Title of Report: The West Berkshire Proposed Submission Core Strategy
Report to be considered by: Council
Date of Meeting: 21 January 2010
Forward Plan Ref: C1946

Purpose of Report: To recommend the West Berkshire Core Strategy Proposed Submission document for approval by Council.

Recommended Action:
That Council resolves that;
i) the West Berkshire Core Strategy Proposed Submission document is published in accordance with Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008;

ii) a period of six weeks is allowed for receipt of representations on the Proposed Submission Core Strategy in accordance with Regulation 28 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008; this act and following this;

iii) the Core Strategy is submitted to the Secretary of State under Regulation 30 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008; act.

Reason for decision to be taken: To progress the Core Strategy in accordance with the timetable.

Other options considered:

Key background documentation: Options for the Future: The Preferred Options draft of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (April 2009).
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Plan Priority:

- **CPP3 – Reduce West Berkshire’s carbon footprint** – to reduce CO₂ emissions in West Berkshire and contribute to waste management, green travel, transportation and energy efficiency.

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Themes:

- **CPT1 - Better Roads and Transport**
- **CPT2 - Thriving Town Centres**
- **CPT3 - Affordable Housing**
- **CPT4 - High Quality Planning**
- **CPT5 - Cleaner and Greener**
- **CPT6 - Vibrant Villages**
- **CPT7 - Safer and Stronger Communities**
- **CPT8 - A Healthier Life**
- **CPT9 - Successful Schools and Learning**
- **CPT12 - Including Everyone**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

- Setting a positive framework for the future planning of West Berkshire.

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**Portfolio Member Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614</th>
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**Implications**

**Policy:**

Publication and submission of the West Berkshire Core Strategy are key regulatory stages in the development of the Council's planning policy, setting out the broad strategy for development in West Berkshire to 2026.

**Financial:**

**Personnel:**

**Legal/Procurement:**

**Property:**

**Risk Management:**

**Equalities Impact Assessment:**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in tandem with the development of the Core Strategy.
Is this item subject to call-in? | Yes: □ | No: ☒
---|---|---
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval | ☒
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council | □
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position | □
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months | □
Item is Urgent Key Decision | □
Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 This report asks Full Council to approve the proposed submission draft of the West Berkshire Core Strategy which is attached as Appendix A, and to agree firstly its publication for consultation between February and March 2010, and then for the submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State in June 2010.

1.2 Information is set out in the report about the role of the Core Strategy for West Berkshire as the main document within the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy, which is subject to a number of stages, contains the housing numbers for the District between 2006 and 2026 (10,500 of which 4,503 units were complete or had planning permission at 31\textsuperscript{st} March 2009), and a distribution for the houses, including the allocation of two strategic scale development sites – at Newbury Racecourse and Sandleford Park.

1.3 The Core Strategy must be based on sound evidence and developed in partnership with the community. The proposed submission draft of the Core Strategy is based on the outcomes of the consultation that has taken place to date, and also on the findings of the evidence base that has been prepared to support the Core Strategy. It is also underpinned by a Sustainability Appraisal which assesses the social, economic and environmental impacts of the Core Strategy throughout the development of the document. It is considered that the Core Strategy attached as Appendix A meets the tests of soundness.

1.4 The report gives information about the content of the proposed submission draft of the Core Strategy and describes the ‘place-shaping’ role of the Strategy. The Core Strategy document consists of the following sections: Introduction; Background and Challenges; Shaping West Berkshire, Vision and Objectives; The Spatial Strategy; Core Policies; Monitoring Framework and Appendices.

1.5 If full Council approve the proposed submission Core Strategy, it will then be published for consultation for a 6-week period beginning in February 2010, followed by submission to the Secretary of State in June 2010, independent examination in the late autumn of 2010 and adoption in March 2011.
Executive Report

1. Background

1.1 This report asks that Full Council resolve to approve the proposed submission West Berkshire Core Strategy document attached as Appendix A and agree to:

(i) The publication of the proposed submission Core Strategy in accordance with regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.


1.2 The Core Strategy is the main, overarching policy document of the West Berkshire Local Development Framework (LDF). It sets out the spatial planning strategy for the District until 2026 and, where appropriate, beyond this. Once adopted, the Core Strategy will be the key document in a hierarchy of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) produced by the Council, and together with national planning statements and the South East Plan will form the basis for planning decisions made in the District.

1.3 The Core Strategy sets out how the Council will deliver the spatial aspects of its vision and the Sustainable Community Strategy, as well as how regional and national policies, such as those contained within the adopted South East Plan, will be applied locally. It contains information about how the housing numbers set out within the South East Plan (10,500 dwellings for West Berkshire between 2006 and 2026 of which 4,503 units were complete or had planning permission at 31st March 2009) will be delivered in terms of distribution, and allocates 2 strategic scale development sites – one at Newbury Racecourse and the other at Sandleford Park.

1.4 The Council’s approach must be sound and as such it is necessary for the policies to be underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base to be published alongside the Core Strategy. In addition the policies and proposals in the plan are subject to a sustainability appraisal – a process whereby the economic, environmental and social consequences of policies are assessed throughout the stages of preparation of the Core Strategy.

1.5 The production of the Core Strategy is an iterative process that is subject to a number of stages. The proposed submission Core Strategy has been developed taking into account the outcomes of previous consultations such as the extensive consultation between May and July 2009 on ‘Options for the Future’ which was the preferred options draft of the Core Strategy.
1.6 If the proposed submission Core Strategy is approved by Full Council it will then be published for a 6 week period of consultation which will take place during February and March. This is a regulatory stage of the Core Strategy process, and views will be sought on the ‘soundness’ of the document.

1.7 Planning Task Group (PTG) has had several meetings to discuss and develop the Proposed Submission draft Core Strategy. The Planning Task Group reports of September and October 2009 set out drafts of the document and comments were sought from Members on the detailed wording. PTG then met on 15 December and agreed the wording of the draft attached as Appendix A. This incorporates any changes requested by PTG at the December meeting.

2. Evidence Base including Public Consultation

2.1 The Local Development Framework is based on the key principles of the front-loading of evidence and continuous public participation. The preparation of the Core Strategy has therefore been informed and underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base to ensure that it addresses and responds to the issues facing the District. This includes the following studies:

(a) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment  
(b) Berkshire Housing Market Assessment  
(c) Landscape Sensitivity Assessment  
(d) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment  
(e) Employment Land Assessment  
(f) Economic Viability Assessment  
(g) Phase 1 Strategic Transport Assessment  
(h) Phase 2 Strategic Transport Assessment  

2.2 Ongoing public participation which includes the general public, key stakeholders, agencies and infrastructure providers also forms a key part of the evidence base. The proposed submission Core Strategy has been developed based on the outcomes of several public consultations. ‘Options for Delivering Homes’ was consulted on between November 2007 and January 2008, and set out options for development and where the additional homes for the district should be located. This was followed by ‘Options for Development in the Rural Areas’ which set out possible options for development within Rural West Berkshire and was consulted on between May and June 2008. Both of these consultations included widespread public engagement.

2.3 ‘Options for the Future’ was the preferred options draft of the Core Strategy, and was the opportunity to explain to the community and to internal and external partner organisations what the Council’s preferred approach was, and to enable them to have their say on this. This was an extensive consultation exercise, including a mobile roadshow, exhibitions, summary leaflets, a newsletter and a four-page ‘wrap’ around the Newbury Advertiser.
3. Structure and content of the Document

3.1 The Core Strategy has been structured to bring out the spatial issues for the district, and to make sure that the implications of the Core Strategy for different areas within West Berkshire are clearly expressed. It contains the following sections:

1. A brief introductory section contains information to explain what the Core Strategy is, and how to comment on the content. A diagram has been added on the LDF and how the LDF and the other corporate strategies link together.

2. A background and challenges section contains information to help set the spatial context for West Berkshire. This contains information about regional guidance and other strategies and plans which have an influence on the Core Strategy. It also contains a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats section to form the basis for the content of the rest of the Core Strategy.

3. A section on shaping West Berkshire contains the vision and objectives for the Core Strategy. This consists of the overarching vision for the district, followed by a set of objectives.

4. The spatial strategy sets out the focus for future place shaping and includes the District Settlement Hierarchy. This is followed by a set of Spatial Policies which separate the District into 4 geographical areas. Key linkages between the areas are recognised so there is some degree of overlap. These 4 areas are:

   a. Newbury and Thatcham, with separate policies for Newbury and for Thatcham.

   b. The Eastern area covering the Eastern Urban Area as well as the Rural Service Centres of Theale and Pangbourne.

   c. The North Wessex Downs AONB as a whole and with more information on the Rural Service Centres of Lambourn and Hungerford.

   d. The Eastern Kennet Valley, setting out information about the Rural Service Centres of Mortimer and Burghfield.

5. Policy frameworks have been developed for each of these areas. These consist of a vision based on those included within a previous draft of the Core Strategy, followed by a number of bullet points about the level of growth for each area and what this means in terms of how the area will change and evolve during the Core Strategy period. Details are included about each part of the area, for example about each separate urban area or Rural Service Centre, to identify the distinct information about each part. An indicative map has been prepared for each area, showing the main changes that are likely to happen and showing how the area links to its surroundings.

6. In terms of the rest of the policies of the Core Strategy, these have now been put within a section called ‘core’ policies as they apply across the
District. This section includes policies on housing numbers and policies on the two strategic sites proposed to be allocated within the Core Strategy, at Newbury Racecourse and Sandleford Park. Other policies within this section include affordable housing, rural exceptions housing and housing type and mix. Policies on waterways, tourism and the North Wessex Downs AONB no longer exist as stand-alone policies; instead their content has been included within the policy frameworks described above to bring out their spatial implications more effectively.

(7) A detailed monitoring framework covering all policy areas, with targets and indicators included so that each policy can be measured to see if it is achieving its aims. Further information on monitoring and how this links to the strategic objectives is also covered.

3.2 Appendices are also included within the proposed submission Core Strategy, consisting of the following:

(1) A housing trajectory and further information about the 5-year housing land supply position.

(2) Information about the saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 and which of its policies will be replaced by the Core Strategy once adopted, and which will be replaced by the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

(3) Information about the safety zones around AWE at Aldermaston and Burghfield.

(4) Information about the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas within the District.

3.3 A key diagram has also been prepared showing the spatial strategy diagrammatically on a not-to-scale map. This includes the settlement and retail hierarchies, the road networks and linkages outside the District and the North Wessex Downs AONB.

4. **Next Steps**

4.1 If the proposed submission draft Core Strategy is approved for publication and submission by full Council, consultation on the document will take place between February and March for a six-week period. This is a regulatory stage (regulation 28) and the consultation period must be for a minimum of six weeks. Proposals for the consultation will be discussed by the Planning Task Group beforehand. At this regulatory stage in the Core Strategy process, representations are sought only on the soundness of the Core Strategy, and whether the correct procedures have been taken in its preparation. The tests of soundness for a Core Strategy are whether it is deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored. Representations should specify in what respect(s) the document is considered to be unsound if this is the view, and what change would need to be made to make it sound. It is considered that the document attached as Appendix A is fundamentally sound and now ready to be published.

4.2 At the time of publication, a request will also be made to the regional planning body for an opinion on the general conformity of the Core Strategy to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). This is a further regulatory stage of the process of preparation of a
development plan document under regulation 29, and the Core Strategy must be in general conformity with the RSS.

4.3 Submission is scheduled for June 2010. Submission will involve submitting the Core Strategy and the supporting documents including the finished Sustainability Appraisal to the Secretary of State under regulation 30. These documents will be accompanied by a schedule of the main issues raised during the consultation.

4.4 Submission will then be followed by the Examination stage which is currently scheduled to begin in the autumn of 2010, and involves the examination of the Core Strategy by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. Following the receipt of the binding Inspector’s report, the Core Strategy is due to be adopted by full Council in March 2011.

Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed Submission Core Strategy.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Stakeholders have been consulted throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy

Officers Consulted: Corporate Consultation

Trade Union: N/A
West Berkshire Proposed Submission Core Strategy
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Section 1 Introduction

What is the Core Strategy?

1.1 West Berkshire previously had a Local Plan (1) which covered the period up to 2006 to guide the development of the District. Some of the policies within this have been saved to provide the basis for planning decisions within West Berkshire until replaced by Local Development Documents.

1.2 The way that we plan for the future has changed and we are now required by Government to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF) which we are developing together with our partners and communities. The LDF is broader than the Local Plan, and means that we must look at wider social, environmental and economic considerations when planning the future. The LDF policies, together with those in the South East Plan and national policy guidance, will form the basis for planning decisions in West Berkshire to 2026.

1.3 We are not starting with a blank sheet. We must take account of Government and Regional guidance, which sets out the number of new homes which must be provided within West Berkshire, as well as the outcomes of the consultations that have taken place so far to shape the Core Strategy. We have also carried out or commissioned technical background work to help inform the process.

1.4 The Core Strategy is the first development plan document within West Berkshire’s Local Development Framework. It sets out a long term vision for West Berkshire to 2026 and translates this into spatial terms, setting out proposals for where development will go, and how this development will be built. The Core Strategy aims to make the different settlements within West Berkshire even more attractive places within which to live, work and enjoy leisure time. The Core Strategy provides an overall framework for the more detailed policies and site specific proposals contained in other parts of the LDF (see figure 1).
Figure 1 Overview of the Local Development Framework

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)
This is the lead document of the LDF which sets out the Spatial Vision and Strategy for how the area will develop between 2006 and 2026. It is the guiding document which the other plans detailed below must be in conformity with.

Site Allocations and Delivery DPD
Contains more detail about specific locations for development, together with Development Management Policies.

Area Action Plans
Area action plans should be used when there is a need to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed.

Supplementary Planning Documents
These provide greater detail on the policies in DPD’s, for example on Design Guidance.

Proposals Maps
The Proposals Maps identify area specific proposals and adopted policy designations on an Ordnance Survey base.

Local Development Scheme
The timetable for the production of the LDF

Statement of Community Involvement
Sets out how the Council will consult the public and stakeholders on planning matters

Annual Monitoring Report
Reports progress on the policies and related targets in the LDF
1.5 This is the proposed submission version of the Core Strategy. Following consultation, this will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. The Examination is where an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State will decide whether the Core Strategy is sound and can be adopted by the Council.

Getting Involved

1.6 The Planning Policy team must receive any comments on the draft Submission Core Strategy between 12 February and 26 March 2010 (draft dates)

1.7 At this stage representations are being sought on the soundness of the Core Strategy and whether the correct procedures have been taken in its preparation. Soundness means “founded on a robust and credible evidence base and the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives”. For the Core Strategy to be found sound it must also be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored. The response form sets out what the tests of a sound plan should be. Representations should specify in what respect(s) the document is considered to be unsound and what change(s) would need to be made to make it sound.

Making comments and getting in touch

1.8 You can view the Core Strategy and the Sustainability Appraisal

- Online at www.westberks.gov.uk/ldfconsultation
- At the Council Offices in Newbury
- At any library in West Berkshire including the mobile libraries

1.9 If possible, please make your comments online at www.westberks.gov.uk/ldfconsultation. However you can also express your views by email, post or fax. Alternatively if you would simply like more information on the consultation or help to comment online you can phone and speak to a member of the Planning Policy team.

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Section 2 Background and Challenges

Consultation so Far

2.1 The Core Strategy is developed in several stages. The proposed submission document has built upon the principles established through earlier consultation, where an urban focus to development was the preferred strategy. ‘Options for Delivering Homes’ was consulted on between November 2007 and January 2008 and asked for views on various options for an urban focus for development within the District. The outcome of this showed that a combination of strategic urban extensions and smaller sites were the favoured options for accommodating the housing growth of West Berkshire.

2.2 This document also invited developers and landowners to submit any proposals for potential large scale development sites. Fifteen strategic sites were promoted and these were assessed through the Combined Strategic Housing Sites Appraisal Document.

2.3 ‘Options for Development in the Rural Areas’ set out the possible options for development within Rural West Berkshire. The outcome of these two consultations was the settlement hierarchy which ranks settlements according to their size and range of services and facilities; their possible capacity for growth and the approach towards the function of the settlement.

