

Broad Areas Draft Indicative Option Working Paper

Spatial Policy Section
July 2010

Changes in Government Policy and assumed housing numbers for Bracknell Forest:

Following the formation of the Coalition Government, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced (in May 2010) his intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). The South East Plan is the RSS that covers Bracknell Forest and includes a requirement for 12,780 new homes for the Borough between 2006–2026. Although this formed the basis of the consultation carried out earlier this year, it is no longer appropriate to use it as a basis for planning future development locations.

The new Government has not yet clarified how the housing requirement is to be calculated, but the Conservative Party's Green Paper, 'Open Source Planning', suggests that housing numbers produced for an earlier version of the South East Plan (the 'Option 1' figures) could be used as a baseline for future work. The figure for Bracknell Forest was 10,780 homes for the plan period which is 2,000 lower than the final RSS figure. This figure also forms the basis of the housing provision policy (Policy CS15) set out in the Bracknell Forest Core Strategy, adopted in 2008. The Green Paper makes it clear that development is not to be prevented by the new planning regime and indeed states that "we believe the country needs to see a major upswing in development and construction as soon as possible".

This working paper has been prepared in order to assess the impact of these reduced figures, enable the work to progress and provide an indication of current thinking for residents and those with direct interests in possible sites. It uses the requirement of 10,780 homes, pending any further announcements from Government. **Figure 1** shows how this requirement might be met, taking into consideration the assumptions set out below.

The calculations in **Figure 1** include sites that had already been agreed at March 2010 for 7,433 homes. This requires additional sites to be found for 3,347 further homes. If we include an allowance for some new homes on sites within existing defined settlements and some small sites on the edge of settlements, we need to find new major sites outside settlements for 2,373 homes. This figure may be subject to change pending further Government announcements and is based on the assumptions set out below.

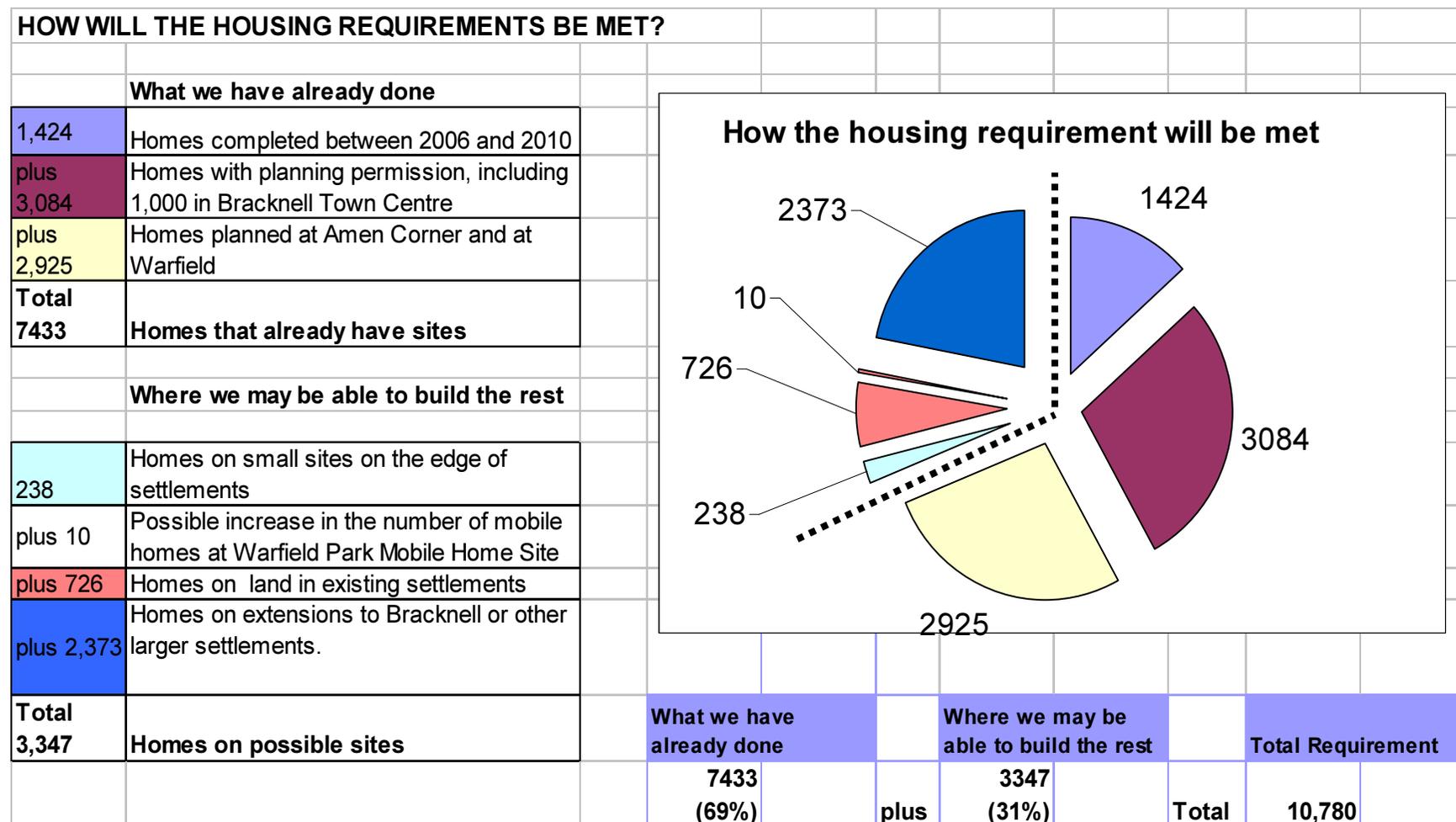
Other Assumptions:

