

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
15th NOVEMBER 2011

**SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT
PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION
(Director of Environment, Culture and Communities)**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 The Purpose of this decision is to seek the Executive's recommendation to Council to submit the SADPD to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent inspector. Pursuant to this recommendation the Executive's recommendation is sought to publish the Draft Submission version of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD) and related changes to the Proposals Map for a six week consultation in January – February 2012.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That, under the provisions of Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Executive recommends to Council that the Draft Submission SADPD, the Proposals Map changes and all supporting documents be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
- 2.2 That, subject to Council accepting the recommendation set out at 2.1 above, the Executive approves the Draft Submission SADPD at Appendix B (along with the supporting documents and revised Proposals Map at Appendices A, and C through to Y) for publication for a statutory six week consultation to commence on 16 January 2012.
- 2.3 That, subject to Council accepting the recommendation set out at 2.1 above, the Executive approve that consultation on the Draft Submission SADPD and the proposed changes to the Proposals Map is carried out as described in Section 8 of this report.

Please note that the Draft Submission SADPD at Appendix B to this report includes tracked changes to identify where the document has changed from the previous 'Preferred Option' version. A 'clean' version with the tracked changes removed will be appended to the Full Council report for approval.

3 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Production of the Site Allocations DPD is an important element in delivering the Council's adopted Core Strategy Vision to 2026 and to:
- ensure that major future developments in the Borough are properly planned and accompanied by the necessary infrastructure
 - ensure that the Council has a robust and continuous five year supply of housing land and is therefore less vulnerable to inappropriate developments being allowed on appeal; and,
 - ensure that the Council has an up-to-date development plan to enable it to introduce the Community Infrastructure Levy.

- 3.2 The publication of the Draft Submission SADPD and its subsequent Submission to the Secretary of State are statutory stages in the process of adopting a Development Plan Document as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended 2008).

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The options of abandoning the SADPD and re-commencing work as a Review of the Core Strategy and of delaying the SADPD in order to await greater certainty over the Localism Bill and the National Planning Policy Framework were both considered and rejected for the following reasons:
- The Core Strategy Review will need to look at a longer timeframe (probably at least to 2031). This will require the allocation of significant additional sites to those proposed in the current draft Site Allocations document. At current levels of requirement this would mean finding sites for another 2,695 homes in addition to those identified in the SADPD. This would require a lot of additional consultation and technical work which would add years of delay to securing a defensible land supply and increasing the likelihood of inappropriate development, such as development in areas with poor access to services or lacking infrastructure provision, being permitted (potentially through the appeal process) in the meantime.
 - The Council currently lacks a five year housing supply against both the Regional Plan target and the lower target in the Council's adopted Core Strategy. We are therefore vulnerable to inappropriate housing applications. In spite of the downturn in the housing market there is still significant interest in securing sites for development both in the short and longer term. The lengthy period required following allocation for large sites to start delivering completed new homes means we need plan for this now.
 - Significant delay in establishing an up to date plan would also result in the Council being unable to secure developer funding for some essential infrastructure as the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations mean that after April 2014 the Council will not be able to pool contributions from more than five developments towards any single infrastructure project. The Community Infrastructure Levy can only be introduced on the basis of an up to date plan which this Council currently lacks in relation to the identification of development sites and the associated infrastructure delivery. This would have serious implications for the provision of improvements to the highway network and securing such things as the new secondary school needed in the north of the Borough. Without the SADPD in place it will be very hard to achieve properly planned infrastructure through reactive responses to developers' proposals.
 - The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "In the absence of an up-to-date and consistent plan, planning applications should be determined accordance with this Framework, including its presumption in favour of sustainable development" (Paragraph 26). This presumption will make it even harder to refuse inappropriate planning applications if the Council does not have a robust housing land supply position established through the SADPD. The draft NPPF is already capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeal decisions.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Site Allocations Process to Date