2.4 ‘Options for the Future’ was the preferred options draft of the Core Strategy. This set out preferred options where development should take place, for where large scale development sites should be accommodated and on what policies to guide development should say. Although this was an optional stage of the Core Strategy process, it was an important stage in giving people the opportunity to comment on the options and for finding out public opinion. ‘Options for the Future’ was consulted on between May and July 2009. The results of all of the consultation have now been used, together with the conclusions of the evidence base, to produce the Proposed Submission Core Strategy.

Relationship with Other Strategies

2.5 Planning policies for West Berkshire need to be prepared in the context of national and regional planning policy and guidance and with regard to other local plans and strategies produced by the Council and other organisations. National policies on planning matters are contained in various Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Statements (PPSs) issued by the Government. These are backed up by companion documents and best practice advice.

Regional Planning Guidance

2.6 West Berkshire's planning policy framework has to be in conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (the South East Plan), which was adopted on 6th May 2009. The South East Plan sets out the vision for the region up to 2026, focusing on housing, transport, economy and the environment. In particular, the Plan sets out the District's housing allocation for the period 2006 to 2026.

2.7 The South East Plan sets the following context for West Berkshire:

- A housing allocation of 10,500 dwellings between 2006 and 2026.
- An urban focus for development.

1 Options for Delivering Homes November 2007
2 Combined Strategic Housing Sites Appraisal Document
3 Options for Development in the Rural Areas May 2008
4 Options for the Future April 2009
5 The South East Plan May 2009
2 Background and Challenges

- The identification of Newbury as a sub-regional hub, as a focus for development and transport infrastructure.
- The identification of Newbury as a secondary retail centre. This means that it is a centre of sub-regional importance and a focus for town centre uses including retail, offices, leisure and entertainment facilities, and arts, culture and tourism.
- Part of West Berkshire lies within the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region which is an area recognised as having high economic and other growth potential.

The Joint Minerals and Waste Development Framework

2.8 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework (6) is prepared for the whole of Berkshire. Once adopted, it will replace the Replacement Minerals Local Plan and the Waste Local Plan. The Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy will provide planning policy for minerals and waste for Berkshire, and will be followed by a Detailed Development Control and Preferred Areas Development Plan.

The Sustainable Community Strategy "A Breath of Fresh Air"

2.9 The Sustainable Community Strategy (7) sets out a long-term vision for the District and has been developed by the West Berkshire Partnership, comprising a range of local people and organisations, including business groups and public sector bodies. The purpose of the Strategy is to set a clear vision and direction focusing on improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and to provide an overarching framework within which other local strategies will sit. The policies and proposals within the Core Strategy will help to deliver some of the Sustainable Community Plan priorities. The themes from "A Breath of Fresh Air" have therefore helped to guide the strategic objectives for the Core Strategy.

The Local Area Agreement

2.10 A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is designed by the Government to simplify the number of additional funding streams from Central Government going into an area, to help join up public services more effectively and allow greater flexibility for local solutions to local circumstances.

2.11 LAAs are three-year agreements struck between Government and the Local Authority working through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP agrees a range of targets to improve public services and quality of life. In return the Government provides financial incentives for all the organisations and agencies involved to meet those targets.

2.12 The LAA is based on 33 designated priority indicators and associated local indicators that have been selected by the Council and its partners based on evidence of local need, consultations and strategies including the Partnership strategic assessments and the SCS. The LDF has a key role in delivering the priority outcomes of the LAA through the implementation of the policies within the Core Strategy.

The Rural Strategy

2.13 The first Rural Strategy for West Berkshire (8) was adopted in May 2009. The Rural Strategy concentrates on the main issues affecting rural West Berkshire, painting a vision for the future of the rural areas to be delivered through a series of rural priority outcomes linked to the key themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy. A number of these outcomes have land use implications and will be delivered through the LDF.

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6 Minerals and Waste Development Framework available on the Berkshire Joint Strategic Unit Website
7 West Berkshire Sustainable Community Strategy: A Breath of Fresh Air available at www.westberks.gov.uk
8 The Rural Strategy adopted May 2009 available at www.westberks.gov.uk
Community Plans

2.14 Feeding into the Sustainable Community Strategy and the LDF are various other plans such as Parish and Town Plans and Market Town Healthcheck, (9) produced by the local communities of West Berkshire. Broadly, these types of plans identify the economic, environmental and social issues important to a particular area and set out a vision for how the community wants to develop. These plans are very useful in informing the overall strategy proposals in the LDF and by adding local detail and support to particular policies within the LDF.

West Berkshire Council Plan

2.15 The LDF will be one of the delivery tools for the Council’s wider strategic objectives, particularly by addressing their spatial planning aspects. The Council Plan (10) aims to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of West Berkshire and is currently based on 16 strategic outcomes. Those of particular relevance to the LDF are:

- Cleaner and Greener
- Better Roads and Transport
- Thriving Town Centres
- Affordable Housing
- Vibrant Villages
- High Quality Planning
- Including Everyone

Local Transport Plan

2.16 The second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) (11) for West Berkshire sets out a transport planning policy framework and strategy for the delivery of local transport measures over the next five years, within the context of a longer term local transport vision. The development of the LTP2 and the Core Strategy has been a linked process. The third LTP must be in place by April 2011 and is being prepared in parallel with the Core Strategy.

North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan

2.17 With 74% of the District within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Management Plan (12) is an important consideration in the preparation of the Core Strategy. The plan, which was adopted by the Council and covers a 5 year period, was prepared in consultation with stakeholders and the local community by the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners on behalf of the local authorities within the North Wessex Downs. The Plan is driven by the primary purpose of AONB designation - conservation and enhancement of natural beauty. It places a strong emphasis on the delivery of an integrated and sustainable approach, with vibrant rural economies and communities.

Vision Documents

2.18 A vision document was prepared for Newbury Town Centre in 2003 (13). It looks to protect and build on the inherent strengths of the town centre whilst maximising the opportunities that exist to strengthen and improve its attractiveness and vibrancy. Several projects have already been completed or are under construction, notably the Park Way project which will enhance Newbury’s retail provision.

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9 All Parish Plans which have been adopted are available to view on the Council's website
10 The Council Plan
11 Local Transport Plan 2007-2011 available to view at www.westberks.gov.uk
12 The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2009 available to view at www.northwessexdowns.org.uk
13 Newbury 2025: A Vision for Newbury Town Centre available to view at www.westberks.gov.uk
2.19 Other vision documents have been prepared for Thatcham and for the Kennet and Thames area, and these have informed the preparation of the Core Strategy.

**About West Berkshire**

2.20 The Core Strategy must have regard to the context of the District for which it is planning. West Berkshire is a unitary authority of 704 square kilometres (272 square miles), which is located in the South East of England. It contains both towns and extensive rural areas, with about 90% of the District being rural in character. The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally important and legally protected landscape, designated for the quality of its scenic beauty.

2.21 Approximately 64,000 people or 44% of the total population (145,000) live in the rural areas of the District. This rural population is dispersed across a large number of towns, villages and smaller settlements each of which has its own identity as well as its own specific needs and concerns.

2.22 This rural dimension is very important in shaping the character of West Berkshire, its communities, economy and environment. The importance of agriculture and rural businesses, the prominence of landscape and countryside along with the small scale and dispersed nature of rural communities, are all important issues and challenges to be considered through the Core Strategy. The rural environment of West Berkshire adds significantly to the quality of life enjoyed by urban residents of the District and is a considerable asset for the area.

2.23 West Berkshire is part of the Thames Valley which is recognised as the most dynamic and competitive sub-regional economy in the UK. Employment provision in West Berkshire is diverse, and despite the current economic downturn, rates of employment in the district remain high.

2.24 The largest settlements include Newbury and Thatcham and the urban areas of Tilehurst, Purley on Thames and Calcot in the east of the District, close to Reading. Newbury is the largest town in West Berkshire and serves as the District's administrative centre. Newbury is described as a 'sub-regional' hub within the South East Plan, which means that it is to be a focus for transport investment and development within the area.

2.25 West Berkshire is well connected in transport terms. At the centre of the District is an important road interchange. This is where the east-west M4 motorway intersects with the north-south A34. There are road connections to larger centres such as Reading, Oxford, Swindon, Basingstoke and London. Mainline railway services to London and the South West of England run through the south of the District. These locational factors, combined with high quality urban and rural areas, contribute towards making the area a popular place to live and work.

**Cross Boundary Issues**

2.26 West Berkshire does not exist in isolation from its neighbours. The Core Strategy needs to take account of the wider challenges, issues and opportunities affecting neighbouring areas as well as in the wider region. Cross-boundary work has taken place during the preparation of the Core Strategy, both through ongoing liaison with neighbouring authorities and at sub-regional level and through the review of proposals within adjoining Core Strategies and other DPDs. This will continue with the development of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as a number of infrastructure issues will require joint working. Some issues in adjoining areas have been identified as potentially having an impact on West Berkshire. These have been taken into account in the Core Strategy, but in summary, are as follows:
Basingstoke and Deane

2.27 Basingstoke is defined as a “diamond for Investment and Growth” within the Regional Economic Strategy, due to the contribution that it makes to the economy of the South East, and as a regional hub within the South East Plan. These designations will have an impact upon West Berkshire’s role within the sub-region as Basingstoke will remain a key location for the provision of growth, jobs and facilities. Joint working will be necessary to explore sustainable solutions to the growth of traffic on the A339, particularly as this is likely to increase with the proposed growth for the Newbury area. There may also be a need for joint approaches to the future role of Tadley.

Reading

2.28 Reading is a significant influence on West Berkshire, as a regional hub within the South East Plan, a new Growth Point and a “diamond for Investment and Growth” within the Regional Economic Strategy. Reading is a major source of employment, services, leisure and retail provision for both the Eastern Urban Area and other parts of West Berkshire. There may be benefits from joint approaches to services and facilities in some cases. There is also an acknowledged need for joint work to deliver sustainable transport solutions to reduce and manage the growth of congestion around the A4 and the M4 and surrounding traffic corridors. A further area of joint work relates to the Kennet Valley Meadows area, and the need to enhance the management of this area.

Wokingham

2.29 West Berkshire needs to continue to work with Wokingham on the implications for development around junction 11 of the M4, particularly associated with Green Park and with the planned residential growth in this area, for example Green Park Village and the expansion of Shinfield.

South Oxfordshire

2.30 Within the South Oxfordshire preferred options Core Strategy, Goring is categorised as a larger village and described as a local service centre. This has implications for the Streatley area of West Berkshire in terms of the provision of local services and facilities. Also within South Oxfordshire, Didcot has been designated a Growth Point within the South East Regional Spatial Strategy and is expected to deliver 8,750 homes to 2026. This may increase the amount of commuting into West Berkshire.

Swindon

2.31 Swindon’s role as a major regional economic driver and a new growth point may also impact upon West Berkshire in terms of residents from West Berkshire commuting there for jobs and services.

Evidence Base

Our Evidence Base, including the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.32 To make sure that the strategy addresses the right issues and to understand the effects of the strategy, an evidence base has been developed. This includes the following studies, all of which are available to download from the Council’s website

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Berkshire Housing Market Assessment
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Employment Land Assessment
2 Background and Challenges

- Economic Viability Assessment
- Strategic Transport Assessment
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan

2.33 The Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) is available alongside the Core Strategy. A sustainability appraisal must accompany every development plan document that is produced. This is a tool that highlights any significant environmental, social or economic effects of the plan. It assesses the plan against a number of sustainability objectives in order to identify these impacts. The appraisal has been fully integrated into the plan process so that it can inform and influence the plan as it evolves.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

2.34 The direction for West Berkshire set out in the South East Plan together with the conclusions from the evidence base and the outcomes of public consultation have all been used to produce the key issues, opportunities and challenges facing West Berkshire. These form the basis for the content of the Core Strategy and have been divided into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The strategic location of West Berkshire.</td>
<td>Rural accessibility is an issue, with the lack of a frequent bus service and limited local facilities in some rural areas encourages use of the car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The strategic transport links connecting West Berkshire to London and to the West.</td>
<td>Traffic congestion already exists in certain hotspots at peak times and this needs to be carefully managed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The high quality rural landscape and character with 74% of the District lying within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), providing the first area of substantive rural countryside as you travel west from London along the M4.</td>
<td>Shortage of affordable housing across the District, leading to a high number of people on the housing waiting list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A diverse and successful economy, hosting many small and medium sized enterprises, as well as large multi-national companies.</td>
<td>A skills shortage in some sectors contributes to a deficiency of labour supply in some industries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive towns and villages, with their own identities.</td>
<td>Lack of higher education provision in the District meaning students have to migrate out for higher education opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The high quality of the District’s heritage assets, including Newbury Battlefield and Donnington Castle.</td>
<td>Some small pockets of deprivation relative to the rest of the District.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The high quality of the District’s biodiversity assets.</td>
<td>The quality of the gateways into Newbury fail to provide a strong sense of identity for the town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinctive quality of the built environment, allowing the District to retain its sense of remoteness in parts of the downlands.</td>
<td>Widespread risk of flooding within the District, arising not only from rivers but also from surface water and groundwater flooding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An internationally renowned horse-racing centre in and around Lambourn.</td>
<td>A lack of identity in some recent housing developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of the Kennet and Avon Canal and other waterways, including the River Thames, as a focus for recreation and leisure, for tourism and economic development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A good quality of life with a high satisfaction rate amongst residents.
Newbury provides a cultural centre for the District.

**Opportunities**
- Implementing the Park Way development in Newbury to improve the retail offer and increase the attractiveness of the town to investors.
- Taking forward the schemes within the Newbury Vision through regeneration which reflects and responds to the historic legacy whilst meeting the needs of residents and visitors.
- Working in partnership to deliver the growth within the Core Strategy.
- Improving the tourism offer across the District and promoting the largely cultural tourist base and attractions.
- Improving the culture, leisure and retail offer within the District.
- Regenerating the centre of Thatcham to provide a higher quality shopping and facilities for residents and visitors.
- Using the development in the District to deliver a high quality of design which responds positively to the local context.
- The potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows to provide an enhanced open space and biodiversity resource.
- Recognising the District’s biodiversity assets by more active management and by improving linkages and corridors between sites.
- Enhancement of existing green infrastructure and ensuring appropriate provision of green infrastructure within new developments.
- Utilizing opportunities for delivering renewable energy schemes through the development of strategic sites.
- Improving skill levels and educational attainment within the District will have knock on benefits for the local economy.
- The potential for the co-location of facilities and services enabling shared sites and an increased provision.
- Working in partnership across the boundaries of West Berkshire on issues of common interest making more efficient use of resources and knowledge.
- Maintaining and enhancing the viability of rural service centres and service villages by recognising their role as centres for the surrounding areas.

**Threats**
- The potential impact to the local economy as a result of the over-reliance on some key businesses.
- Ageing population leading to pressure on some services, such as community care and health, plus the implications for the type of housing provision and employment.
- The impact of Growth Points and Diamonds of Investment and Growth in neighbouring authorities.
- Viability of parts of the rural areas and their ability to retain services and facilities.
- A reliance on a subsidised public transport system is a threat to the accessibility of rural areas.
- High car dependency due to the rural nature of much of West Berkshire and an insufficient public transport service places a threat to the environment and on the level of accessibility to rural areas.
- Possibility that housing delivery will not continue at a sufficient rate to meet the needs of the District across the Core Strategy period.
- Delivering the levels of growth in the District in a sustainable way taking into account climate change and maintaining a high quality environment.
- Managing increases in traffic from existing and new developments.
- Inappropriate amount, type or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments in order to ensure the District’s growth targets.
Content of the Core Strategy

2.35 The Core Strategy contains the following:

- An overall vision which sets out how West Berkshire should evolve over the next 20 years.
- A set of strategic objectives which expand the vision and focus on the key issues to be addressed.
- A delivery strategy for achieving these objectives which sets out how much development is intended to happen, where, when and how.
- Strategic policies for delivering the development.
- An implementation and monitoring framework

2.36 One of the principles of a Core Strategy is that it must set out clear spatial choices about the future location of development. This does not mean allocating sites to fulfil the entire housing allocation, but instead identifying those sites or broad locations for sites that are considered key to the achievement of the overall strategy. This is in order to provide certainty for the community, as well as for infrastructure providers and investors. It must also display enough flexibility to respond to changing circumstances across the time frame of the Core Strategy.

2.37 The way forward on housing distribution is set out. This identifies a strategic site at Newbury (Newbury Racecourse), and a strategic site at Sandleford Park to the south of Newbury. It is proposed that the development of Sandleford Park continues after 2026 in order to give long term certainty about the long term direction of growth in the District and to introduce flexibility to the Core Strategy.