- The sites within defined settlements currently include some that involve private residential gardens. The Government announced in June 2010, that these would no longer be classified as previously developed land. Whilst the Core Strategy (Policy CS2) suggests that previously developed land and '**other land**' within defined settlements should be allocated for development before looking at extensions to defined settlements, there may be a need to re-consider private residential gardens by looking further at possible impacts on the character of an area. Although it is unlikely that there would be justification for removing this source of supply, the estimate of the number of dwellings likely to come forward may decrease. This would result in an increase in the requirement from urban extensions.
- We may need to remove some sites from consideration if we find out from owners/developers that they are unlikely to be available for development over the plan period. This may increase the requirement from urban extensions.
- In response to comments made during the February-April consultation about the number of empty office blocks that could be used for housing, we will investigate further the suitability of some employment land for housing development. If additional suitable and available employment land is found for residential

development, this would contribute to the category of sites within identified settlements, and reduce the requirement from urban extensions.

- Figures have not been adjusted to take account of a low-density option (below 35 dwellings per hectare (dph)) following the Government's announcement in June 2010 to remove reference to a minimum density (30 dph) from national policy (Planning Policy Statement 3). It should, however, be noted that the revisions to PPS3 do not remove the guidance that land should be used efficiently.
- Given recent Government announcements, we have not included small windfall sites under the sub-heading 'where we may build the rest' to make up our housing numbers. Future announcements from the Government may require us to review this stance.

Figure 1: Housing Requirement



Draft Indicative Options for Locations for Growth

Over 7,000 comments were received in response to the Options consultation during February to April 2010. Most of these comments were about possible Broad Areas and we have been considering the issues raised. Although some background evidence is yet to be finalised, we have received final reports on some topics and interim reports on others. The consultation responses, technical work and the Council's adopted Core Strategy approach for locations for development has led to a rationale for an indicative option for the pattern of future growth.

The rationale can be summarised as follows:

- Prioritising the use of previously developed land (parts of Broad Areas 2 and 3)
- Prioritising the use of land with the best links to Bracknell, the Borough's most sustainable settlement, (the southern parts of Broad Areas 4 and 5)
- It has emerged that the majority of Broad Area 8 will not be available for residential development during the plan period so this land has been eliminated and a small part of the area identified as a possible 'rounding-off' site.
- It is has become clear that a significant area at the centre of Broad Area 6 will not be available for residential development and that without this land it would not form a coherent urban extension.
- Elimination of the broad areas that would form extensions to less sustainable settlements and performed less well against sustainability objectives (Broad Areas 1 and 7 and much of the northern parts of Broad Areas 4 and 5 around Binfield)
- In light of the number of homes now being considered in the North of the Borough and the priority to use previously developed land it is not proposed to pursue the concept of a 'Northern Arc' of development. This concentration of development did not appear to be a critical issue in the responses on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

This approach has led to the identification of parts of four of the original eight possible Broad Areas (shown hatched in blue) as having potential to form extensions to existing settlements as a draft indicative option, as shown on the map below:

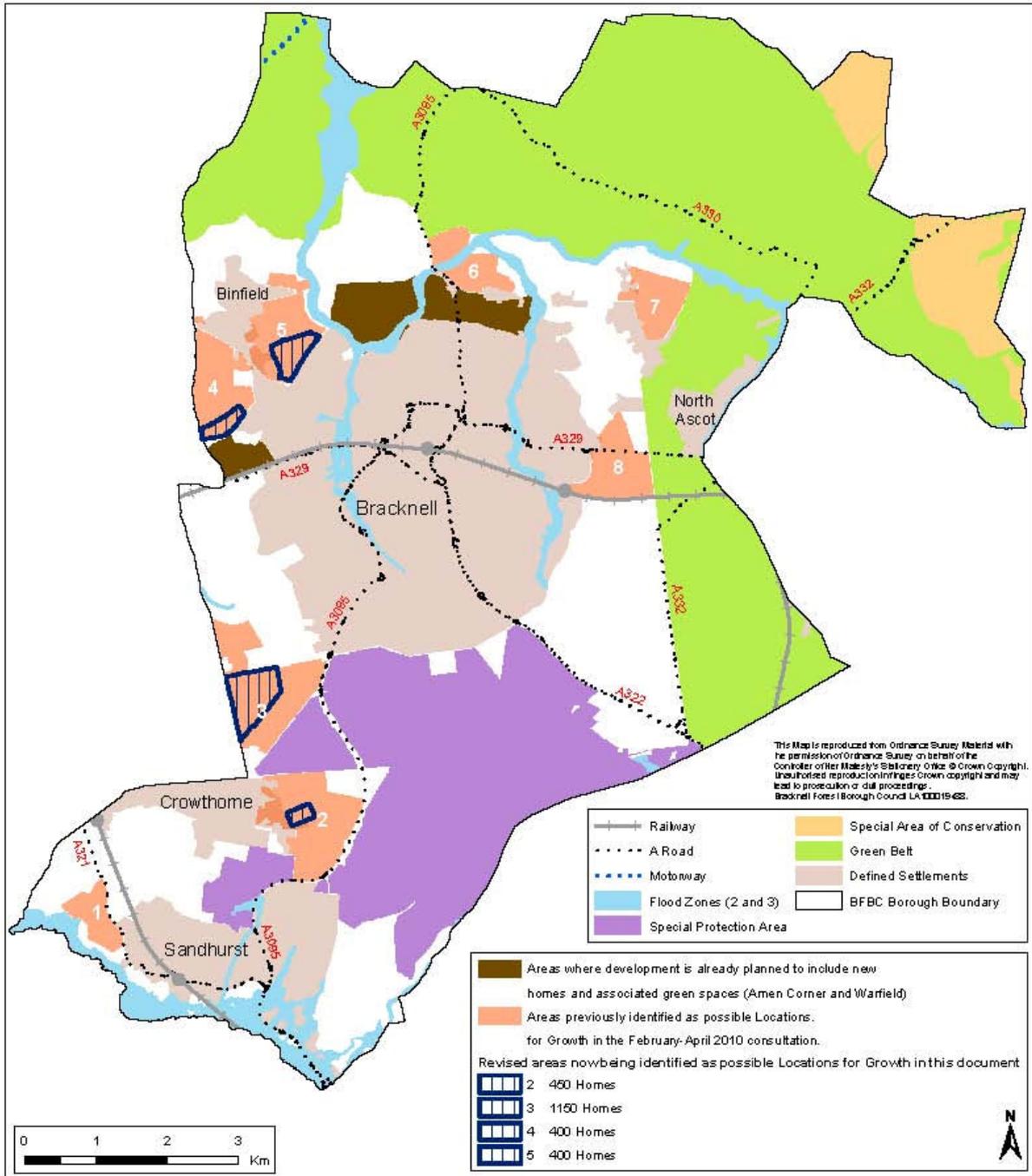


Figure 2: Constraints and Draft Indicative Options for Growth

Illustrative concept master plans for the 4 draft indicative options for development are set out on the following pages to show where urban extensions to accommodate around 2,400 homes could be located. These relate to:

- Broadmoor (450 homes)
- North East Crowthorne (1,150 homes)
- East and West Binfield combined (800 homes)

Broadmoor
(Part of former Broad Area 2)