- 5.1 The Site Allocations DPD work has been underway for several years as it was originally envisaged that it would run in parallel with the preparation of the Core Strategy which was adopted in February 2008. It was subsequently agreed that the site allocations process would follow the adoption of the Core Strategy and work commenced on the current document at the end of 2009. Early stages of the process comprised evidence gathering and stakeholder engagement. The evidence gathered included completion of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to identify a long list of available sites for assessment for their suitability for development.
- 5.2 The first major consultation ran from February to April 2010. This was an 'issues and options' stage for which a Participation Document was published which identified eight 'broad areas' with potential for development. It also asked for views on an option whereby development would be focused on a 'northern arc' across the north of Bracknell urban area.
- 5.3 Following this consultation, four evening Design Workshops were held during May 2010 which considered the eight potential new development areas (the 'broad areas') in more detail. Representatives from local resident associations, amenity groups, Parish/Town and Borough Councillors were invited.
- 5.4 In all, over 1,300 respondents made representations to the consultation, which were collated and considered by the Council. These representations and further technical work were used to narrow down to four preferred strategic urban extensions. It was proposed to abandon the concept of a northern arc of development in favour of a less concentrated approach with two of the new strategic sites being proposed on the edge of Binfield and two on the edge of Crowthorne.
- 5.5 The change of government at this time and the announcement of the proposed abolition of regional strategies also resulted in the decision to proceed on the basis of the lower housing target in the adopted Core Strategy (10,780 from 2006-2026) rather than the one in the South East Plan (12,780).
- 5.6 These changes were embodied in a Preferred Option document which included policies and illustrative concept plans for the proposed major urban extensions. It also identified a set of smaller sites to be allocated within, and on the edge of existing urban areas and included a number of proposed policies for other land uses and policy designations.

The Preferred Option Consultation

- 5.7 The Preferred Option consultation ran from 8 November 2010 to 17 January 2011. The consultation was open to all and the consultation methods used built on those for the SADPD Participation consultation and improved / expanded these where possible, such as:
 - Holding evening exhibitions (exhibitions at the Participation Stage were only held during the day and on Saturdays);

- Enabling online consultation on all parts of the document (previously there were targeted questions which narrowed down the points of the document where people could make comments);
 - Simplifying the response form;
 - Simplifying the consultation portal pages to be clearer and more concise;
 - Producing fact sheets in relation to the 4 main urban extension areas;
 - Undertaking a non-statutory press advert in the Bracknell Standard – a free local newspaper delivered to every household in the Borough; and,
 - Producing a schedule of Frequently Asked Questions which was published on the consultation website.
- 5.8 In addition to the above, meetings were also held with Crowthorne Parish Council (19 October 2010) and Binfield Parish Council (3 November 2010).
- 5.9 The consultation was advertised on the Council website including a headline feature on the homepage from mid-November for approximately two weeks and again in January 2011. The consultation was streamed through social networking sites (e.g. Twitter, Facebook) via an RSS news feed. In addition to the article in the Bracknell Standard, referred to above, an article appeared in the Winter 2010 edition of the Borough Council newspaper, Town and Country.
- 5.10 Around 800 responses were received to the Preferred Option consultation, which are summarised together with the Council's response in the 'Summary of Responses to SADPD Preferred Option Nov 2010 – Jan 2011' document. This document also sets out how the Council has taken the representations into account and any changes that have been made to the document as a result.
- 5.11 A summary of the key issues raised during the consultation is attached at Appendix A and the Summaries of all the representations received and the responses to them is attached at Appendix E.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.12 Throughout the process the SADPD has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal, which has incorporated the requirements under European law to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of plans policies and programmes. The Sustainability Appraisal process involves examination of the impact of proposed plans and policies against economic, social and environmental objectives, and ensures that these issues are taken into account at every stage so that sustainable development is delivered on the ground. It also appraises the different options that are put forward in the development of policies and the identification of allocation sites. The objectives for sustainability were predominantly set at the time of the Core Strategy and were judged sound at the time of its examination.
- 5.13 The Sustainability Appraisal has also been subject to consultation along with the previous iterations of the SADPD. The main Sustainability Appraisal Report is attached at Appendix F. The SA Appendices are at Appendix G to this report and there is a non-technical summary of the SA at Appendix H to this report.