2.38 Within the Eastern part of the District, a broad location for development is identified on the Key Diagram, taking in the Eastern Urban Area of Tilehurst, Calcot and Purley on Thames, as well as the two Rural Service Centres of Pangbourne and Theale.

2.39 The sites and broad location included within the Core Strategy proposed submission draft are considered to represent the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

2.40 Once the Core Strategy has been adopted, it will be followed by a Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). This will include details of any additional housing allocations, reviews of settlement and town centre boundaries, plus policies for development management.
Section 3 Shaping West Berkshire - Vision and Objectives

Spatial Vision

The vision is our description of how West Berkshire should look in 2026. The spatial vision for the Core Strategy has been developed around the vision and themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the analysis of the evidence base.

3.1 In 2026 and beyond, West Berkshire will be an economically prosperous area, with a strong and diverse employment base and low unemployment. It will be home to both multi-national companies and a large number of small and medium enterprises and will continue to benefit from its strategic location in the Thames Valley with excellent transport links to London and the rest of the country.

3.2 The District will make the most of its built and natural environment, through the conservation and enhancement of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, other countryside areas and the high quality design of built development. The biodiversity of the District will be enhanced, in particular through the conservation of several Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

3.3 West Berkshire will continue to be a desirable place to live, with lively and attractive towns and picturesque and vibrant villages, surrounded by beautiful countryside. The population of the District will have increased and this growth will have been largely accommodated in sustainable urban extensions and through the sensitive redevelopment of previous developed land. The infrastructure to support this growth will have been delivered and affordable housing to meet local needs provided in mixed communities united by a strong local identity. Crime will have reduced and people will feel safe in their neighbourhoods and town centres.

3.4 People in the towns and villages will have a high quality of life with good access to education, jobs, services, shops and public transport, mostly within walking and cycling distances. The transport infrastructure will have been improved and there will be reduced congestion and better access to public transport throughout the District, with improved pedestrian routes and cycleways. People will lead healthy and active lifestyles benefiting from improved access to sporting facilities, high quality open spaces, and the open countryside while being supported by a good network of local health centres. The town centres of Newbury, Thatcham and Hungerford will be thriving retail and leisure destinations, reducing the need to travel to larger centres. Smaller centres will provide a range of shops and services catering for local needs in the suburban and rural areas.

3.5 Traditional industries which are strongly associated with the area such as agriculture and the racehorse industry will continue to thrive, and the rural economy will be further strengthened through increased home-working and e-business opportunities.

3.6 West Berkshire will play a full role in reducing carbon emissions, through increased generation of renewable energy and the incorporation of community heat and power systems, energy efficient buildings and more sustainable patterns of development which enable more people to travel by public transport, cycle or on foot. The District will be much more resilient to the threat of flooding, through avoiding developing in areas of flood risk, increased green infrastructure, and better flood management and defences.

3.7 The District will be coping well with the challenges of an ageing population, partly by retaining larger numbers of younger people and families (through the provision of an appropriate range of housing in terms of size and tenure), who will help support the older communities but also through increased investment in accommodation for the elderly.
Strategic Objectives

3.8 The Spatial Vision leads to a set of objectives which have been prepared through consultation, and which reflect the direction given by other plans and strategies in the District. The strategic objectives represent the key delivery outcomes that the Core Strategy should achieve. It is critical to the success of the Core Strategy that these objectives are realised.

1. Sustainable Development

3.9 To exceed regional and national targets for CO2 emissions reduction and deliver the District’s growth in a way that helps to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

2. Housing Growth

3.10 To deliver 10,500 homes across West Berkshire between 2006 – 2026 in accordance with the South East Plan. These homes will be delivered in an effective and timely manner, will maximise the use of brownfield land and access to facilities and services and will be developed at densities which make the most efficient use of land whilst responding to the existing built environment.

3. Housing Needs

3.11 To meet housing needs in a way that secures the provision of affordable and market housing to meet local needs in both urban and rural areas of the District. To provide homes in a way that promotes sustainable communities, providing a mix of house sizes, types and tenures to meet identified needs, and respond to the changing demographic profile of the District.

4. Economy

3.12 To provide for a range of sizes and types of employment land and premises in the right locations to respond to the forecast changes in economic activity, the location of new residential development and the specific needs of the rural economy, including the equestrian and horseracing industries.

5. Infrastructure Requirements

3.13 To ensure that infrastructure needs (including community services and facilities) arising from the growth in West Berkshire are provided in a timely and coordinated manner, which has kept pace with development in accordance with the detail set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Document.

6. Green Infrastructure

3.14 To ensure that West Berkshire contains a strong network of well-connected and multi-functional green infrastructure which provides an attractive environment to live, work and spend leisure time, providing benefits for health and opportunities for formal and informal recreation.

7. Transport

3.15 To put in place a sustainable transport network which supports the growth in West Berkshire, links existing and new development, prioritises walking, cycling and public transport and provides a genuine choice of modes. Traffic management measures will minimise the impact of new development on the existing network.
8. Retail

3.16 To achieve growth in retail activity and consequent increase in the vitality and vibrancy of town centres in West Berkshire. To meet the range of shopping needs for residents and visitors largely through the completion of the Park Way development and through the regeneration of Thatcham town centre. To provide for local shopping need in Town, District and Local centres to serve the needs of existing and future residents.

9. Heritage

3.17 To ensure that development to 2026 is planned, designed and managed in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of the built, historic and natural environment and habitats in West Berkshire.

3.18 A table showing how the strategic objectives are linked with the Council Plan and the themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy can be found in Appendix A 'Strategic Objectives'.
Section 4 The Spatial Strategy

Introduction

The Spatial Strategy

4.1 The South East Plan sets out a strategy of urban focus and urban renaissance, by encouraging mixed use and high quality development in the region's network of urban areas. It also seeks to support the vitality and character of the region's rural areas, whilst protecting the valuable natural and historic assets of the region. These principles have been carried through into the spatial strategy developed for West Berkshire.

4.2 The spatial strategy seeks to deliver the spatial vision and objectives for the District and has been shaped through analysis of the evidence base, consultation and the sustainability appraisal of options and policies. It provides a broad indication of the overall scale of development in the District and the infrastructure needed to support it. The role of the strategy is to achieve an appropriate balance between protection of the District's environmental assets and improving the quality of life for all, ensuring that necessary change and development is sustainable in the interests of future generations. Policies in the Core Strategy seek to deliver the spatial strategy and provide the context for the preparation of other Local Development Documents.

4.3 The spatial strategy reflects the status of the District in the South East Plan as part of the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley which exhibits high economic and other growth potential.

4.4 The spatial strategy reflects the existing settlement pattern with a particular focus on Newbury as an identified sub-regional hub and on other sustainable locations. The aim is to maintain a network of sustainable communities, meeting the needs of communities while protecting and enhancing the environmental assets of the District.

4.5 The spatial strategy therefore reflects the existing and future role and function of settlements in West Berkshire. A hierarchy of settlements has been identified with the majority of growth taking place in the urban areas at the highest level of the hierarchy. Rural Service Centres have also been identified which contain a range of facilities which can provide services to a wider area and where some development could potentially enhance or strengthen their role.

4.6 Most new development will take place in Newbury, Thatcham and in the settlements in the east of the District close to Reading, which has been identified in the South East Plan as a regional hub and focus for growth. The existing urban areas are regarded as the most suitable locations for future development by virtue of their existing access to services and facilities, thereby providing the opportunity to reduce out-commuting and the need to travel. Development in Newbury and the smaller towns of the District is seen as contributing not only to their regeneration, through provision of additional services and facilities, but also to the rural areas they serve.

4.7 Adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change are an integral part of the spatial strategy and cut across all policies. The strategy and policies will have an important role in assisting in the implementation of policy in the South East Plan which seeks to reduce the region’s carbon dioxide emissions by at least 25% below 1990 levels by 2015 and by 80% by 2050. A key principle of the strategy is that intensive trip generating development should be built in the most accessible locations. The co-location of employment, shopping, leisure, transport and other facilities means that people can carry out multiple activities in a single journey and there will be a boost to the local retail economy.

4.8 A high quality environment has a key role in delivering the spatial strategy. West Berkshire has an important cultural heritage and much of the District is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This high quality environment is important for the quality of life of West Berkshire
residents and has an important role in attracting visitors and investment. Green infrastructure, such as open space, biodiversity, geodiversity and other semi-natural features will be protected and enhanced, including networks of green wildlife corridors and spaces. Green infrastructure has an important role in our adaption to climate change and contributing to carbon neutral development.

The Spatial Policies

4.9 Following the overall spatial strategy, policies are set out to deliver this strategy for West Berkshire. The District has been separated into the following 4 main geographical areas in order to bring out the distinct characteristics of the different parts of West Berkshire:

- Newbury and Thatcham, with separate policies for Newbury and for Thatcham
- The Eastern Area, with separate policies for the Eastern Urban Area (Tilehurst, Calcot and Purley on Thames) and for the Rural Service Centres of Pangbourne and Theale
- The North Wessex Downs AONB, with separate policies for the Rural Service Centres of Hungerford and Lambourn
- The East Kennet Valley, with a policy for the Rural Service Centres of Burghfield and Mortimer.

4.10 There is some element of overlap between the different areas, due to some parts of the District having geographical links with more than one area. Where this is the case, it is identified within the text.

4.11 A vision for each area sets the scene for how it is expected to change and evolve over the Core Strategy period. This vision is followed by a set of bullet points which show how the vision will be implemented and how the level of growth for each area will be delivered, with detailed proposals coming forward through the Site Allocations DPD and through the development management process.

Spatial Strategy

Spatial Policy SP 1

Spatial Strategy

Development in West Berkshire will follow the existing settlement pattern and comply with the spatial strategy set out in this document.

Most development will be within or adjacent to the settlements included in the settlement hierarchy set out below, and related to the transport accessibility of the settlements (especially by public transport, cycling and walking) and their level of services. The majority of development will take place on previously developed land.

West Berkshire’s main urban areas will be the focus for most development. The most intensively used developments, intensive employment generating uses, such as B1(a) offices, and intensive trip generating uses, such as major mixed use, retail or leisure uses, will be located in those town centre areas where the extent and capacity of supporting infrastructure, services and facilities is the greatest. High densities of development may be appropriate in these locations. Such development will have to be comprehensively planned in order to deliver maximum social, environmental and economic benefits to the wider community.
The scale and density of development will be related to the site’s current or proposed accessibility, character and surroundings. Significant intensification of residential, employment generating and other intensive uses will be avoided within areas which lack sufficient supporting infrastructure, facilities or services or where opportunities to access them by public transport, cycling and walking are limited.

**District Settlement Hierarchy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Areas</th>
<th>Wide range of services and the focus for the majority of development - delivery of approximately 6,900 new homes</th>
<th>Newbury, Thatcham, Eastern Urban Area (Tilehurst, Calcot and Purley on Thames)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Service Centres</td>
<td>Range of services and reasonable public transport provision - opportunities to strengthen role in meeting requirements of surrounding communities - delivery of approximately 2,000 new homes</td>
<td>Burghfield Common, Hungerford, Lambourn, Mortimer, Pangbourne, Theale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Villages</td>
<td>More limited range of services and some limited development potential - delivery of approximately 1,100 new homes.</td>
<td>Aldermaston, Bradfield Southend, Chieveley, Cold Ash, Compton, Great Shefford, Hermitage, Kintbury, Woolhampton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below the settlement hierarchy there are two additional types of area where there will be more limited development, including affordable housing for local needs:

- smaller villages with settlement boundaries - suitable only for limited infill development subject to the character and form of the settlement
- open countryside - only appropriate limited development in the countryside will be allowed, focused on addressing identified needs and maintaining a strong rural economy.

All settlement boundaries will be reviewed in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD

**Delivery and Monitoring**

This policy will be delivered through development control decisions, supported by the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document.

The following indicators will be used by the Council to assess the effectiveness of the policy:

- The percentage of all new development completed on previously developed land.
- The percentage of all new development completed within and adjacent to the settlements within the District Settlement Hierarchy
Newbury and Thatcham

4.12 Newbury and Thatcham are distinct towns with their own character but are geographically close and functionally related. Both towns have significant employment provision and Newbury provides many of the major services, including retail and leisure facilities. There is significant movement between the two towns, and so transport linkages, by rail and road are vital. The Core Strategy recognises the separate identities of the towns and seeks to build on those, enhancing the character of the towns and maintaining the physical separation between them while improving linkages, particularly for non-car modes of transport.

Newbury - The Vision

4.13 Newbury will retain its traditional market town heritage whilst undergoing infrastructure improvements and development and renewal of commercial uses and housing, to create a vibrant 21st century centre.

4.14 Newbury will continue to fulfil its key role as a sub-regional hub, the administrative centre and major town centre for the District, with a wide range of retail, employment, leisure and community services and facilities. It will be the main focus for housing growth over the period with new housing development well integrated into the town, supporting the vitality of the town centre and accompanied by enhanced services, facilities and infrastructure.

4.15 Newbury’s accessibility in terms of access to rail and to the strategic road network will mean that it remains a key focus for business investment and development. Additional employment opportunities will reduce the need for out-commuting and provide job opportunities for existing and new residents.

4.16 Newbury will build on its existing strengths and historic legacy to reinforce its distinct identity and differentiate its shopping centre from other town centres in the region. The “Newbury 2025 Vision” will continue to be implemented, with its emphasis on enhancing the different “quarters” of the town centre. A great deal has already been achieved with the opening of the new cinema and construction work underway on the Park Way development which will increase the attraction of Newbury town centre for local residents and visitors.

4.17 Tourism will play a bigger part in the town’s economy. Improvements to the racecourse and the extended recreational role of the Kennet and Avon Canal, combined with the regeneration of the town centre and the established arts and cultural attractions, will raise the town’s profile and help increase the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.

4.18 Open spaces will be better linked to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists within the town and to improve public access to countryside on the fringes of town which will continue to form an important recreational resource.
Figure 3 Newbury Town Centre
Spatial Policy SP 2

Newbury

Housing

- Newbury will accommodate approximately 5,400 new homes over the Core Strategy plan period, contributing to its South East Plan role as a sub-regional hub. There is significant development potential on previously developed land, particularly in the town centre and periphery. Urban extensions to the town to the east, on land at Newbury Racecourse and, later in the plan period, to the south at Sandleford, will provide new residential neighbourhoods with supporting facilities and green infrastructure, well designed and built to high environmental standards and integrated with the rest of the town through public transport and pedestrian/cycle links.

Town Centre

- The Park Way development will provide 27,300 square metres of new retail floorspace in the town centre. This will meet the demand for retail provision during the Core Strategy period and will help to enhance Newbury’s defined role as a secondary shopping centre in the South East Plan.
- The town centre commercial boundary and primary shopping frontage will be reviewed in the Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD.
- Regeneration of the Faraday Road area immediately to the east of the town centre for mixed use and office developments will create additional jobs and improve the environment of this part of the town.
- New office development will be directed towards the town centre and existing office developments protected.
- Improvements to Victoria Park, together with improved linkages through to Northbrook Street, will enhance this important open space in the town centre.
- The Wharf area will be enhanced and developed as an extension to the cultural quarter of the Market Place, providing important new open space and potentially a canal basin, and becoming a focus for cultural activities and outdoor events.
- The Market Place will continue to be developed as a high quality café and leisure quarter in addition to its role as the location for the twice weekly market and the Farmers’ Market.
- The Market Street area will be developed as an “urban village”, a mixed use, but predominantly residential area, with greatly improved pedestrian links from the railway station to the town centre.
- The landscape and recreational role of the Kennet and Avon Canal, which makes a positive contribution to the character and heritage of the town centre, will be strengthened. The canal towpath will be improved in partnership with British Waterways to enhance the quality of the route for walking and cycling and to promote it as a sustainable link between Newbury and Thatcham.