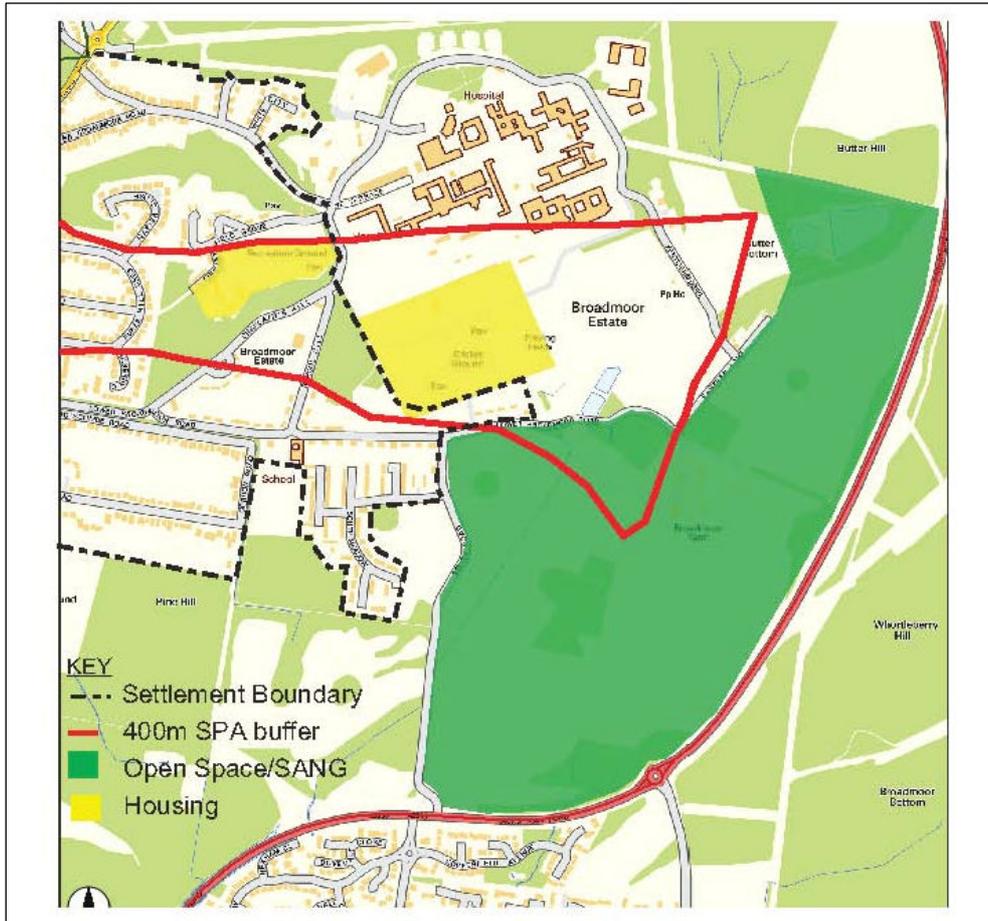


Figure 3: Broadmoor Illustrative Concept Plan

Objectives

- Safeguard and maintain the setting of the Broadmoor Hospital Listed Building and associated Historic Park and Garden.
- Re-provide Open Space of Public Value lost through new housing development.
- Deliver sustainable transport and improved accessibility for Crowthorne.
- Housing would be an enabling development for a comprehensive hospital regeneration, and not as a stand alone development.

Requirements

- Approximately, but no greater than 350 houses outside the settlement at Lower Broadmoor Road.
- 100 houses within the settlement at Cricket Field Grove.
- 4.5ha of Open Space comprising 2.4ha passive and 2.1ha active space.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) to mitigate impact upon the Thames Basins Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) in excess of the standard requirement.
- No residential development within 400m buffer of SPA.

The figures for new homes do not include 30 units at School Hill, which are likely to be progressed as a separate application.

North East Crowthorne
(Part of former Broad Area 3)

