within and around the town of Brentwood



Benefits

- Efficient use of land and buildings within the town
- Provides for development where access to jobs, services and other facilities are greatest
- Reduces pressures on the wider Green Belt
- Opportunity to reduce the need to travel
- Reduces the impact of development pressures over a large part of the Borough
- Potential to maximise economic benefits of Crossrail

Weaknesses

- Limited brownfield opportunities
- Potential increase in congestion in the town centre and local road network
- Potential to overstretch existing infrastructure
- High density development may not be in keeping with the character of the urban areas
- Restriction on business growth in other centres
- Impact on the viability of rural settlements
- Possible coalescence with adjacent settlements
- Environmental constraints to the south of the town

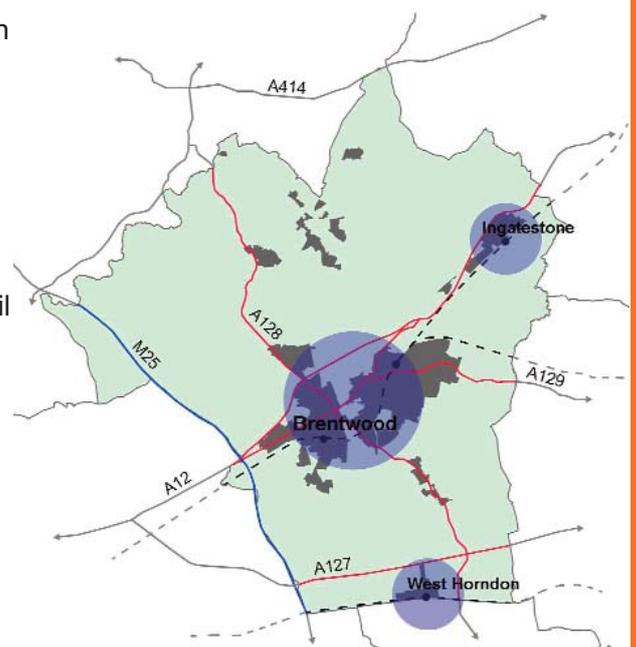
Option 2: Transport Corridor Led Growth – development concentrated along transport corridors and in the main centres

Benefits

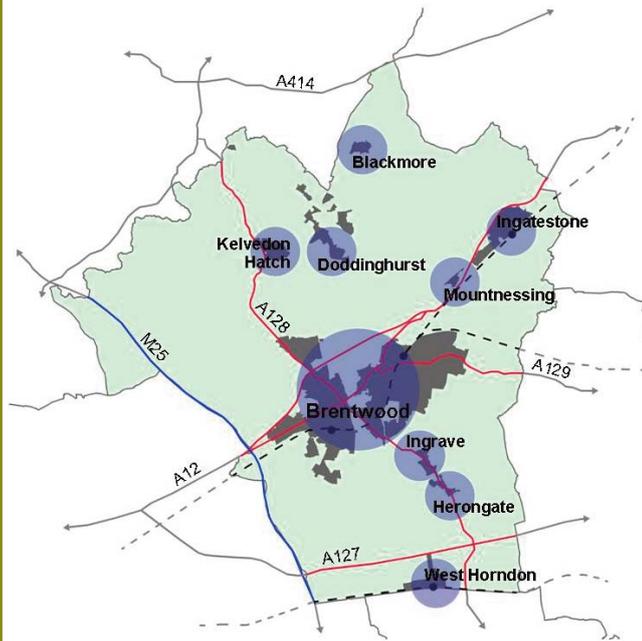
- Efficient use of land and buildings in the Borough's main settlements
- Provides for development where access to jobs, services and facilities is relatively good
- Potential to direct housing and economic development to areas with good rail links
- Potential to enhance and/or improve services and facilities in Ingatestone and West Horndon
- Potential to maximise the economic benefits of Crossrail
- Reduces pressures on the wider Green Belt

Weaknesses

- Limited brownfield opportunities
- High density development may not be in keeping with the character of the urban areas
- Encourages growth in areas where the availability of land and buildings may be limited
- Increased demand on other facilities, such as schools, recreation and shopping
- Potential impact on the Green Belt around the main settlements



Option 3: Semi-Dispersed Growth – development around Brentwood town and the main villages