Employment

- Existing employment areas including New Greenham Park and the Vodafone site will continue to play a crucial role in the economy of the District. There may be limited opportunities for re-allocation to residential or mixed uses in appropriate locations and this will be assessed through the Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD.
Accessibility

- Demand for travel will be managed, and accessibility to sustainable transport opportunities increased through improving choice in transport modes, for example through enhancing the bus services in the Newbury area and ensuring their routing is effective. Rail travel will be actively encouraged and facilitated through improvements to Newbury rail station and Newbury Racecourse rail station in partnership with First Great Western.
- A range of transport measures, to minimise congestion, improve safety and enhance connectivity will be implemented. These will be informed by the Local Transport Plan 3 and will include measures to reduce the need to travel and encourage a shift to more sustainable modes.
- The impact on the Air Quality Management Area will be taken into account when developing transport solutions for the A339 and surrounding areas.
- Existing highway infrastructure will be improved to manage flows along the A339 and A4 corridors in particular. This will be achieved through upgrading junctions to improve turning movements, adjusting land arrangements to add capacity and enhancing the management of traffic signals.
- Opportunities for increasing capacity on the network through planning for additional infrastructure will be investigated and delivered where possible and where this can be balanced with other considerations within the Core Strategy.

Environment

- Development will respect the historic environment of the town. Conservation Area appraisals will be undertaken for Newbury Town Centre Conservation Area and for other conservation areas within the town.
- Opportunities will be taken to enhance the townscape. A number of buildings which are regarded as “eyesores” may provide redevelopment opportunities.
- The appearance of key gateways to the town will be improved providing an enhanced identity for the town.
- Improvements to pedestrian and cycle links to surrounding countryside will be implemented when opportunities arise.
- Opportunities will be taken to reduce flood risk, particularly in the town centre through flood alleviation schemes and redevelopment.

Community Infrastructure and Services

- Community Infrastructure will be provided to meet the growth in population, including new school buildings at St. Bartholomew’s School, additional school provision in the south of Newbury to meet the requirements arising from urban extensions to the town, and addressing capacity issues elsewhere in the town’s schools.

Thatcham - The Vision

4.19 Thatcham town centre will be a focus for regeneration, enabling the town to fulfil its role within the District’s Hierarchy of Centres (1) by improving the retail offer and enhancing the streetscape. The provision of leisure and community facilities for all ages will be improved and encouraged within the town centre. With the development of the new town centre, reflecting the historic heritage and responding to the needs of local people, Thatcham will become more self-contained providing a range of job opportunities and encouraging residents to shop and socialise locally.
4 The Spatial Strategy

4.20 Thatcham will be an accessible location, with improved access by public transport, walking and cycling and local traffic improvements increasing access and linkages to the town for residents and for visitors. Flood risk throughout Thatcham will be reduced and managed through surface water management schemes \(^{(2)}\) and sensitive development.

4.21 The countryside and green infrastructure surrounding Thatcham, such as the Kennet Valley, the Nature Discovery Centre and the Living Landscape to the south, will be positively and proactively managed as assets for biodiversity. This will enhance health and well-being by creating more opportunities for residents and visitors to access and enjoy the high quality environment of the area.

Figure 4 Newbury and Thatcham

Spatial Policy SP 3

Thatcham

Housing

- Thatcham will accommodate approximately 900 homes of the total allocation for the District over the Core Strategy period in line with its role within the District Settlement Hierarchy. The majority of this planned growth, approximately two thirds, has already been committed or completed, for example through the Kennet Heath site to the south of the town. The rest will be delivered through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, with schemes contributing to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities and addressing local housing need.
Development will respect the historic environment of the town. A Conservation Area Appraisal will be undertaken for Thatcham Conservation Area.

Opportunities will be taken to maintain and enhance the identity of Thatcham, separate to that of Newbury and the surrounding rural settlements.

**Town Centre**

- Thatcham’s services and facilities will be improved allowing the town to fulfil its role within the District Settlement Hierarchy and the Hierarchy of Centres, serving the local population, not only within Thatcham, but also the surrounding rural areas.
- The town centre will be regenerated with the redevelopment of the Kingsland Centre driving this improvement, providing an attractive shopping environment and enhanced retail offer.
- The town centre commercial boundary and primary shopping frontage will be reviewed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

**Employment**

- Thatcham will continue to support local employment through designated Employment Areas at Colthrop and Green Lane. The role, function and boundaries of these sites will be reviewed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

**Accessibility**

- Thatcham will have recognisable gateways and better signage, improving connectivity and giving the town a stronger identity, as a distinct and thriving settlement.
- The streetscape and public realm throughout the town will be improved, along with upgrades to the A4/Bath Road corridor, all of which are vital to enhancing Thatcham’s image.
- Opportunities will be maximised to provide better connections and maximise accessibility linkages between the town centre and Thatcham Railway Station.

**Environment**

- The risk of flooding within the area will be reduced and managed through the implementation of schemes within the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan (2009).
- Through new development opportunities will be actively sought to create a connected and multi-functional green infrastructure network, which links with the town centre and surrounding countryside.
- The Nature Discovery Centre will be positively managed by the Council to ensure it continues to act as a vital educational and recreational resource for the area, as well as attracting tourism.
- The landscape and recreational role of the Kennet and Avon Canal will be strengthened in conjunction with British Waterways, and will continue to contribute positively to the character of Thatcham.
- The Council will continue to implement strategic biodiversity enhancements in conjunction with Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), within the area covered by the Living Landscape project (3).

**Community Infrastructure and Services**

- The range of leisure facilities within Thatcham will be expanded, utilising those at the existing Newbury Leisure Park on Lower Way, and optimising opportunities for leisure within the town centre through any future regeneration projects.

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The educational issues facing Thatcham will be addressed and opportunities taken to meet the educational needs of residents, particularly with regards to the provision of secondary school places, as Kennet School is currently at full capacity.

Opportunities to implement schemes set out within the Thatcham Vision (4) will be taken, for example schemes relating to sustainable travel, or maintaining the historic character of the town centre.

Delivery and Monitoring

The strategy for Newbury and Thatcham will be delivered by implementation of the projects in the "Newbury Vision 2025" and the Thatcham Vision and through the range of core policies identified in Section 5 'Core Policies'.

Infrastructure requirements are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Monitoring will be through a range of indicators which are outlined in Section 6 'Monitoring Framework'.

Eastern Area

4.22 The Eastern Area is made up of the Eastern Urban Area consisting of Purley on Thames, Tilehurst and Calcot plus the two rural service centres of Pangbourne and Theale.

Eastern Urban Area - The Vision

4.23 The individual identities of Purley on Thames, Tilehurst and Calcot will be maintained and enhanced, as will the quality of the built environments. This area will have a close functional relationship with the Reading area and will benefit from the facilities and services that Reading offers.

4.24 Transport infrastructure will be enhanced to tackle issues of car dependency and congestion. Capacity on the road network will be increased through traffic management measures and upgrades to key routes. Public transport services will be improved through working with Reading Borough Council to increase accessibility to employment and services in Reading. Walking and cycling routes will be improved and more people will use these modes of travel. Additionally, traffic calming measures will improve the quality of the local environment.

4.25 Local centres will serve the needs of the communities of Calcot, Tilehurst and Purley on Thames. The area’s retail offer will be improved and scope for improving the provision and enhancing the quality of the environment at the Pincents Lane Retail Park will be explored. Young people will have access to improved facilities and the community will benefit from better local sports provision. Education provision will be enhanced in the Tilehurst area. Regeneration opportunities and enhancement schemes such as at Underwood Road in Calcot will be completed.

4.26 The high quality landscape and environmental assets in this part of West Berkshire, which includes the Thames National Path and the North Wessex Downs AONB will be protected and enhanced as a resource for the local population and for green tourism. As part of the Kennet Valley East Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) the Kennet Valley Meadows to the south of Calcot will be enhanced through better management and will provide a higher quality resource for the local community.

Thatcham Vision, (2007); www.thatchamonline.net
Pangbourne

4.27 Pangbourne will remain a thriving village community in an attractive and accessible setting which will serve as a Rural Service Centre for the surrounding villages. Small scale extensions in keeping with the existing character and pattern of development and in line with Pangbourne’s role as a Rural Service Centre will address issues of local housing need and provide opportunities for local people to buy a home in the village. The thriving district centre will continue to provide a good range of retail and leisure facilities, in the form of shops, pubs and restaurants. The diverse range of retail and leisure outlets will also help to form an important tourism base.

Theale

4.28 Theale will remain a vibrant village which maintains a distinct identity and sense of community. The new Lakeside development will provide a range of different sizes and types of houses and will become a well integrated part of the Theale community. Following this development, Theale will need to undergo a period of consolidation without further strategic scale development, to provide an opportunity for facilities and services to be upgraded. The wide range of shops and businesses in the High Street will be maintained and enhanced. Important countryside assets such as Hosehill Local Nature Reserve will be managed and enhanced as an important resource for recreation and leisure during this period. Linkages between the town and railway station will be improved.

Figure 5 Eastern Area
Spatial Policy SP 4

Eastern Area

- The Eastern Area of West Berkshire will accommodate approximately 1500 new homes during the plan period, in order to support the growth of the Reading area and to sustain services in the rural service centres of Pangbourne and Theale. A significant development of 350 homes which already has planning permission will be delivered at Theale Lakeside, while development in Pangbourne will be more limited due to the town’s location in the floodplain and North Wessex Downs AONB.

Transport

- Cycle and pedestrian accessibility between Theale and Calcot will be enhanced by the construction of a new bridge over the M4 in partnership with the Highways Agency.
- Better cycle provision between Pangbourne and Tilehurst, through Purley on Thames; as well as safe and attractive cycle links between Pangbourne and Theale will be delivered in accordance with the Transport Vision.
- Facilities at Theale and Pangbourne railway stations will be improved in partnership with First Great Western; including additional parking where possible, and greater accessibility to facilitate interchange between modes.
- There will be a focus on engaging businesses in travel planning, particularly around junction 12 of the M4 at Pincents Lane Retail Park and Arlington Business Park.
- Highways infrastructure will be upgraded to reduce congestion along the A4 corridor, including improvements to the Langley Hill / A4 junction and potentially dualling the A4 from Langley Hill to the M4.

Retail Centres

- The retail park at Pincents Lane will be retained and enhanced as an important retail centre for the residents of Calcot, Tilehurst and Theale.
- The boundaries of the district centres of Theale and Pangbourne and their primary shopping frontages will be reviewed in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.
- Local centres will be identified through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.
- The former Underwood Road shopping area will be redeveloped with residential units, shop and a doctors’ surgery.
- Pangbourne will be a key service centre within the North Wessex Downs AONB and will also form a base for the sale of local produce through local markets.

Employment

- Arlington Business Park in Theale and Horseshoe Park in Pangbourne will continue to provide sustainable employment opportunities for local residents.
- Protected employment areas will be reviewed in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

Community Infrastructure and Services

- Educational facilities will be improved through the refurbishment of Denefield and Brookfields Schools, and expansion of Theale Primary School. The need for any other educational facilities will be assessed using a formulaic approach.
- The youth activity centre of Adventure Dolphin will have been rebuilt at Pangbourne, providing a Centre of Excellence for a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities for young people.
Environment

- As part of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, a strategic approach will be taken towards the Kennet Valley Meadows to ensure that the habitat continues to be able to support a diverse range of species and that the area’s recreational function is maximised. Cross boundary work with Reading Borough Council on the management of this area will continue.
- Access to opportunities for leisure and tourism on the Thames National Path, the Kennet and Avon Canal and in the North Wessex Downs AONB will be improved through signposting and communication methods. They will be an important resource for both local residents and for visitors to the area.

Delivery and Monitoring

The strategy for the Eastern Area will be delivered through the range of core policies identified in Section 5 ‘Core Policies’.

Monitoring will be through a range of indicators which are outlined in Section 6 ‘Monitoring Framework’.

North Wessex Downs AONB

North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - The Vision

4.29 The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be a place where the landscape is managed to conserve and enhance its natural beauty in accordance with its national designation. With its legacy of historical associations and richness in historic sites and features the area will be a focus for conservation with low impact leisure and green tourism activities which help to sustain vibrant and balanced rural communities. As a primarily agricultural landscape the traditional land based and rural economy of the area, such as agriculture and the racehorse industry, will continue to thrive and support the social and economic needs of the communities of which they are a part.

4.30 The North Wessex Downs AONB covers 74% of West Berkshire and makes a significant contribution to the uniqueness of the District. The settlement pattern will be maintained as both distinctive and ancient with a small and dispersed population within villages and small towns that have a strong sense of identity. The AONB includes the Rural Service Centres of Lambourn, Hungerford and Pangbourne together with the Service Villages of Bradford Southend, Chieveley, Compton, Great Shefford, Hermitage and Kintbury. The AONB will have appropriate and sensitive housing growth throughout the plan period to support the local communities and rural economy.

4.31 As a Rural Service Centre Hungerford will prosper as a self-sufficient, historic medieval market town, serving the needs of its residents and the surrounding rural areas. The town will have an enhanced role as a tourist destination within the AONB based on its wealth of independent stores, local produce and stronger retail offer, markets and festivals/events and also as a base to explore the surrounding countryside. Some housing and employment development will take place and this will respect the historic form of the built environment within the AONB. The Commons and the Kennet and Avon Canal will be protected and enhanced as important areas of recreation and nature conservation.

4.32 Lambourn will be a busy working village that serves as the heart of one of the most important areas for horseracing in the country. As a key service centre for the surrounding rural area it will continue to provide a range of employment, shops and facilities for the local community while being
well connected via public transport to Swindon and Newbury. A modest level of housing growth will have maintained the viability of services and contributed towards the housing needs of the local people and the local economy whilst respecting the historic built environment and unique character associated with the horseracing industry.

4.33 The Service Villages will continue to meet the needs of their residents and surrounding communities for facilities and services. Some small-scale development will have taken place to meet local needs, support the rural economy and sustain local facilities.

Figure 6 North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Spatial Policy SP 5

North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

North Wessex Downs AONB as a whole

Development

- The North Wessex Downs AONB will have appropriate and sensitive growth that conserves and enhances its special landscape qualities. During the Core Strategy period the area will accommodate approximately 2,100 dwellings, of which almost half have already been built or have planning permission. New dwellings will be allocated through the Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD, amongst Hungerford, Pangbourne and Lambourn, with some small scale developments for the service villages and development to meet local need in the other villages within the AONB.
- The sites of the Institute of Animal Health at Compton and Dennison Barracks at Hermitage have been identified as becoming vacant during the Core Strategy period and therefore having potential for future development. There may be opportunities to redevelop these sites and this will be assessed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.
- The Service Villages will continue to provide a range of services to their communities and surrounding areas. A limited level of development will be accommodated to meet local needs, including employment, housing, amenity and community facilities, to maintain the areas as vibrant and balanced communities with their own sense of identity.
- Smaller villages within the AONB will continue to support the needs of their residents and surrounding communities for facilities and services.
- The AONB will be managed in partnership with the statutory North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and opportunities to implement the delivery plan will be taken.

Environment

- Recognising the area as a national landscape designation, development will conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting of the AONB whilst preserving the strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark night skies, particularly on the open downland. Development will respect identified landscape features and components of natural beauty.
- Traditional and local rural skills, such as the skills of hedge laying, woodland management and thatching will be supported so that they help to deliver a wide range of public benefits which include the conservation and enhancement of the areas special qualities and features and sustaining the vibrancy of the rural economy.

Economy

- The equestrian and racehorse industry will continue to be supported as a nationally and locally important part of the economy in accordance with Policy CS 13 ‘Equestrian/Racehorse Industry’.
- The area will be positively managed through partnership working to ensure its continuation as a location for leisure and green tourism. The AONB will continue to play an important role in attracting visitors and investment. The landscape and recreational role of the Kennet and Avon Canal, which makes a positive contribution to the character and cultural heritage of the AONB, will be strengthened as part of this.
Opportunities for appropriate small scale renewable energy schemes, which use local resources will be encouraged if they can be accommodated within the landscapes of the North Wessex Downs.

Economic development will be supported through the North Wessex Downs LEADER programme, and any similar subsequent schemes, which offers grants for farmers, foresters, rural businesses and community organisations within the AONB to enable them to strengthen their support for the local economy. The funding is available for a wide range of activities such as farm diversification, adding value to timber, tourism activities and projects that will benefit local communities.

**Accessibility**

Opportunities will be sought to improve the accessibility to and within the AONB, bringing improved public transport links and the retention of services and facilities as well as stronger signage to enhance the identity of the North Wessex Downs.

**Hungerford**

**Housing**

Hungerford will accommodate a level of housing which is appropriate to its role as a Rural Service Centre and this will be delivered through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, contributing to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities.