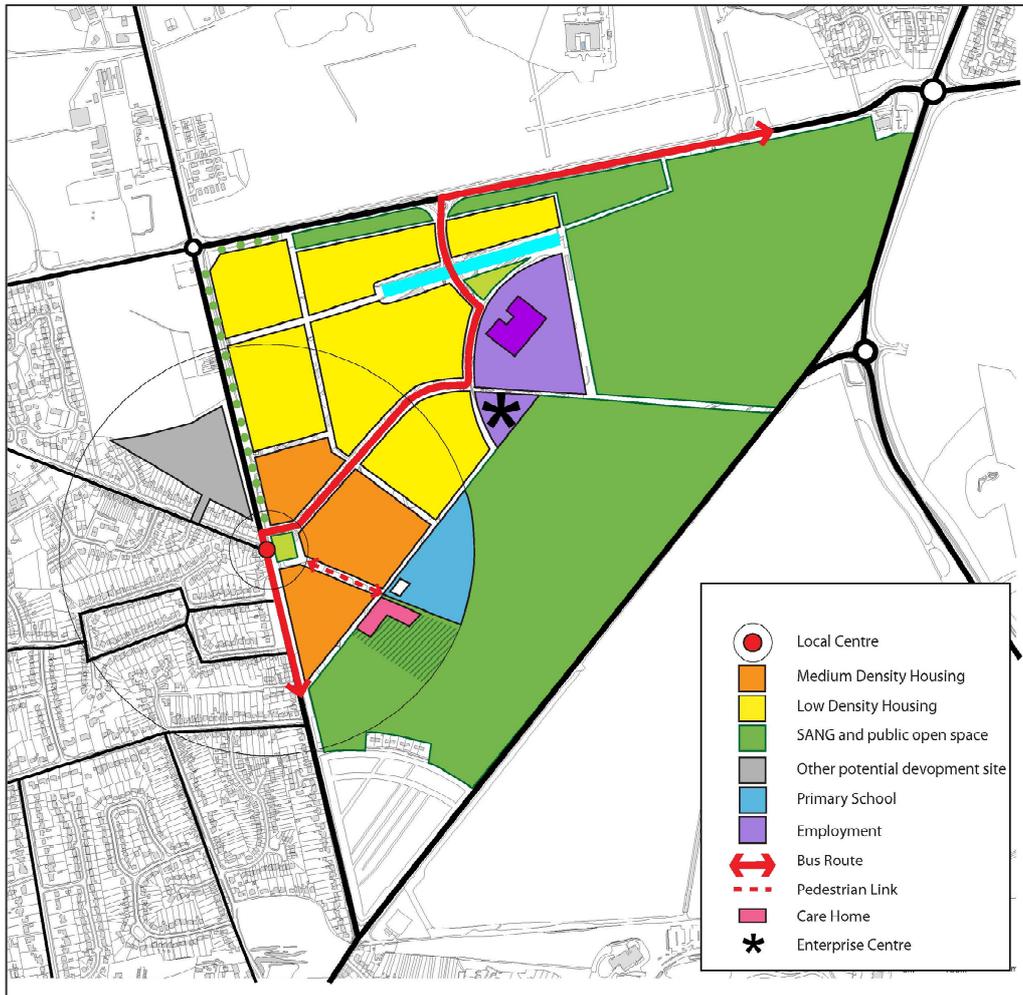


Figure 4: North East Crowthorne Illustrative Concept Plan

Objectives

- Local Centre located along Old Wokingham Road to maximise viability and accessibility to public transport route.
- Potential public transport link to Nine Mile Ride.
- Higher density housing located around Local Centre and overlooking public open space.
- Potential to integrate Transport Research Laboratory site with potential housing site to the west of Old Wokingham Road in Wokingham Borough.

Requirements

- Approximately, but no greater than 1,150 houses.
- 2-form entry primary school.
- Local Centre.
- Care home.
- Enterprise Centre, for small and new businesses (replacement facility).
- 12ha Public Open Space comprising 5.5ha active space and 6.5ha passive space.
- Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) to mitigate impact upon the Thames Basins Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) in excess of the standard requirement.
- No residential development within 400m buffer of SPA.

Land north of London Road and land at Wood Lane, Binfield Parish
(Part of former Broad Areas 4 and 5)