Overview and Scrutiny

- 5.14 A Working Group of the ECC Overview and Scrutiny Panel was established to examine the SADPD proposals in detail. The working group met twice; firstly to explore the background to the SADPD and agree what aspects they wished to consider, and secondly to consider the draft SADPD itself along with a paper on how the four major sites were selected from the initial eight broad areas. This Paper is attached at Appendix W. The Working Group made a number of detailed comments on the draft SADPD but did not request any substantive changes. The notes of the Group's meetings are attached at Appendix Y.

Localism Bill and the Draft National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.15 The Localism Bill has been making its passage through parliament and is important in connection with the SADPD as it includes the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies.

The Process to Adoption

- 5.16 There are still a number of stages in the process of adopting the Site Allocations DPD as Council Policy. These are summarised in the table below:

Event	Date
Executive Recommendation considered at Council	30 November 2011
Publication of Draft Submission SADPD	Jan 2012
Consultation on Draft Submission SADPD (based on tests of soundness)	Jan – Feb 2012
Submission to Secretary of State	Jun 2012
Exam	Oct 2012
Report	Jan 2013
Adopt	Mar 2013

6 THE DRAFT SUBMISSION SADPD

Housing Provision

- 6.1 A key component of the SADPD is the identification of sites to meet the Borough's housing needs. The housing requirement in the Core Strategy is to provide 10,780 homes by 2026. Of this total, some are already committed through existing permissions, homes already completed and sites identified in the Core Strategy. As shown below, this leaves us to find additional sites for 3,465 homes (at 30th September 2011) to meet the Borough's projected need to 2026. We also need to identify sites for additional homes beyond this target in order to demonstrate that we have a robust and flexible supply of land and ensure that there is choice in the housing market.

- 6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework is likely to provide guidance on the level of flexibility required. The Draft Submission SADPD proposes sites for an additional 3,896 homes in order to demonstrate how flexibility will be achieved. It should also be noted that the numbers are based on the adopted Core Strategy on the understanding that the South East Plan (and the housing targets it contains) will be abolished when the Localism Bill takes effect in law.

Homes Already Committed to be Allocated	
Homes planned at Amen Corner & Warfield	2,925
Additional Homes to be Allocated	
Small windfall allowance (excluding first 10 years)	150
Small edge of settlement sites	198
Sites within settlements	1,478
<i>Extensions to Settlements</i>	
Land at Broadmoor, Crowthorne	270
Land at TRL, Crowthorne	1,000
Amen Corner North, Binfield	400
Land at Blue Mountain, Binfield	400
Total Additional Homes to be Allocated	3,896

- 6.3 The proposed new allocations therefore total 3,896 homes which is 431 over the outstanding requirement. This gives us a robust housing supply position and provides for some choice in the market for housing land.

Major Urban Extensions

- 6.4 In addition to the two major urban extensions identified in the Core Strategy, the four new major urban extensions set out in the Preferred Option are proposed for allocation, namely, land at Broadmoor, Crowthorne, land at the Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne, land at Amen Corner North, Binfield and land at the Blue Mountain golf course, Binfield. The proposals for these sites are summarised below and the SADPD includes more detailed concept plans for the sites based on further technical work and the findings of the consultation.

Broadmoor

- 6.5 Land at Broadmoor, Crowthorne is identified for a comprehensive well designed mixed-use development, including the following:
- A redeveloped hospital and ancillary buildings.
 - 210 residential units (including affordable housing) within the walled garden area (the final number to be subject to further consideration of the impacts on the heritage value of the site and the justification for the development including the needs of the listed building).
 - 60 retirement apartments outside the walled garden.
 - A small research park.
 - Re-use of the existing hospital buildings for an appropriate use.
 - Nursing home / Care Home.