**Economy**

With an accessible economic base with good access to the road and rail network Hungerford will continue as a self-sufficient Rural Service Centre providing a focus for local employment and local businesses. Existing employment areas will be protected to continue to play an important role in the local economy and community.

New office developments will be directed towards the town centre and existing office developments will be protected.

The town will have an enhanced role as a tourist destination within the AONB (within and beyond the District boundary), promoting its diverse retail offer, regular market and acting as a base to explore the surrounding countryside.

**Town centre**

The retail offer in the town centre will be encouraged and supported whilst preserving its unique character and local, independent businesses. The town centre commercial boundary and primary shopping frontage will be reviewed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

**Environment**

Any development will respect and respond to the historic environment and setting of the town, such as the historic features, character and identity of the burgage plots extending either side of the High Street, and its highly distinctive medieval market town character.

Portdown Common, Freeman’s Marsh and the Kennet and Avon Canal will be protected and enhanced as important areas of recreation and nature conservation.

Improvements to access to the surrounding countryside, Portdown Common and Freeman’s Marsh, and the Kennet and Avon Canal will be implemented when opportunities arise.
Accessibility

- Opportunities will be taken to manage congestion and improve accessibility linkages within the town, in particular the north/south links within the community and encouraging the use of public transport. Opportunities will be sought to provide improved and safe pedestrian and cycling access within the town and to the surrounding countryside.

Lambourn

Housing

- Lambourn will accommodate a level of housing which is appropriate to its role as a Rural Service Centre and to meet local housing need, including accommodation for equestrian industry workers. This will be delivered through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

District centre

- Lambourn will be defined as a District Centre as outlined in Policy CS 12 'Hierarchy of Centres'.
- The historic market village will continue to provide a range of shops and services meeting the needs of local people and visitors. Opportunities will be sought to strengthen its role in serving surrounding communities.

Economy

- Its role as a nationally important centre for the racehorse industry will be maintained and enhanced through the implementation of Policy CS 13 'Equestrian/Racehorse Industry'.
- Small, local businesses will be supported, encouraged and protected within the Lambourn area providing local job opportunities and maintaining the rural economy.

Accessibility

- Demand for improved accessibility will be managed through enhanced public transport to Newbury, Hungerford and across the District boundary to Swindon.

Environment

- Development will respect and respond to the historic environment and setting of the village.

Delivery and Monitoring

The strategy for the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be implemented through the range of core policies identified in Section 5 'Core Policies'.

Infrastructure requirements are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Monitoring will be through a range of indicators which are outlined in Section 6 'Monitoring Framework'.
The East Kennet Valley

East Kennet Valley - The Vision

4.34 The East Kennet Valley is the name given to the rural south-east of the District that lies to the east of Thatcham and outside of the AONB. Distinct features of this area are the Kennet and Avon Canal and River Kennet which both run from west to east across the breadth of this area, parallel to the Newbury – Reading train line and the A4. The East Kennet Valley is also characterised by a number of villages along the route of the canal/river such as Woolhampton and Aldermaston Wharf and others dispersed across farmland and some woodland including Aldermaston, Brimpton, Burghfield Common and Mortimer.

4.35 The Atomic Weapons Establishment has two bases in this area, at Aldermaston and Burghfield, and is an important provider of local jobs but may have implications for the future level of development in this area. There is a business park at Arlington near Theale, and a number of other employment areas comprising of small industrial estates. The main transport links include the mainline railways linking the West Country with Reading and London and Reading with Basingstoke and the south coast. There are stations at Midgham, Aldermaston, and Stratfield Mortimer. The people of this area interact significantly with the surrounding larger centres, with Reading, Newbury, Thatcham and Basingstoke and to a lesser extent Tadley all providing jobs, shopping and leisure facilities.

Figure 7 Eastern Kennet Valley
4.36 This area has a number of environmental assets, notably the canal and river but also a large number of ancient woodlands, local wildlife sites and SSSI. A small area in the very south east around Beech Hill is within the designated Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area for birds. In terms of the historic environment, there is an Elizabethan Manor at Ufton Court, two Historic Parks and Gardens, Folly Farm near Sulhamstead and The Manor House near Aldermaston. Minerals have been extracted from the Kennet Valley since the first settlements appeared in the area. Due to its gravel deposits, the River Kennet will continue to be a focus for extraction over the next plan period.

Spatial Policy SP 6

The East Kennet Valley

Housing

- Some growth is planned for this area to help meet the needs of the village communities and to assist with the viability of village shops and services. This amounts to approximately 800 homes between 2006 and 2026, around 40 new homes a year. The Rural Service Centres and Service Villages will be the focus for any new development.
- With regard to the presence of AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield, the Council will monitor housing completions and population levels in conjunction with the HSE / NII. Development will be strictly controlled for health and safety reasons within the zones set out in Appendix C 'AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield' until the HSE/NII is satisfied that there is capacity to accommodate an increase in population with safety.
- The two identified rural service centres of Burghfield Common and Mortimer will be a focus for development in this area, together with the more modest development of the identified service villages, Woolhampton and Aldermaston. Development may take the form of small extensions to these villages and infill development and the location and detail of this will be set out in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

Employment

- Existing employment areas such as Young’s Industrial Estate and Calleva Park near Aldermaston, Benham Grange and Theale Lakes Business Park will be protected.

Environment

- The character of all the settlements in this area will be conserved and enhanced by ensuring that any development responds positively to the local context. Conservation Area Appraisals will be carried out in accordance with the Council’s programme.
- The environmental and leisure assets, including the river and its floodplain, the canal and the boating lakes will be conserved and enhanced, and development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled.

Community Infrastructure and Services

- A new Integrated Waste Management Facility will be constructed at Padworth Sidings to improve the management of waste and significantly improve recycling and composting rates in West Berkshire.
- The boundaries of any local centres for retail and other services will be defined through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD and opportunities for a more distinct centre offering shops and services in Burghfield Common will be explored.
4 The Spatial Strategy

**Accessibility**

- Opportunities to improve public transport links between the villages and nearby towns including Newbury, Thatcham and Reading will be sought, and the area will benefit from the planned electrification of the London to Newbury railway line.
- Improvements to the accessibility of Mortimer railway station will be sought, for example through enhancements to the road bridge. This will be taken forward through partnership working.
- Opportunities for the improvement of cycle and pedestrian routes between Burghfield Common and Mortimer; between Mortimer railway station, and between the schools in Burghfield will be explored in partnership with landowners, Network Rail and education providers.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

The strategy for the East Kennet Valley will be implemented through the range of core policies identified in Section 5 'Core Policies'.

Infrastructure requirements are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Monitoring will be through a range of indicators which are outlined in Section 6 'Monitoring Framework'.
Section 5 Core Policies

Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock

Policy CS 1

Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock

Provision will be made for the delivery of approximately 10,500 new homes and associated infrastructure over the period 2006 to 2026. Delivery will be phased and managed in order to meet the annual average net additional dwelling requirement of 525 dwellings per annum set out in the South East Plan and to maintain a rolling five year supply of housing land.

There should be no net losses from the existing stock of homes in West Berkshire. Existing homes should be retained in residential use (or replaced at least in equal numbers, normally on the proposal site), unless there is a reasoned justification in the form of a benefit to the wider community for a change of use. Developments should utilise opportunities to make better use of the existing housing stock.

Explanation of the Policy

5.1 The Core Strategy needs to demonstrate how the housing allocation set out in the adopted South East Plan can be accommodated in West Berkshire. The housing requirement in Policy H1 of the South East Plan is for 10,500 net additional dwellings over the period 2006 to 2026. The Core Strategy will therefore demonstrate how this minimum requirement can be met, with flexibility to allow for contingencies.

5.2 The policy also aims to retain the existing stock of dwellings, to avoid a net loss of existing homes as a result of redevelopment or change of use, and so minimise the need to build additional dwellings to meet housing requirements.

Delivery and Monitoring

The delivery of new homes will be phased in order to manage the release of housing sites. Phasing will ensure that infrastructure and community needs are delivered in a planned manner. Strategic sites, which are critical to delivering the Core Strategy spatial vision, have been identified and additional sites will be identified and phased in subsequent Development Plan Documents to ensure that delivery meets requirements. A housing land supply of deliverable sites for at least five years will be maintained.

The policy will be implemented through the determination of planning applications. Implementation of individual sites may involve preparation of SPDs, masterplans or development briefs and partnership working with the private sector and Registered Social Landlords.

The policy will be monitored through the production of the Housing Trajectory, published in the Annual Monitoring Report (1) and by regular updating of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Appendix B ‘Housing Land Supply’ contains details of the components of housing supply and the housing trajectory as at 2009.

1 available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk/ldfamr
Housing Distribution

Policy CS 2

Housing Distribution

New homes will be located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy outlined in the spatial strategy and area policies. The broad distribution of new housing over the period 2006 to 2026 is indicated below:

- In the region of 6,300 dwellings in and adjacent to Newbury and Thatcham, including strategic urban extensions to the east of Newbury at Newbury Racecourse and to the south at Sandleford.
- In the region of 1,500 dwellings in the Eastern Area (Tilehurst, Calcot, Purley on Thames, Theale and Pangbourne)
- In the region of 2,100 dwellings in the North Wessex Downs AONB, with the main focus of new development in the Rural Service Centres of Hungerford, Lambour and Pangbourne (Pangbourne lies within both the Eastern Area and the AONB so there is an element of overlap in the figures).
- Approximately 800 dwellings in the remainder of the rural areas, i.e. In the Kennet Valley area in the south east of the District.

New homes will be primarily developed on

- Suitable previously developed land within settlement boundaries,
- Strategic sites and broad locations identified on the Core Strategy Key Diagram,
- Land allocated for residential development in subsequent Development Plan Documents.

The Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document will identify specific sites to accommodate the broad distribution of housing indicated above. The focus will be on previously developed sites where opportunities occur within and on the edge of settlements.

All settlement boundaries will be reviewed in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD

Explanation of the Policy

5.3 The majority of West Berkshire lies within the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region but a significant part, predominantly in the north of the District and within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, lies outside the sub-region defined in the South East Plan. The housing distribution in the South East Plan sets out a requirement for 1,000 dwellings out of the total 10,500 requirement to be located in this more remote part of the District. This is equivalent to an annual average delivery of 50 dwellings per annum. The Council have, however, taken the approach with the housing distribution of planning for the AONB as a whole, due to its importance as a nationally protected landscape. Though past rates of development indicate that the level of development proposed for the area outside the Western Corridor could be met, a significant proportion of development has been on small-scale windfall sites. Though some allocations in this area will be made through the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document it would be inappropriate to allocate the total requirement as this would be incompatible with the spatial strategy and with the aims and objectives of the designation of the AONB.
### 5.4 The Core Strategy Vision aims to build upon the existing settlement pattern and direct most development to those urban areas which have the infrastructure and facilities to support sustainable growth. The main focus for housing growth will therefore be Newbury, Thatcham and the east of the District. Two strategic urban extensions are proposed: the first to be developed would be the site at Newbury Racecourse to the east of Newbury, for up to 1,450 dwellings, partly on land within the existing settlement boundary, and the second would be a greenfield site at Sandleford, to the south of Newbury where up to 2,000 homes could be developed, with delivery commencing in the second half of the plan period and extending beyond 2026. The allocation of this strategic site introduces some flexibility into the housing delivery with the opportunity to amend the phasing to respond to changing circumstances.

### 5.5 The rural service centres provide the role of a focal point for the surrounding villages and rural areas in terms of the provision of services and facilities and will accommodate some additional housing. The level of development in the individual settlements will vary depending on the character and function of the settlement and on assessment of the potential sites available for housing.

### 5.6 Villages identified in the District settlement hierarchy as service villages will accommodate more limited development: these villages would benefit from small-scale development, appropriate to the character and function of the village, in order to meet local needs, including residential infill or minor development adjacent to the settlement, which will be allocated in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

### 5.7 Settlements below the service village level in the hierarchy would deliver additional housing but this would be limited to infill windfall development where a settlement boundary has been defined, and to rural exception schemes for affordable housing to meet local needs. Outside these settlements, in the countryside, a more restrictive approach to development will be taken. Specific exceptions to this approach could include barn conversions and agricultural workers dwellings to support the rural economy.

### Delivery and Monitoring

The policy will be implemented through subsequent policies and guidance in further Local Development Documents, particularly the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. It will involve partnership working with developers, other local authorities and Registered Social Landlords.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment will be regularly monitored and up-dated in order to identify the scope for redevelopment and intensification in urban areas, to provide an up-to-date evidence base for future DPDs and to demonstrate a five year housing land supply.

The geographical distribution of housing completions and the completions within the settlements in the District Settlement Hierarchy will be monitored to assess the delivery of the spatial strategy.
Newbury Racecourse Strategic Site Allocation

Policy CS 3

Newbury Racecourse Strategic Site Allocation

Within the area identified at Newbury Racecourse, a sustainable and high quality mixed use development will be delivered including:

- Phased delivery of up to 1,450 homes, of which at least 35% will be affordable;
- Appropriate retail facilities;
- Social and physical infrastructure;
- Measures to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network;
- Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes, including provision of cycle and pedestrian routes to both the Racecourse and Newbury stations and to Newbury and Thatcham town centres;
- Appropriate green infrastructure;
- Generation of on-site renewable energy.

Explanation of the Policy

5.8 Newbury Racecourse is located approximately 1 km to the south east of Newbury town centre. The area proposed for development, a site of approximately 40 hectares, lies to the west and north of the racetrack itself. Improvements to the racecourse facilities have been proposed, together with housing development on land which is surplus to racing requirements. The western part of the site is previously developed land, within the Newbury settlement boundary, currently used as stable blocks and car parking. The eastern part lies outside the settlement boundary. The site is well located in terms of access to facilities and employment opportunities as it is within walking and cycling distance of the town centre, and adjacent to a train station. Its location and accessibility mean that relatively high densities would be appropriate on the site, with a mix of family houses and apartments.

Delivery and Monitoring

It is envisaged that implementation of the Racecourse development would commence in the first half of the Core Strategy period. Fundamental to its delivery would be the implementation of measures to mitigate the transport impact.

A masterplan or supplementary planning document (SPD) will be prepared for the site in order to demonstrate how the housing and associated infrastructure will be delivered and provide the context for more detailed design.

Infrastructure requirements and phasing will be set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation

Policy CS 4

Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation

Within the area identified at Sandleford Park, a sustainable and high quality mixed use development will be delivered including:

- Phased delivery of up to 2,000 dwellings, of which at least 40% will be affordable and with an emphasis on family housing. Approximately half the housing is anticipated to be delivered by 2026;
- Appropriate retail facilities;
- Social and physical infrastructure (including provision for a new primary school and extension of Park House School);
- Measures to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network;
- Measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes particularly to Newbury town centre and along the A339 route to Basingstoke;
- A network of green infrastructure which will conserve the areas of ancient woodland and respect the landscape significance of the site on the A339 approach road into Newbury;
- Generation of on-site renewable energy.

Explanation of the Policy

5.9 The Sandleford Park site to the south of Newbury comprises approximately 140 hectares of land. It is bordered to the north by existing development along Monks Lane and could potentially accommodate around 2,000 dwellings with associated community facilities and services. The area is accessible to facilities and services in Newbury town centre and is also close to other retail and educational facilities. The development would need to be designed with significant green infrastructure, taking account of the site’s complex topography and landscape importance. Sandleford Park has the potential to form a high quality southern gateway to Newbury.

Delivery and Monitoring

It is envisaged that the implementation of the Sandleford Site would commence in the latter half of the plan period with approximately 1,000 homes delivered by the end of the plan period with development continuing beyond 2026. This allows for some flexibility in phasing with the potential to bring development forward if other sites do not deliver as anticipated.

An SPD or masterplan will be prepared for the site in order to demonstrate how the housing and associated infrastructure will be delivered and provide the context for more detailed design.

Infrastructure requirements and phasing will be set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
Housing Type and Mix

Policy CS 5

Housing Type and Mix

Residential development will be expected to contribute to the delivery of an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet the housing needs of all sectors of the community, including those with specialist requirements. The mix on an individual site should have regard to:

- The character of the surrounding area;
- The accessibility of the location and availability of existing and proposed local services, facilities and infrastructure;
- The evidence of housing need and demand from Housing Market Assessments and other relevant evidence sources;
- Forecast demographic changes;
- Market considerations.

Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how these matters have been addressed within the proposed dwelling mix.