Benefits

- Efficient use of land and buildings in the Borough's main towns and villages
- Provides for development where access to jobs, services and other facilities are relatively good
- Potential to improve infrastructure in the larger villages
- Better meets the objective of locating development where it gives access to services and facilities
- Opportunity to improve public transport in parts of the rural area
- Opportunity for improving community facilities, including education, leisure and culture in main settlements

Weaknesses

- Limited brownfield opportunities in some areas
- Potential impact on the Green Belt and areas of high amenity value across the Borough
- Cost of new infrastructure and the provision of community facilities
- Increased need to travel, with both house and jobs dispersed across the Borough and with poor access to public transport facilities

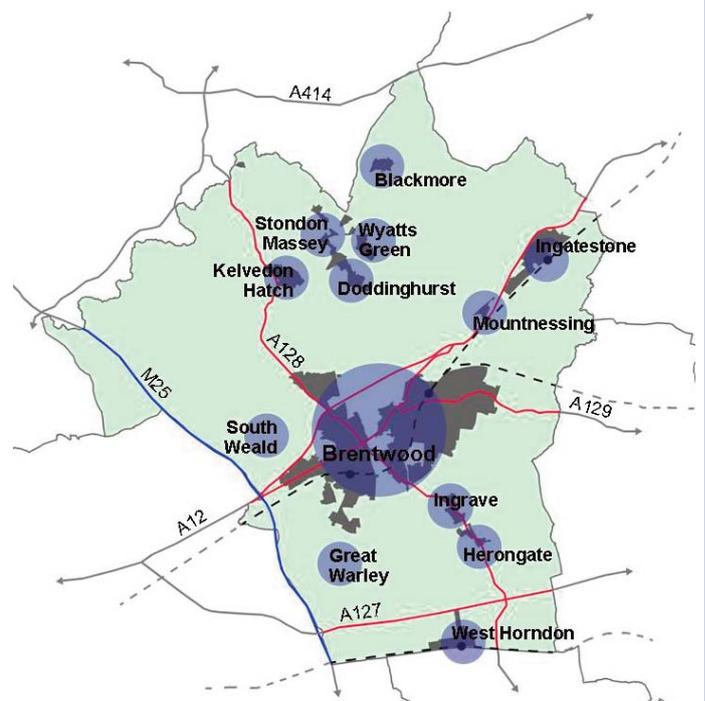
Option 4: Dispersed Growth – development at all settlements across the Borough

Benefits

- Efficient use of land and buildings across the Borough
- Any Green Belt land releases limited in impact on individual settlements
- Potential for high quality development at densities in keeping with existing character
- Opportunities to contribute to the viability of the rural economy
- Potential to provide improved local services and/or maintain the viability of existing services

Weaknesses

- Limited brownfield opportunities in some areas
- Potential impact on the Green Belt and areas of high amenity value across the Borough
- Cost of new infrastructure and the provision of community facilities
- Increase need to travel, with both house and jobs dispersed across the Borough and with poor access to public transport facilities



What do you think?

Please see section 8 of the comment form.

What Next?

There will be further opportunities for you to be involved as we go through the process of preparing the strategies, before the Sustainable Community Strategy is adopted in early 2010 and the Core Strategy is adopted in 2011.

Viewing the full document

A full copy of the document can be viewed on the Council's website at www.brentwood.gov.uk and at the Town Hall, Information Centre and local libraries. You can also view full details about the consultation on the website.



Housing Land 'Call for Sites'

An important part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy is a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

If you wish the Council to consider a site for housing development, you should fill in the 'Call for Sites' form available on the Council's website at www.brentwood.gov.uk or obtainable from the Planning Policy Team by emailing planning.policy@brentwood.gov.uk or calling 01277 312530/312610.



We can provide this document in other formats, such as large print, audio tape or a translation. For more information please call 01277 312629.

Have your say

The Council is keen to hear your views on the questions raised as we want to make sure we get it right. You can make comments by:

Online: Go to www.brentwood.gov.uk and complete our online comment form.

Email: Email your comments to planning.policy@brentwood.gov.uk.

Post: Obtain a paper copy of the comment form from the Town Hall, Information Centre or your local library and return to LDF/SCS Project Team, Brentwood Borough Council, Town Hall, Ingrave Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8AY.

Fax: Fax your completed comment form or comments to 01277 312635.

If you have any queries or for further guidance on completing the comment form, you can also email us as above or telephone on 01277 312530/312610.

All comments should reach the Council by 5pm on 23rd December 2009.