- New Access Road
- On site open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

6.6 Changes to the Concept Plan from the Preferred Option version for Broadmoor are minimal, partly due to the heavily constrained nature of the site which restricts the development options available. The changes include

- an extension to the identified mixed use area to contain the areas for existing ancillary uses and the proposed medi-park
- The addition of the main listed building and the proposed housing sites at Cricket Field Grove and School Hill.

Transport Research Laboratory

6.7 Land at the Transport Research Laboratory at Crowthorne is identified for a comprehensive well designed mixed-use development that maintains a buffer between Crowthorne and Bracknell, including the following:

- 1,000 residential units (including affordable housing) (located outside of the 400m buffer to the Thames Basins Heath Special Protection Area);
- Neighbourhood centre;
- Primary School;
- Multi-functional community hub;
- Nursing home / Care Home;
- A replacement for the existing enterprise centre for small and new businesses, unless a better alternative site can be found elsewhere);
- A depot site (to enable the redevelopment of the Council's existing depot site in Bracknell);
- Provision of green routes along Nine Mile Ride and Old Wokingham Road; and,
- On site open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

6.8 Changes to the Concept Plan from the Preferred Option version for TRL include:

- A deeper landscaped buffer along Nine Mile Ride;
- A larger open area at the Old Wokingham Road / Nine Mile Ride junction;
- Inclusion of a community facility;
- Screening to the proposed depot site; and,
- An indication of where landmark and gateway buildings may be located.

Amen Corner North

- 6.9 Land at Amen Corner North, Binfield, is identified for a comprehensive well designed development that maintains a buffer between Binfield, Wokingham and Bracknell, including the following:
- 400 residential units (including affordable housing); and,
 - On site open space and SANG.
- 6.10 Changes to the Concept Plan from the Preferred Option version for Amen Corner North include:
- A realignment of the housing area to respond better to the site's topography;
 - Indication of existing footway links;
 - Proposed green connections to form attractive routes through the site;
 - A 20m buffer zone between housing and the ancient woodland; and,
 - An indication of where landmark and gateway buildings may be located.

Blue Mountain

- 6.11 Land at Blue Mountain Binfield as shown on the Proposals Map and Illustrative Concept Plan is identified for a comprehensive well designed mixed-use development that maintains a buffer between Binfield and Bracknell. Proposals for the site include land for a new Secondary School and Special Educational Needs facility. These will serve the broad needs arising from the planned new developments across the north of the Borough and provide additional capacity for increased numbers coming through existing primary schools. The proposals for the site include the following:
- 400 residential units (including affordable housing);
 - Land for a range of educational facilities, including:
 - a primary school;
 - a secondary school; and ,
 - a special education needs facility;
 - Multi-functional community hub (may be incorporated within education facilities and/or the football club);
 - A new football ground; and,
 - On site open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).
- 6.12 Changes to the Concept Plan from the Preferred Option version for Blue Mountain include:

- A change to the site boundary to reflect that land at the southern tip is not available;
- Indication of existing footway links;
- Realignment of the proposed bus route;
- Green frontage to Temple Way;
- Education land to reflect requirements of EC Harris study;
- A green connection to provide an attractive route through the site; and,
- An indication of where landmark and gateway buildings may be located.

6.13 The Council has a leasehold interest in the land at Blue Mountain. This has not affected the planning assessment of the site's sustainability. The site is also covered by a Section 52 legal agreement dating from 1990 in which the owner of the land covenants with the Borough Council as follows:- "Not to use the golf course land for anything other than a golf course or other sporting or other recreational facilities or as open space and not to construct any buildings on the golf course land other than as reasonably required in connection with any of the uses mentioned in this paragraph." The Section 52 agreement can be varied or released by agreement between the landowner and the Council. Whether or not it is necessary or appropriate to vary or discharge the agreement is a matter which the Council may consider in due course.