Developments will make efficient use of land with greater intensity of development at places with good public transport accessibility.

- Higher densities above 50 dwellings per hectare may be achievable in town centres, particularly in parts of Newbury town centre, and along main transport routes and close to transport nodes.
- In the areas outside town centres new residential development will predominantly consist of family sized housing, which should achieve densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare and should enhance the distinctive suburban character and identity of the area.
- Developments below 30 dwellings per hectare may be appropriate in certain areas of the District. Some parts of the urban areas and some villages are particularly sensitive to the impact of intensification and redevelopment because of the prevailing character of the area and the sensitive nature of the surrounding countryside or built form and/or the relative remoteness from public transport.

Explanation of the Policy

5.10 In addition to ensuring that an appropriate amount of housing is provided in suitable locations, it is also important to ensure that there is a wide choice and mix of housing to meet local needs, and help secure mixed and balanced communities. Housing provision must support the needs of the whole community, include the provision of both market and affordable housing and reflect the needs of specific groups such as families with children, single person households, the elderly and those households with special needs.

5.11 A Housing Market Assessment for Berkshire,\(^2\) prepared during 2006, defined the housing market area relevant to West Berkshire. It highlighted characteristics of current housing supply and demand, potential future trends and considered options to intervene to redress imbalances in the housing market. The outcome of the Housing Market Assessment and any future reviews may inform more detailed policies on housing mix, type and densities, which would be prepared in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

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5.12 The Housing Market Assessment identified demographic trends towards smaller households and an ageing population but stressed that the relationship between household size and type and dwelling size is not straightforward. Demand for market homes will reflect a complex set of factors relating to household income and life stage rather than simply household size. In recognition of the changing needs and demographics within the District, developments should include the provision of lifetime homes. This will assist the council in meeting the needs of an ageing population in the District.\(^{(3)}\)

5.13 In order to implement the spatial strategy of concentrating development in the most accessible locations, and to help towards meeting the regional target of 40 dwellings per hectare over the plan period, it is proposed that higher densities be sought in town centres or areas with high accessibility to public transport. Densities will be related to the character of the surrounding area, the accessibility of the location and the availability of existing and proposed local services, facilities and infrastructure.

Delivery and Monitoring

This policy will be implemented through the determination of planning applications for residential development and through Supplementary Planning Documents. Implementation will need to take account of the Housing Strategy and the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

The SPD design guide series “Quality Design – West Berkshire” contains guidance on the Residential Character Framework and is supported by various Area Design Focus Statements for particular key areas. Proposals should take account of this guidance and any relevant Town or Village Design Statement.

Monitoring of housing mix and densities on completed sites will be reported in the AMR.
Infrastructure

Policy CS 6

Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery

The Council will work with infrastructure providers and stakeholders to identify requirements for infrastructure provision and services for new development and will seek to co-ordinate infrastructure delivery, whilst protecting local amenities and environmental quality. The key infrastructure schemes required to facilitate development and secure the delivery of the Core Strategy include, but are not limited to those schemes set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Explanation of the Policy

5.14 New development within West Berkshire needs to be supported by adequate infrastructure of all kinds including physical, social and green infrastructure. The infrastructure requirements of new development need to be established to ensure improvements occur alongside new development. Development should not be permitted unless essential infrastructure can be completed in pace with new development.

5.15 The Council has worked in partnership with other infrastructure providers, including both internal Council departments and external agencies, throughout the development of the Core Strategy to identify the infrastructure required to facilitate the development set out in the Core Strategy, including where, when, by whom and by what means this is to be delivered to ensure that the spatial strategy is robust in terms of delivery.

Delivery and Monitoring

The Council will maintain an infrastructure delivery plan identifying the key infrastructure projects required to support the delivery of the Core Strategy. The infrastructure schedule will be maintained on the Council's website as a 'live' schedule that will be updated as further infrastructure requirements or projects are identified, and as the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD is taken forward. The Council will continue to give consideration to the level of risk that some of the required infrastructure will not be forthcoming and ways that this might be mitigated or addressed. The implementation schedule identifies contingency planning where this may be required. However, in the preparation of the Infrastructure Plan, the Council has consulted with and had regard to, the investment and operational plans of relevant infrastructure and public service providers, ensuring that these bodies recognise their contributions and that the resources required to deliver the infrastructure to support the delivery of the Core Strategy have been given due consideration and have a realistic prospect of being provided in the life of the Core Strategy. Any specific land use requirements for infrastructure will be updated within the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

The implementation of the infrastructure delivery plan will be assessed through monitoring progress on infrastructure projects.
Affordable Housing

Policy CS 7

Provision of Affordable Housing

In order to address the need for affordable housing in West Berkshire a proportion of affordable homes will be sought from residential development. Affordable housing will be provided on-site, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Subject to the economics of provision, the following levels of affordable housing provision will be sought:

- On development sites of 15 dwellings or more (or 0.5 hectares or more) a proportion of 30% will be sought on previously developed land, and 40% on greenfield land;
- On development sites of less than 15 dwellings a sliding scale approach will be used to calculate affordable housing provision, as follows:
  - 30% provision on sites of 10 – 14 dwellings; and
  - 20% provision on sites of 5 – 9 dwellings.

Where schemes fall short of the policy requirements specified, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

In determining residential applications the Council will assess the site size, suitability and type of units to be delivered. The Council will seek a tenure split of 70% social rented and 30% intermediate affordable units, taking into consideration the identified local need and the site specifics.

The affordable units will be dispersed throughout the development, and remain affordable in perpetuity.

Explanation of the Policy

5.16 West Berkshire is an area of high property prices compared to the level of income and as a result many local people have difficulty gaining access to suitable housing on the open market. Housing triggers a wider range of factors than affordability alone, having widespread implications on health, education and employment opportunities.

5.17 Affordable housing is defined in Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (PPS3). The definition can be found in Appendix F ‘Glossary’.

5.18 The West Berkshire Housing Need Assessment (4) identifies a shortfall of between 560 and 850 new affordable homes across the District per year to 2011. This must be placed in the context of the West Berkshire housing allocation of 525 new dwellings (both market and affordable) each year to 2026. Whilst the level of affordable housing need will be kept under review throughout the Plan period and may alter, the level of need remains extremely high and the policy must therefore seek to maximise opportunities for increased affordable housing delivery.
5.19 The South East Plan states that a substantial increase in the amount of affordable housing needs to be delivered, and Policy H3 requires local authorities to set policies appropriate for the local area to assist in achieving increased delivery. Methods for securing affordable housing as an element of market housing proposals have been well established in the West Berkshire District Local Plan (5) and the Council’s existing Supplementary Planning Guidance 4/04 (6). However, evidence from the Housing Need Assessment and the Council’s Strategic Housing Market Assessment (7) indicates that the current threshold for securing provision to date appears unlikely to meet the continuing need for affordable housing in the future.

5.20 A study of economic viability (8) has been carried out on behalf of the Council which sets out the evidence for reducing affordable housing thresholds below the national indicative minimum site size threshold and the current adopted Local Plan policy of 15 units. The study and its update report support a policy approach which reduces the threshold to 5 units without unduly compromising the site viability. The Council recognises that in some circumstances there may be exceptional costs of development which need to be acknowledged and that the policy may represent the starting point for negotiation. The Council will carefully scrutinise proposals which appear to fall artificially below the required thresholds which may indicate a possible attempt to avoid making the appropriate contribution towards the delivery of affordable housing. Such proposals are likely to be refused planning permission where they fail to make efficient use of land.

5.21 Taking account of housing need, past delivery trends and the South East Plan the Council will seek an overall target of 35% of all new housing to be affordable. With an average housing allocation of 525 dwellings per annum, this overall target for affordable housing delivery would equate to an average of 184 units per annum, depending on overall housing completions in any given year.

5.22 The Council seek a tenure split on each development site of 70% social rented and 30% intermediate affordable units. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Housing Need Assessment conclude that the core requirement to meet the need within the District is for social rented housing. There is, however, still a significant proportion of existing and newly arising households that require access to intermediate accommodation. To ensure flexibility in the policy the tenure split is a target, with the tenure on each site taking into consideration the identified local need and site specifics. On smaller schemes, for example those of 5 units, a 70/30 split would be impractical given the provision of affordable housing on such a site would only be one unit and therefore in this case the tenure will be determined based on local need.

5.23 Affordable housing should be provided as built units on the application site as part of well designed mixed tenure schemes, helping to create mixed inclusive communities. In exceptional circumstances where site specific issues inhibit the provision of on-site affordable housing or where provision can be better met on an alternative site in the District, off-site contributions may be accepted as an alternative.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

The policy will be delivered by working in partnership with the Council’s Housing Department, Housing Associations/Social Registered Landlords and planning applicants.

The Council will regularly monitor and review the need for, and delivery of, affordable housing by assessing the level of affordable housing completions across the District and affordable housing completions in rural areas.

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5 West Berkshire District Local Plan, Saved Policies 2007
6 West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Guidance 4/04 ‘Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development’ (Topic Paper 1 – Affordable Housing)
7 West Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (DTZ, 2007)
8 West Berkshire Economic Viability Assessment (Adams Integra, 2007 & 2009)
Rural Exception Sites

Policy CS 8

Rural Exception Sites

Land may be released for affordable housing under the provisions of the Government’s rural exception site policy.

Proposals for small scale affordable housing development may be permitted on sites in the countryside provided certain criteria are met, including:

1. The applicant demonstrates that the proposal would help to meet a proven local need for affordable housing with evidence being derived from a recent Local Housing Needs Survey as per the West Berkshire Allocations policy;
2. The development is well related to an existing settlement, ensuring consistency with the scale and form of surrounding development and does not adversely affect any landscape or historical features that are important to the rural character of the area;
3. The proposal does not include any element of market housing; and
4. The applicant enters into a legal agreement that ensures the accommodation will be managed so as to meet the need for affordable housing in perpetuity and reserves and prioritises occupancy for people in housing need who have a specified local connection (as specified in the West Berkshire Allocations policy).

The proposal should also comply with all other relevant policies, particularly those relating to character, design and sustainability.

Explanation of the Policy

5.24 With over 70% of the District classed as rural the specific housing needs of small settlements and local communities are a key concern for the Council and this policy provides for the development of affordable housing in areas that would not normally be acceptable for residential development.

5.25 National and regional guidance highlights the importance of providing affordable housing in rural areas, where opportunities for delivery tend to be more limited, in order to assist in creating and maintaining sustainable rural communities. Guidance also advises that rural exception sites are to be small in scale and developed solely for affordable housing, located on land that would not normally be released for housing. The site size must be based on proven local need and respect the scale and form of the surrounding settlement.

5.26 The Council expects exception schemes to be supported by the local Parish Council and actively encourages Parishes which are aware of a need for affordable housing to work with the District’s Rural Housing Enabler to undertake a local housing needs survey. Occupation of rural exception housing should be restricted to people either living in, or having a local connection to, the village (or surrounding villages) where the development is proposed, in accordance with the Council’s Allocations Policy. Rural exception schemes make an important contribution to the affordable housing stock and it is important that opportunities to provide affordable housing are maximised to help meet the needs of local people within the District’s rural areas.
Delivery and Monitoring

The policy will be delivered by working in partnership with the Council’s Housing Department, Housing Associations/Social Registered Landlords, as well as the Rural Housing Enabler, Parish Councils and planning applicants.

The Council will regularly monitor and review the need for, and delivery of, affordable housing by assessing the level of gross affordable housing completions on rural exception sites.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Policy CS 9

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

To meet the identified need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople\(^\text{(10)}\) pitches within the District, as set out in the South East Plan, the Council will make appropriate provision through the identification of sites within the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). The requirement for transit sites will be addressed through the same DPD.

In allocating sites and for the purpose of considering planning applications relating to sites not identified in the relevant DPD, the following criteria will need to be satisfied:

- Safe and easy access to major roads and public transport services;
- Easy access to local services including a bus route, shops, schools and health services;
- Located outside areas of high flooding risk;
- Provision for adequate on site facilities for parking, storage, play and residential amenity;
- The possibility of the integrated co-existence between the site and the settled community, including adequate levels of privacy and residential amenity both within the site and with neighbouring occupiers;
- Opportunities for an element of authorised mixed uses;
- The compatibility of the use with the surrounding land use, including potential disturbance from vehicular movements, and on site business activities;
- Will not materially harm the physical and visual character of the area.

Explanation of the policy

5.27 West Berkshire Council as the Local Planning Authority is required to identify sites to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

5.28 There is a corporate commitment to supporting sustainable communities and a good supply of affordable housing including social rented housing to address housing needs. This applies to the Travelling communities as well as settled communities.

5.29 In order to assess the housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, local authorities are required to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This assessment has been used as the basis for informing the South East England Regional Assembly

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\(^{10}\) The term ‘Gypsies and Travellers’ is as defined in Circular 01/2006 ‘The Provision of Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites’, and ‘Travelling Showpeople’ is as defined in Circular 04/2007 ‘Planning for Travelling Showpeople’, available to view at www.communities.gov.uk.
(SEERA), as the Regional Planning body (now South East England Partnership Board), who are undertaking a Partial Review of the South East Plan with regard to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. When the Partial Review has been completed the number of pitches which each local authority within the South East will have to provide by 2016 and beyond will be identified.

5.30 The current indication is that by 2016 the Council will need to provide an additional 18 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, and an additional 3 pitches for Travelling Showpeople. The Partial Review also provides guidance for the provision of transit sites. Work on this is underway and it is expected that Berkshire will deal with any transit issues on a county-wide basis.

5.31 The location of pitches will be determined by the Council through the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). The criteria that will be used to identify such sites and to determine planning applications relating to sites not identified in the relevant DPD is set out in the above policy.

5.32 For the purpose of this policy, the criteria for high flooding risk refers to the vulnerability of caravans and mobile homes as identified in Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25) and Circulars 01/2006 and 04/2007. PPS25 identifies such land use as Highly Vulnerable and appropriate for location within Flood Zone 1 and only in Flood Zone 2 where the Exception Test can be passed. The District is also vulnerable to surface water and groundwater flooding and so sites should be located outside areas susceptible to such flooding. Sites should also consider onsite drainage in accordance with Policy CS 17 'Flooding'.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

The policy will be implemented through the allocation of sites within the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD and the determination of planning applications, along with working in partnership with the travelling community and other relevant Council Departments including Housing and Development Control.

The number of pitches provided will be monitored and reported in the AMR.
Employment and the Economy

Policy CS 10

Location and type of employment development

Location

Employment generating development (business, industry, distribution and storage uses) will be permitted within the District’s defined Protected Employment Areas and existing suitably located employment sites and premises. Outside of these Protected Employment Areas any employment generating development will be directed towards previously developed land.

New B1 office development will be directed towards Newbury town centre, with more limited B1 development within the District’s centres identified in Policy CS 12 ‘Hierarchy of Centres’. Office developments will also be considered favourably within existing business parks.

Existing office developments within defined town and district centres and small scale business units within settlement boundaries will be protected. Proposals seeking the loss of such uses or premises will need to demonstrate that the proposal does not negatively impact upon the economy and the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Strategic urban extensions as identified within Policy CS 3 ‘Newbury Racecourse Strategic Site Allocation’ and Policy CS 4 ‘Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation’ will provide the scope for some limited additional employment development to assist in the creation of sustainable communities. The scale and nature of employment development provided will be determined as part of the overall scheme.

Scale, type and intensification

A range of types and sizes of employment premises and sites will be encouraged throughout the District to meet the needs of the local economy. Proposals for employment development should be in keeping with the surrounding environment, not conflict with existing uses and promote sustainable transport.

More efficient use of existing sites and premises should be made, in order to attract investment, respond to modern business requirements and meet the demand for employment land over the plan period. The intensification, redevelopment and upgrade of existing, vacant and/or derelict employment sites and premises will be permitted for employment generating uses.

Explanation of the Policy

5.33 A key strategic objective of the Core Strategy is to support and encourage continued economic development, ensuring the conditions are right for businesses to thrive and grow in the local economy, striking a balance between the supply and demand of employment land and continuing to provide a diverse range of job opportunities. Providing the right type of jobs in the right location is essential to creating sustainable communities and reducing the level of out-commuting. In order to meet this objective, it is essential that a positive planning framework is set in place to support economic development throughout West Berkshire.

