

Local Authority Core Strategies and saved Local Plan policies

Core Strategies

Local authorities in the Bristol area are currently in the process of drawing up their Core Strategies. This follows the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires each local planning authority to replace its Local Plan with a Local Development Framework (LDF). The Core Strategies will be the primary planning document within each local authority's LDF.

FOSBR has recently responded to consultations about their draft Core Strategies by [Bristol City Council](#), [Bath & North East Somerset Council](#) and [North Somerset Council](#). [South Gloucestershire](#) has recently opened consultation on its draft Core Strategy. Anyone can respond to this consultation; a FOSBR response is currently in preparation.

Local Plans

At FOSBR's AGM in January, concern was expressed that the Core Strategies of the four local authorities appear to be less favourable to rail than the Local Plans they will replace. We have investigated this, and referred to Local Plan policies in our response to the draft Core Strategies where appropriate. As a matter of principle, Core Strategies are supposed to be less detailed than Local Plans. Further detail may be provided in due course by Supplementary Planning Documents.

Although Core Strategies are intended to replace Local Plans, it is possible for a local authority to save policies from its Local Plan that it wishes to continue to be effective. A local authority must apply to the Government for permission to do this.

Saved Policies in the West of England area

[Bristol](#) and [South Gloucestershire](#) have both been granted leave to save their rail transport policies. We understand from correspondence with the councils concerned that [B&NES](#) and [North Somerset](#) have applied for leave to save their rail transport policies too.

This means that, in all four authorities, the rail policies in their Local Plans will continue to be in effect until they are explicitly revoked and superseded by the Core Strategy or by a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Development Framework.

North Somerset has expressed the intention that the rail policies in its Local Plan will be superseded by its proposed Core Strategy when it is adopted (in July 2012). FOSBR is concerned that some of the rail commitments in the Local Plan do not appear in the Core Strategy, and urges that the Local Plan policies should continue in effect until superseded by policies no less favourable to rail.