Infrastructure

6.14 The policies for the new strategic urban extensions include details of the infrastructure required in order to mitigate their impacts. Further detail of these requirements and how they are expected to be met are included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This has been updated from the version that accompanied the Preferred Option to take account of further technical work and the results of the consultation. The current version of the IDP is attached at Appendix I. The infrastructure work has included extensive transport modelling. This modelling has incorporated background growth based on planned levels of development within adjoining Boroughs and from the strategic highway network. In the case of Wokingham Borough, where there are more detailed proposals for major developments, the more detailed traffic projections arising from the planned developments have been incorporated in the model more detailed data to be used in the model. The findings of this work are summarised in the Journey Time Report at Appendix N. Further background and methodology information and details of proposed highway improvements are in the Transport Study Reports at Appendices K, L and M.

Amen Corner South and Warfield

6.15 The SADPD will allocate these sites for the levels of housing development identified in their respective Core Strategy policies (725 new homes for Amen Corner South and 2,200 for Warfield). The policies also set out the infrastructure requirements associated with the development of these sites.

Other Sites

6.16 Policy SA1 allocates eleven sites on previously developed land within existing settlements for between 10 and 325 new homes. The combined contribution from

these sites is some 983 new homes. Two new sites have been added to the Policy since the Preferred Option stage, namely Land at Old Bracknell Lane West and Chiltern House and the Redwood Building at Broad Lane, Bracknell.

- 6.17 Policy SA2 allocates six sites on other (not previously developed) land within existing settlements for between 12 and 147 new homes. The combined contribution from these sites is some 495 new homes. Two new sites have been added to the Policy since the Preferred Option stage, namely, Popeswood Garage, Hillcrest and Sundial Cottage, London Road, Binfield and Land north of Peacock Lane, Bracknell.
- 6.18 Policy SA3 allocates six sites on the edge of existing settlements for between 16 and 67 new homes. The combined contribution from these sites is some 198 new homes. One new site has been added to the Policy since the Preferred Option stage, namely, Land at Bog Lane, Bracknell.

Other Policies

- 6.19 Changes are proposed to reduce the size of some of the employment areas, in particular the Eastern Industrial Area where a housing allocation for over 200 homes is proposed. It is also proposed to include a policy for the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to support its nationally important military training function while protecting nature, landscape and heritage interests.
- 6.20 Changes are proposed to the extent of retail and frontage designations within them. These changes reflect up to date guidance in PPS4 and are mostly quite minor apart from the proposal to designate the Peel Centre as an edge-of-centre location. This would be accompanied by a policy to support its ongoing role as a retail warehouse park.
- 6.21 It is also proposed to rationalise the extent of the designations of Open Space of Public Value and settlement boundaries, particularly in relation to providing greater flexibility for school sites. A policy has been added to this version of the SADPD to set out the proposed changes to existing policy designations on the Proposals Map.

Background Material

- 6.22 The context for the housing numbers and detailed analysis of the proposed sites and other policy issues is set out in the Background Paper at Appendix D. As part of the process of preparing the Draft Submission Site Allocations DPD a number of additional studies have been prepared, some as updates to previous work. The new and updated studies are appended to this report as follows:

APPENDIX	
J.	Strategic and Small Sites Viability Assessment
K.	Transport Study – Validation Report
L.	Transport Study – Forecast to 2026
M.	Transport Study – Proposed Measures Report
N.	Transport Study - Journey Time Report
O.	Updated Landscape Analysis August 2011
P.	Bracknell Forest Housing Market Assessment
Q.	Habitat Regulations Assessment
R.	Market Perspective of Bracknell Forest Office Floorspace
S.	SHLAA Monitoring Report (base date March 2011)
T.	Planning Commitments for Housing as at 30 September 2011 (mid year