11 Protected Employment Areas are currently outlined within the West Berkshire District Local Plan, Saved Policies. These designations will continue to be in use until reviewed under the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD
12 Defined town and district centres as outlined with the policy Town Centres/Retail Hierarchy
5.34 The District’s strategic location has meant that it has traditionally had a diverse and successful economy, owing mainly to the clustering of knowledge-based companies. West Berkshire is home to some well-known companies, such as Vodafone and Bayer, along with the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), all taking advantage of the opportunities the area has to offer and in turn attracting inward investment. It is important to the District’s economy to retain these companies and others already in the District, and to allow for both new entrants into the local economy and for new employment development to meet the changing and future economic requirements.

5.35 The South East Plan sets Interim Job Numbers for the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region, within which West Berkshire is located, at 79,300 to 2016, but it does not set a target job number for each district. In order to plan for the longer-term the Council’s Employment Land Assessment (ELA)\(^\text{(13)}\) estimates that an additional 10,800 jobs between 2006–2026 should be planned for. It is anticipated that much of this employment growth will be in the financial and business services, government and other services, and distribution, hotels and catering, with traditional manufacturing set to decrease over the plan period. The ELA translates the employment change into floorspace requirements, and estimates that between 61 and 67 hectares of employment land will be required to meet the demand in job growth to 2026. The study concludes that there is a sufficient supply of land to cater for this demand in economic growth and thus no need to plan for a net increase in employment land stock. The supply of land is in the form of outstanding planning permissions and the available commercial floorspace. The approach set out in this Core Strategy therefore, is not to allocate any strategic employment land, but to meet the forecasted demand in growth through the retention, intensification and redevelopment of existing employment sites and premises for employment generating uses, with particular focus on the District’s Protected Employment Areas. There will also be scope within the strategic urban extensions of Newbury Racecourse and Sandleford to provide some limited additional employment development to assist in the creation of sustainable communities, and add in additional flexibility over the life of the Core Strategy.

5.36 The policy seeks to support and build upon West Berkshire’s vibrant and successful economy through continued economic development in sustainable locations. The Council will seek to focus employment-generating development in areas identified as Protected Employment Areas and on existing sites and premises throughout the District. Employment-generating development refers to B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) in line with the Use Classes Order 2005. All other uses relating to economic development and employment opportunities, such as retailing and tourism are not included in this definition and are covered by other policies.

**Location**

5.37 Office development (B1a) will be directed towards Newbury town centre, where development will be accessible and well served by a choice of transport modes. With Newbury being the focus for housing development over the plan period it is important that any new employment development, as well as existing sites and premises is balanced with housing locations and is suitably located to cater for demand and reduce out-commuting. More limited office development will also be directed towards the other town and district centres\(^\text{(14)}\) and existing business parks where much of the supporting infrastructure is already in place. As well as providing for new development, existing office premises must be protected, especially within the town centres, in order to maintain vitality but also to assist in addressing the shortfall in office development forecasted over the Core Strategy period.

5.38 Business employment in the District is dominated by small to medium sized units, typically in B1 use, with over 80% of premises under 500sqm in size. Demand for such accommodation is likely to be met through smaller individual sites and on multi-occupancy business parks therefore it is imperative that small to medium businesses are protected and that opportunities are provided for them to grow within the District.

\(^\text{13}\) West Berkshire Employment Land Assessment (DTZ, 2007)
\(^\text{14}\) District centres are identified within Policy CS 12 ‘Hierarchy of Centres’
Industrial, warehousing and distribution developments (B2 and B8) will be focused in areas of existing employment activity and within identified Protected Employment Areas. The location of any B2 and B8 uses should be in areas with good access to major road/freight route networks and should not conflict with surrounding uses. The Council’s ELA highlights that although the level of B2 activity in the District is low, most of the B2 floorspace is located to the east of Newbury, south east Thatcham mainly at Colthrop, and close to the A4 at Beenham. It also indicates that the majority of B8 floorspace is located to the south of Newbury at New Greenham Park, Greenham, to the south east of Thatcham and in the west of the District near Hungerford and north of the M4 at Lambourn.

Existing employment areas will continue to play a crucial role in the District’s economy. West Berkshire’s Protected Employment Areas currently cover approximately 315 hectares. Along with the District’s Protected Employment Areas, New Greenham Park, Vodafone, and AWE are strategically important employment areas for the District and for the entire sub-region. The strategy relies upon the efficient use and reuse of employment land to meet growth forecasts and so the retention and protection of employment areas will continue to be a priority.

In planning for economic development in the longer-term the LDF must respond positively to changes in the economy which have land use implications. Although in quantitative terms the ELA outlines that there is sufficient supply to meet demand, the supply of land is not necessarily in the correct use class. This mismatch in supply and demand among the B-use classes will be addressed through a comprehensive assessment of the existing Protected Employment Areas and their boundaries in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, along with an assessment of how the supply should be managed. This will provide the flexibility required to respond positively to the current imbalance. The review may lead to the creation of additional floorspace on new and existing sites, but equally it may lead to the loss of some limited employment land, through possible reuse of existing sites for other uses, especially those which may no longer be suitable for such uses, or in areas of low demand. Either way it is important to ensure that there is no net loss in employment floorspace overall and the balance between the supply of and demand for employment land is achieved. It is the intention of the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD to set out a criteria-based policy for continuing the assessment of employment sites throughout the plan period, allowing for flexibility and positive planning for the longer-term based on the annual monitoring process.

**Scale, type and intensification**

The South East Plan gives priority to the retention of existing employment sites, and with the evidence indicating that there is no current requirement for allocating a strategic employment site, the policy promotes appropriate intensification and redevelopment of existing sites and premises. The approach encourages a strong mix/range of premises and promotes the redevelopment of vacant and/or derelict buildings, in order to keep the market attractive to modern investment.

To ensure the health of the local economy is maintained it is important to provide a variety of size and type of employment premises, of an appropriate scale and intensity. The Council will therefore encourage proposals which seek to upgrade or redevelop existing or vacant premises, especially within Protected Employment Areas, which will enhance the flexibility and availability of employment space. Any development within these areas which will potentially reduce the range of sites and space available will be resisted.

Intensification of office development will be looked upon favourably in areas of high demand, such as the town and district centres and business parks in Newbury and Theale, provided the scale and intensity is not out of proportion with the character of surrounding areas.

In relation to intensification and the efficient use of land, Council will support the principles of smart growth encouraging improvements to the District’s productivity and competitiveness, in accordance with policy RE5 of the South East Plan. The innovative use of ICT is key to supporting changing working practices and encouraging flexibility in the workplace and social inclusion. The
Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy seeks to reduce the skills gap and increase the employment rate within key groups as part of its key priorities. Businesses will therefore be encouraged to promote skills training within their sector area to assist in addressing the skills shortages across the District and improve productivity levels.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

The policy will be delivered through the Development Control process and through subsequent policies set out in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. Working in partnership with the Local Strategic Partnership and continuing to build relationships with local businesses will all be key to policy delivery.

The Council will regularly monitor and review the delivery of economic development across the District through planning commitments and completions. The AMR will assess various indicators including the total amount of additional employment floorspace, total amount of employment land available and total amount of employment land lost to alternative uses.

**The Rural Economy**

### Policy CS 11

**Rural Economy**

Proposals to diversify the rural economy will be encouraged, particularly where they are located in or adjacent to Rural Service Centres and Service Villages. Existing small and medium sized enterprises within the rural areas will be protected, providing local job opportunities and maintaining the vitality of smaller rural settlements.

Proposals for appropriate farm diversification will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will make a long-term contribution to sustaining the agricultural enterprise as a whole.

Any employment generating development within rural areas should be of a scale and character appropriate to the location, with particular regard given to the amount and nature of traffic-generated.

**Explanation of the Policy**

**5.46** The Council will encourage the retention of small and medium sized businesses in the rural areas, along with the promotion of appropriate farm diversification. The Council recognises changes in the agricultural industry over recent years. Rural West Berkshire plays an important role within the District’s economy and therefore it is essential that the rural communities are supported. Many rural areas host a large number of small and medium sized enterprises which are vital to providing local job opportunities and a diverse economy. With the conclusions in the Matthew Taylor Review (15) and the increased emphasis on the contributions of the rural economy there is a continued need to protect and support the development of start-up businesses, and adequate provision should be made for them throughout the District. PPS4 (16) encourages this approach and outlines the need for local

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authorities to be supportive of small-scale development within rural settlements to meet business needs and sustain vitality. More detailed policies on the management of development contributing to the rural economy will be set out in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

5.47 In relation to this, the race-horse industry and tourism also make a vital contribution to the local economy, and the management of both these sectors is key to fostering economic growth without detriment to the environment.

Delivery and Monitoring

The policy will be delivered through the Development Control process and through subsequent policies set out in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. Working in partnership with the Local Strategic Partnership and continuing to build relationships with local businesses will all be key to policy delivery.

The Council will regularly monitor and review the delivery of economic development across the District through planning commitments and completions. The AMR will assess various indicators including the total amount of additional employment floorspace, total amount of employment land available and total amount of employment land lost to alternative uses.

Town Centres

Policy CS 12

Hierarchy of Centres

The vitality and viability of the District’s town, district and local centres will be protected and enhanced. The existing network of town, district, local and village centres will form the focal point for uses, services and facilities serving the surrounding population. The scale, character and role of the centres defines their position within the hierarchy and network of centres within the District as follows.

- Major town centre: Newbury
- Town centres: Thatcham and Hungerford
- District Centres: Pangbourne, Lambourn and Theale
- Local and Village Centres: To be confirmed through Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

As no capacity for any additional retail convenience and comparison floorspace on top of that which is already committed has been identified through the 2009 Retail Study (17), any retail development during the Core Strategy period will be mainly focussed on the implementation of current schemes such as the Park Way development in Newbury, plus regeneration and other qualitative improvements and schemes. Any scheme will be of an appropriate scale and character to reflect and respond to the role and function of the centre, and should promote the individuality of the centre, responding to any distinct features.

The significant new investment committed and planned for the District’s main centres should not be jeopardised or harmed by additional out of centre retailing.
Some small amounts of new retail floorspace may be provided in the form of new local centres at the two strategic developments of Sandleford Park and the Racecourse in Newbury, to respond to local needs in these areas.

The detailed boundaries of the centres identified in the retail hierarchy and their primary and secondary shopping frontages will be defined in the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document as will the local shopping centres and parades that meet the day to day needs of local communities.

**Explanation of Policy**

5.48 At a regional level, the South East Plan recognises a hierarchy of centres across the South East, and within this, Newbury is recognised as a secondary regional centre which serves many of the comparison shopping needs of the Newbury, Thatcham and the surrounding rural areas.

5.49 The key aim of this policy is to promote a network of dynamic and successful town centres across the District. Health check assessments carried out as part of the Retail Study Update 2009 have identified that all of West Berkshire District’s main centres remain vital and viable, with any identified weaknesses being addressed through committed schemes. Specific conclusions and recommendations about the future role of the District’s retail centres are dealt with within Spatial Policies 2-6. Newbury and Thatcham will undergo the most significant changes over the Core Strategy period. Newbury is attracting significant new investment through the implementation of the Park Way development and the opening of the 7-screen Vue Cinema (see Spatial Policy SP 2 ‘Newbury’) which will considerably improve the range and quality of the town centre’s comparison goods offer. As well as enhancing the retail offer of Newbury, this will help to retain a higher proportion of residents’ expenditure within the District, some of which has been lost in the past decade to new investment in competing centres such as Reading and Basingstoke.

5.50 In terms of specific schemes, the Kingsland Centre at Thatcham (see Spatial Policy SP 3 ‘Thatcham’) has been identified within the Thatcham Vision as needing regeneration and will strengthen the town centre’s overall retail offer, status and trading performance in the face of increased competition from out of centre shopping locations and Newbury Town Centre.

5.51 The village centres in West Berkshire will be a focus for facilities aimed at supporting sustainable rural communities. The role of village centres will be addressed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD.

5.52 Although no need for the provision of any additional capacity has been identified by the 2009 Retail Study, future retail demand is very difficult to predict beyond a 10 year horizon so it will be particularly important to monitor development and review requirements, particularly following the implementation of the Park Way development and other schemes set out within the Newbury Vision.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

The policy will be delivered through the development control process and through the review of commercial areas and primary shopping frontages in the Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD.

The AMR will monitor the changes in retail floorspace and other town centre uses and the percentage of vacant retail premises.
Equestrian/Racehorse Industry

Policy CS 13

Equestrian/Racehorse Industry

Proposals for equestrian related development that provides diversification opportunities for farmers, helps to strengthen the rural economy, and increases opportunities for people to enjoy the countryside in a sustainable way, will be supported.

Development associated with equestrian activities will be encouraged where the reuse of existing buildings is considered before any new build; and the scale, form, impact, character, siting and level of activity is in keeping with its location. Proposals for associated new residential accommodation in the countryside will be permitted where genuine need is suitably demonstrated through a business case and accommodation cannot be reasonably secured within existing settlements.

North Wessex Downs AONB Racehorse Industry

The racehorse breeding and training industry in the AONB will be maintained and its sensitive growth will be allowed for. Proposals for change of use should be essential to the horseracing industry.

For suitable existing establishments or facilities:

- Fragmentation will be resisted; and
- Redevelopment away from uses essential to the horseracing industry will not be permitted.

Newbury Racecourse

Newbury Racecourse’s viability as a major tourist attraction and economic driver will be maintained and future development proposals should have a positive impact upon the ability of the racecourse to continue operations as normal and potentially expand in the future. Proposals within and adjacent to Newbury Racecourse will be design and community led to secure high quality sustainable development that is sensitive to the environmental quality and historic character of the area.

Explanation of the policy

5.53 Equestrian activities and related development, and the racehorse breeding and training industry are characteristic features of West Berkshire and are of particular importance to the rural economy. The North Wessex Downs AONB is home to around 10% of Britain’s racehorse trainers and the Lambourn area is a nationally important centre of activity for the horseracing industry second only to Newmarket. The policy recognises the important links between the various aspects of the equestrian industry and the shared facilities and infrastructure that supports it, such as farriers, veterinary practices and horse feed merchants and the important role riding schools and recreational uses play in providing the racehorse industry with people interested in equine matters.

5.54 The policy aims to conserve environmental quality and countryside character, including built and natural form, and social and economic aspects (such as the influence of the racehorse industry as part of the local economy which gives Lambourn its unique character), and limit new development in the countryside, focusing on addressing local needs and maintaining a healthy rural economy.
5.55 In relation to the racehorse industry within the North Wessex Downs AONB, the policy aims to prevent pressure for redevelopment of existing facilities to other uses, and fragmentation of existing sites; pressures which could lead to the decline of the industry locally or pressure for replacement facilities in environmentally sensitive areas. Within an overall context of development restraint in the countryside, this policy allows for sensitive development and growth of the industry. Preference will be given to proposals that seek to locate within valleys and avoid development on hilltops or ridgelines. The variety in yard sizes is an important feature for the industry in this area, this helps support the start up of new trainers and the movement to larger premises keeps their location and staff in the Lambourn area.

5.56 It is acknowledged that there is a need in some circumstances to provide accommodation close to hand in order to provide 24 hour supervision as part of licensing requirements or for the effective running of an establishment. It is the Council’s preference for workers to be accommodated within existing nearby villages, so as to contribute to the overall sustainability of settlements and limit development in the countryside.

5.57 For Newbury Racecourse, the policy aims to ensure that the racecourse maintains its status as a premier sporting and major events venue. The policy seeks to allow for sensitive development of the racecourse and surrounding areas which do not have a negative impact upon the ability of the racecourse to continue operations as normal or restrain expansion opportunities in the future.

Delivery and Monitoring

This policy will be implemented through the determination of planning applications relating to the equestrian industry and further guidance may be prepared through a supplementary planning document.

The Newbury Racecourse is to be allocated as a strategic site within the Core Strategy for a sustainable and high quality mixed use development and will be delivered through a masterplan or supplementary planning document.

The policy will be monitored through development completed/permitted within the AONB and the monitoring of the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan.

Transport

Policy CS 14

Transport

The Council will use its planning and transport powers to:

- Reduce the need to travel;
- Improve and promote opportunities for healthy and safe travel;
- Improve travel choice and facilitate sustainable travel particularly within and between main urban areas and rural service centres;
- Provide improved access to key services and facilities;
- Facilitate sustainable travel to regional hubs and growth points along key transport corridors;
- Minimise the impact of all forms of travel on the environment and help tackle climate change;
Maintain and where possible improve the local transport network;
Influence the appropriate movement of freight through and within the district.