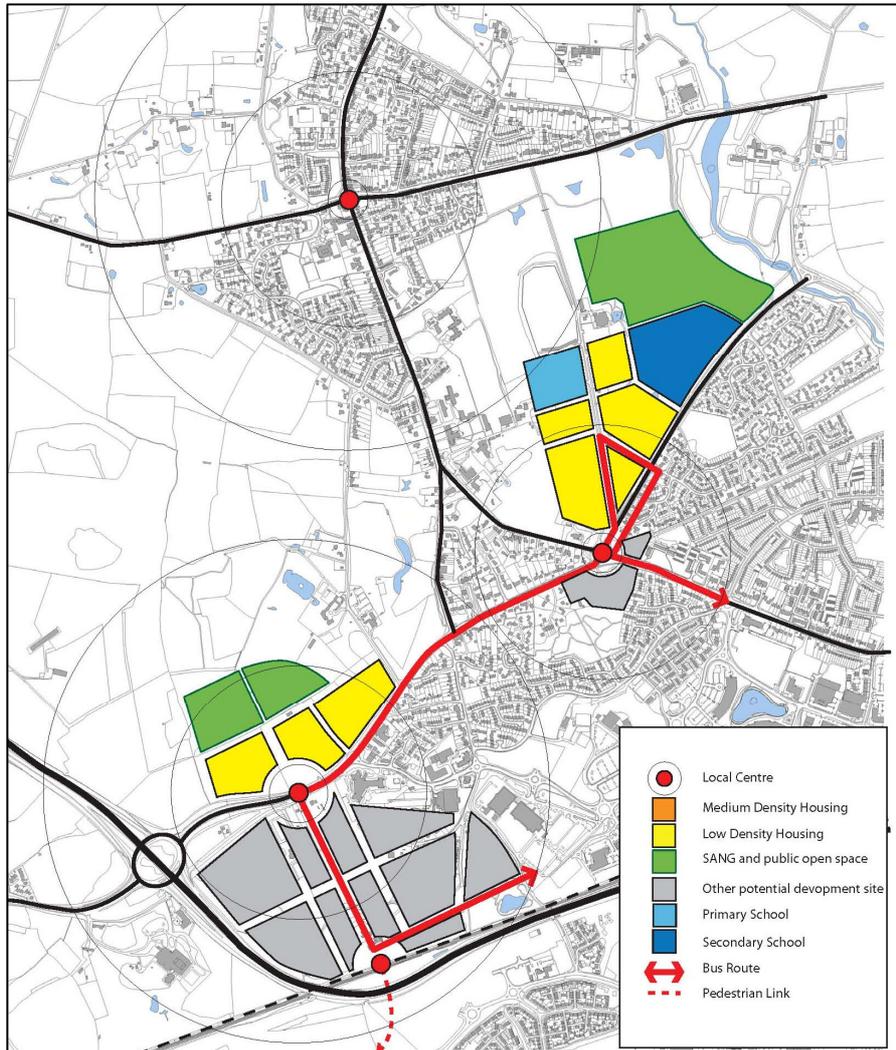


Figure 5: Binfield Illustrative Concept Plan

Objectives

- Open land would be retained around Binfield village to maintain the character and identity of the village.
- Within West Binfield, development would be concentrated to the south of the area, in order to link with planned development at Amen Corner. Important areas relating to Local Wildlife Sites (formerly Wildlife Heritage Sites) would be retained.
- Within East Binfield, new development would be centred around Wood Lane (south of Forest Road). The site would provide for the relocation of Bracknell Town Football Club and potentially a Football Academy.
- A new primary school and secondary school would be provided.

Requirements

- c.400 homes East Binfield.
- c.400 homes West Binfield.
- Primary School.
- Secondary School.
- Relocated Football Club and potential Football Academy.
- 8ha Open Space comprising 3.7ha active and 4.3ha passive.
- 15ha Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) to mitigate impact upon the Thames Basins Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).

The figures for new homes do not include two possible 'rounding-off' sites, identified on the edge of Binfield Village, which are listed at the end of this paper.

List of possible 'rounding-off' sites

Following further consideration of the extent of the Broad Areas, some further possible stand-alone rounding off sites have been identified from within the previous Broad Areas. If these sites were to be allocated in the future, it would require a 'rounding-off' of the relevant settlement boundaries to include them within the appropriate settlement. The following table comprises a full list of the possible rounding off sites:

SHLAA Ref	Former Broad Area	Site Address	Estimated Capacity (net)
24	4	Land East of Murrell Hill Lane, South of Foxley Lane and North of September Cottage, Binfield	67
93	4	Land at junction of Forest Road and Foxley Lane, Binfield	31
204	8	Land at Bog Lane, New Forest Ride, Warfield	60
34	n/a	White Cairn, Dukes Ride, Crowthorne	16
165	n/a	Land south of the Limes, Forest Road, Warfield	10
251	n/a	White Gates, Mushroom Castle	54
		TOTAL	238

Background Evidence

Additional studies have been undertaken and completed since the consultation on the Site Allocations Participation Document. This adds to our existing evidence base comprising Retail Study, Employment Land Review and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment:

- Accessibility Assessment
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Master Planning
- Ecology Assessment (Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey)

Infrastructure

An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is being prepared to identify what infrastructure should be provided, where, by whom and when. This must be set at a level that does not prevent development. This could mean setting priorities to make sure that critical infrastructure is not reduced or left out.

Following the recent announcements by Government on the changes to the baseline housing numbers, further work is being undertaken in relation to the IDP. At present, there are no significant infrastructure concerns that have been highlighted that would prevent development taking place on any of the draft indicative option sites.