	update)
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- 6.23 The new and updated studies will be published for consultation along with the Draft Submission SADPD. Previous studies, Environmental Appraisals and other supporting documents produced during the process will also be available on the Council website and will form part of the submission to the Secretary of State.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 Nothing to add to the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 7.2 Officers are working within the existing LDF budget for the current year, any future years impact will be considered for inclusion in the commitment budget as part of the budgeting process.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 See Equalities Impact Assessment attached at Appendix X.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 The Strategic Risk Register includes under Potential Risk Category 8 (Infrastructure and Maintenance of Assets) Risk 8.5 which is - Impact of additional dwellings in the borough before 2026 and the accompanying estimated 2000 additional jobs will require significant infrastructure improvements (transport, schools, hospitals). The identified action is - Complete Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD). The proposed publication and submission of the SADPD are statutory stages in taking forward the SADPD to examination and final adoption.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 There has been extensive consultation throughout the process of preparing the SADPD. At this advanced stage in the process the next consultation will seek views on the soundness of the document and whether the correct procedures have been followed during its preparation. Soundness in this context means “founded on a robust and credible evidence base and the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives”. The test may be expanded through the emerging National Planning Policy Framework. For the Site Allocations DPD to be found sound it must also be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored. To assist interested parties in participating effectively the response form will give guidance on the tests of a sound plan. Representations should specify in what respect(s) the document is considered to be unsound and what changes are required to make it sound.
- 8.2 It is proposed to carry out the consultation for a period of six weeks from 16 January to 27 February 2012 following the Christmas and New Year holiday period.
- 8.3 The following consultation strategy is proposed:

- a) Online consultation using the Objective consultation portal.
- b) Update front page of Council's web page and Boris to include notification that the Draft Submission SADPD Consultation has commenced and provide direct link to consultation.
- c) Town and Country Article
- d) Press release to local newspapers at start of Draft Submission SADPD Consultation and placing of formal notice.
- e) Explanatory leaflet to complement the Draft Submission SADPD Consultation, this will explain that the consultation is based on soundness and what this means for the way in which responses should be framed.
- f) Question and Answer document explaining in non-technical language how the Draft Submission SADPD has been arrived at and responding to the key issues raised through the Preferred Option Consultation. (attached at Appendix V)
- g) Half page advertisement in local newspapers at start of Draft Submission SADPD Consultation (this is not a statutory requirement but would help to raise awareness).
- h) Email/letter to consultees/individuals on our database who responded to the Participation Document and/or the Preferred Option to inform them that the consultation is taking place and how to access the material and respond (over 1,300 organisations and individuals are on the database).

Background Papers

Appendices

APPENDICES

- A. Summary of key issues raised to Preferred Option Consultation & Council's Response
- B. Draft Submission Site Allocations Development Plan Document
- C. Draft Submission Proposals Map
- D. Draft Submission Background Paper
- E. Summary of Responses to the Preferred Option Consultation
- F. Sustainability Appraisal (Incorporating SEA), Draft Submission Site Allocation Development Plan Document
- G. Sustainability Appraisal (Incorporating SEA) Appendices, Draft Submission Site Allocation Development Plan Document
- H. Sustainability Appraisal (Incorporating SEA) Non-Tech Summary, Draft Submission Site Allocation Development Plan Document
- I. Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- J. Strategic and Small Sites Viability Assessment
- K. Transport Study – Validation Report
- L. Transport Study – Forecast to 2026
- M. Transport Study – Proposed Measures Report
- N. Transport Study - Journey Time Report

- O. Updated Landscape Analysis August 2011
- P. Bracknell Forest Housing Market Assessment
- Q. Habitat Regulations Assessment
- R. Market Perspective of Bracknell Forest Office Floorspace
- S. SHLAA Monitoring Report (base date March 2011)
- T. Planning Commitments for Housing as at 30 September 2011 (mid year update)
- U. Site Allocations DPD Consultation Statement [Reg 30(1)(d)]
- V. Question and Answer Document
- W. Overview and Scrutiny Report
- X. Equalities Impact Assessment
- Y. Minutes of SADPD Overview & Scrutiny Working Group

Contact for further information

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