Transport Assessments/Statements and Travel Plans will be required to support planning proposals in accordance with national guidance.

Explanation of the Policy

5.58 West Berkshire Council is a unitary authority and as such is both the Local Planning Authority and the Local Highway Authority for the District. The Council is responsible for producing both the Local Development Framework and the Local Transport Plan which specifically addresses transport issues. There are strong links between these two forward planning documents. This Transport Policy in particular, is supported in delivery terms by the Local Transport Plan.

5.59 The provision of a sustainable transport network to serve the communities of West Berkshire is essential for improving accessibility, enhancing economic vitality, protecting the environment and promoting quality of life. The policy therefore seeks to encourage sustainable travel in order to achieve these goals and to minimise the impact on the strategic and local road network.

5.60 The policy is based upon the premise of Reduce, Manage and Invest, which is in accordance with regional policy and the Local Transport Plan. By aiming to reduce the quantity and length of journeys that are made, manage the way in which people travel and the efficiency of the local transport network, and invest in infrastructure, the policy will work towards a sustainable transport network for West Berkshire.

5.61 Reducing the need to travel reflects the Council’s desire to plan for people to live in places where there are local facilities and services, whether these are fixed or mobile. It also reflects the changing nature of technology and how this facilitates working from home and access to services through the world wide web. The policy seeks to encourage and facilitate the best use of technology to enable a reduction in travel.

5.62 Working towards reducing casualties associated with road traffic accidents in West Berkshire is a key consideration in the planning of any transport scheme. Safe travel also has links to West Berkshire's Community Safety Strategy and the personal safety element of travel. Another wider agenda which links with the way in which people travel is improving health through the promotion of active travel such as walking and cycling.

5.63 Improving travel choice is a key way of working towards a modal shift away from single occupancy car use in favour of more sustainable travel (walking, cycling, bus and rail travel, car sharing). Focusing on sustainable travel within and between the main urban areas and rural service centres of West Berkshire will help to facilitate regular journeys for example for work and education.

5.64 The rural nature of West Berkshire poses a significant challenge for accessibility to key services and facilities within the District, so the Council will seek to improve this accessibility by promoting development where there is already good access to key service and facilities, safeguarding essential local services and facilities and by improving connections between communities and key services and facilities.

5.65 Journeys are not affected by administrative boundaries and travel from and to West Berkshire is influenced by factors beyond the District. Significant growth is planned for all authorities adjoining West Berkshire which will increase the number of movements to, from and through West Berkshire. Working with others to facilitate sustainable cross boundary journeys will help to achieve the aims of improving accessibility, enhancing economic vitality, protecting the environment and promoting quality of life.
5.66 The quality of environment is a key factor in the attractiveness of West Berkshire. Transport can have a number of impacts on the environment which the policy seeks to minimise. The environment can be protected through the careful design of traffic schemes and through the reduction in carbon emissions. The Council’s Climate Change Strategy recognises the part that changing travel behaviour can play in achieving this aim. West Berkshire's air quality is strongly linked to transport, so where air quality becomes a cause for concern, the Council will seek to manage it through transport related reduce, manage and invest measures.

5.67 The Council is responsible for maintaining the local highway, cycle and walking networks. Planning proposals will have to demonstrate that they do not adversely affect these networks or that the adverse impact can be suitably mitigated. Where possible the Council will seek to improve these networks in order to offer greater travel choice and more reliable journey times.

5.68 The strategic road network and strategically important local roads support a high volume of freight movements through the District. The role of secondary and tertiary roads is to distribute freight traffic between the main highways and locations within the District, but they are generally unsuitable for through traffic.

5.69 Transport Assessments / Statements and Travel Plans are vital to support planning proposals so that the impact of the proposed development can be assessed and mitigated. The Council recognises the wider benefits of travel plans in reducing the impact of travel on the environment, improving access and travel choice, and reducing reliance on the car; so in addition to new developments, the Council will support and encourage existing organisations within the District to implement travel plans.

5.70 Standards for parking provision will be related to levels of accessibility. The basis for this will be established through the Local Transport Plan, and subsequently a supplementary planning document (SPD) will be prepared.

Delivery and Monitoring

Implementation will be through the development control process with production of Transport Assessments, Statements and Travel Plans, and through implementation of the Local Transport Plan.

The following indicators will be monitored in the AMR:-

- Accessibility of new residential development
- Sustainable travel to schools
Design Principles

Policy CS 15

Design Principles

New development must demonstrate high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area and makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire. Good design relates not only to the appearance of a development but the way in which it functions. Considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context, having regard not just to the immediate area but to the wider locality. Development shall contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Create safe environments, addressing crime prevention and community safety;
- Make good provision for access by all transport modes;
- Ensure environments that are accessible to all and that give priority to pedestrian and cycle access and provide linkages and integration with surrounding uses and open spaces;
- Make efficient use of land whilst respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- Consider opportunities for a mix of uses, buildings and landscaping;
- Consider opportunities for public art;
- Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural assets of West Berkshire;
- Provide, conserve and enhance biodiversity and create linkages between green spaces and wildlife corridors;
- Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces and enhance the public realm;
- Consider opportunities for including Home Zones (18) where practicable.

All development proposals will be expected to seek to minimise carbon dioxide emissions through sustainable design and construction, energy efficiency and the incorporation of renewable energy technology as appropriate and in accordance with Policy CS 16 'Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency'.

Explanation of Policy

5.71 The quality and local distinctiveness of the built environment in West Berkshire is an important asset for the area. The importance of new development complementing and relating to its surroundings, while being safe and accessible for all, is established in the Core Strategy Vision and objectives. The SPD Quality Design – West Berkshire contains local guidance on design, including a Residential Character Framework and a series of Area Design Focus Statements which give detailed guidance for particular key areas. Conservation Area Appraisals, the Landscape Character Assessment and Town and Village Design Statements also provide a more detailed local context for the consideration of development and should be taken into account as material considerations.

5.72 The objectives of the Core Strategy also seek to mitigate the impact of climate change and the environmental performance of new buildings is particularly important in this context. Policy CS 16 'Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency' requires that development proposals consider energy efficiency and sustainable design from the outset. While many of these principles can be
incorporated within existing building materials and forms it is acknowledged that non-traditional materials and designs may be necessary in order to achieve low carbon or carbon-neutral developments and meet targets for reducing carbon emissions.

5.73 Design and Access Statements are required to be submitted with most planning applications and these should demonstrate how a proposal addresses the design considerations set out in this policy, in the SPD Quality Design – West Berkshire and other relevant documents such as Town and Village Design Statements. The criteria in ‘Building for Life’ published by CABE \(^{19}\) will be incorporated wherever possible and will be used to monitor the quality of new residential development. Developments should incorporate ‘Secured by Design’ principles to reduce opportunities for crime and the fear of crime.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

Implementation will be through the development control process.

The AMR will monitor the number and proportion of total new build completions on housing sites reaching very good, good, average and poor ratings against the Building for Life criteria.

**Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency**

**Policy CS 16**

**Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency**

**Residential Development**

New residential development will meet the following standards of construction:

Minor development - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3

Major development\(^{20}\) - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4

From 2013: All development - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4

From 2016: All development - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6

**Non-Residential Development**

New non-residential development will meet the following standards of construction:

Minor development - BREEAM Very Good

Major development - BREEAM Excellent

From 2013: All development - BREEAM Excellent

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\(^{19}\) CABE Building for Life at [http://www.cabe.org.uk/building-for-life](http://www.cabe.org.uk/building-for-life)

\(^{20}\) For dwellings: where 10 or more are to be constructed, or if the site is more than 0.5 hectares. For all other uses: where the floor space will be 1000sq metres or greater. Floor space is defined as the sum of the floor area within the building measured to the external wall faces at each level.
Renewable energy

Major development shall achieve the following reductions in total CO\textsubscript{2} emissions (regulated and unregulated energy use) from renewable energy or low/zero carbon energy generation on site or in the locality of the development as long as a direct physical connection is used, unless it can be demonstrated that such provision is not technically or economically viable.

The percentage reductions in CO\textsubscript{2} emissions should be based on the estimated CO\textsubscript{2} emissions of the development after the installation of energy efficiency measures related to either the Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM or equivalent method has been applied.

**Residential Development:**
- A 10\% reduction in CO\textsubscript{2} emissions
- from 2014: A 20\% reduction in CO\textsubscript{2} emissions
- from 2016: Zero Carbon\textsuperscript{(21)}

**Non-Residential Development:**
- A 10\% reduction in CO\textsubscript{2} emissions
- from 2014: A 20\% reduction in CO\textsubscript{2} measures
- from 2019: Zero Carbon \textsuperscript{(22)}

**Explanation of Policy**

5.74 Carbon reduction is a key issue for West Berkshire. Sustainable construction and renewable energy generation can help in achieving emissions reduction. Cost implications of installing CO\textsubscript{2} measures from the start of the development are less than if they were retro-fitted afterwards. In addition, the benefits derived by the end user in relation to reduced heating and fuel bills will be enhanced.

5.75 West Berkshire has the highest electricity usage in the south east and is in the upper quartile of local authorities for CO\textsubscript{2} emissions within the region.\textsuperscript{(23)} Fuel poverty levels in West Berkshire are also high, compared to other authorities.\textsuperscript{(24)} This is clear evidence and justification that West Berkshire needs to do more to meet national and regional targets in relation to CO\textsubscript{2} emission reduction.

**Code for Sustainable Homes / BREEAM**

5.76 The Code for Sustainable Homes is the Government's preferred method for implementing zero carbon homes. In addition BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is a well established national assessment tool for non-residential buildings.

**Renewable Energy Generation**

5.77 South East Plan policies NRM13 and NRM14 implement renewable energy targets for the sub-region. Further progress towards meeting these targets will need to be investigated through a future Renewable Energy SPD, which will highlight the potential in West Berkshire for commercial scale renewable energy. In order to reduce local carbon emissions and meet regional and national targets, a policy approach that supports and reflects the significant challenge ahead needs to be adopted. Any renewable energy schemes should be efficient.

\textsuperscript{21} Requirements for zero carbon in line with stated Government aspirations, which may be subject to change.
\textsuperscript{22} Requirements for zero carbon in line with stated Government aspirations, which may be subject to change.
\textsuperscript{23} Department for Energy and Climate Change, High Level Energy Indicators
\textsuperscript{24} Communities and Local Government, Places Analysis Tool
Existing Housing Stock

5.78 Measures to increase the adoption of retro-fitting energy efficiency measures for the existing housing stock may be explored in subsequent local development documents.

Changes to national targets

5.79 This policy may be revised and updated periodically, for example to reflect changing national and regional guidance or changing circumstances.

Thresholds

5.80 The Council will carefully scrutinise proposals which appear to fall artificially below any thresholds which may indicate a possible attempt to avoid implementing the relevant measures described above.

Delivery and Monitoring

This policy will be delivered through the Development Control process

The amount of renewable energy generation and developments meeting the policy criteria will be reported in the AMR.

Flooding

Policy CS 17

Flooding

The sequential approach in accordance with PPS25\(^{(25)}\) will be strictly applied across the District, with the preference for new development to be located within the Environment Agency’s Flood Zone 1. Development within areas of flood risk from any source of flooding, including Critical Drainage Areas and areas with a history of groundwater flooding, will only be accepted if it is demonstrated that it is appropriate at that location and that there are no suitable and available alternative sites at a lower flood risk.

When development has to be located in flood risk areas it should be safe and not increase flood risk elsewhere including downstream, reducing the risk where possible and taking into account climate change. Development will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- it would not have an impact on the capacity of an area to store floodwater;
- it would not have a detrimental impact on the flow of flood water, surface water or obstruct the run-off of water due to high levels of groundwater;
- measures required to manage any flood risk can be implemented;
- surface water will be managed in a sustainable manner through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Methods (SuDS)\(^{(26)}\) and to provide attenuation to Greenfield run-off rates and volumes, for all new development and re-development;

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\(^{(26)}\) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is a term used to describe the various approaches that can be used to manage surface water drainage in a way that mimics the natural environment.
5 Core Policies

- provision is made for the long term maintenance and management of any flood protection and or mitigation measures;
- through the sequential test and exception test (where required), it is demonstrated that the benefits of the development to the community outweigh the risk of flooding;
- dry escape should be provided above the 1 in 100 year flood level with an allowance for climate change for “More Vulnerable” development and “Highly Vulnerable” development. All other development uses should be ‘safe’ but preferably ‘dry’.

Proposed development will require a Flood Risk Assessment for:

- Sites of 1 ha or more in Flood Zone 1;
- Sites in Flood Zone 2 or 3;
- Critical Drainage Areas;
- Areas with historic records of groundwater flooding;
- Areas near ponds or the Kennet and Avon Canal, that may overtop;
- Sites where access would be affected during a flood;
- Sites with known sewage flooding.

Explanation of the policy

5.81 The risk of flooding within West Berkshire is widespread, arising not only from rivers, but also from surface water and groundwater flooding. This policy aims to achieve a planning solution to flood risk management wherever possible, steering vulnerable development away from areas affected by flooding.

5.82 Definitions for the following terms used in this policy can be found in PPS25 or the West Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA):

- Sequential approach.
- Flood Risk Area.
- Low, medium, high probability of flooding.
- Functional floodplain.
- Flood Zone 1, 2, and 3.
- More or highly vulnerable use.
- Safe and dry access.
- Critical Drainage Areas.

5.83 The policy seeks to ensure that development provides appropriate measures for the management of rainfall (surface water) as an essential element of reducing future flood risk to both the site and its surroundings. Sustainable drainage methods, such as green roofs, ponds and permeable surfaces, should be incorporated where technically possible. The integration of a SuDS scheme is dependent upon the topography and geology of the site and its surrounding area or may not be acceptable due to contamination. Further information on SuDS can be found in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and the Quality Design – West Berkshire – Supplementary Planning Document Series, 2006.

5.84 The Council has undertaken an SFRA of the District which has been agreed with the Environment Agency. This study supports this policy and has been used to evaluate the strategic development sites and other broad locations for development. The SFRA has identified areas that may be most at risk from groundwater and surface water flooding as ‘Critical Drainage Areas’. The SFRA maps and the Environment Agency’s Flood Maps should be used to inform planning applications and the selection of allocation of sites in the LDF.
5.85 The policy identifies when a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required. These areas can be identified from the SFRA and also from local information. The content of the FRA will vary depending on the scale and nature of the development, and the source of the flooding. The FRA should seek to reduce overall flood risk, and outline how flood risk to and from the site will be managed. As a minimum an FRA should address the following:

- Flood resistance and/or flood resilience, such as floor levels should be set a minimum of 300mm above the 100 year flood level plus climate change;
- No additional residents will be located within the functional floodplain;
- Safe access and exit from the site can be provided for routine and emergency access under both frequent and extreme flood conditions \(^{(27)}\);
- Development must not result in a loss of floodplain storage;
- Development must not impact on flood flows;
- The impacts of climate change must be assessed.

5.86 It is recommended that all sites within Flood Zone 1 should carry out an assessment of localised flood risks, including surface water (flash) flooding. Development in the upstream vicinity of critical drainage areas could also raise flood risk issues. The cumulative impact of minor development, including development permitted without the need for a planning application, could also affect local flood storage capacity or flood flows. The Environment Agency’s Standing Advice should be referred to prior to designing a development.

5.87 The Council will consult the Environment Agency where it has indicated that it wishes to be involved in the planning process. The Environment Agency’s Flood Risk Standing Advice provides information to local planning authorities on which applications it wishes to be consulted on in relation to flood risk.

**Delivery and Monitoring**

The policy will be delivered through the development control process.

The indicator used for monitoring purposes will be the number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds.

**Biodiversity**

**Policy CS 18**

**Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

Biodiversity and geodiversity assets across West Berkshire will be conserved and enhanced.

Habitats designated or proposed for designation as important for biodiversity or geodiversity at an international or national level or which support protected, rare or endangered species, will be protected and enhanced. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site or species in terms of its international or national importance.

Development which may harm, either directly or indirectly...
5 Core Policies

- locally designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites), or
- habitats or species of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity, or
- the integrity or continuity of landscape features of major importance for wild flora and fauna

will only be permitted if there are no reasonable alternatives and there are clear demonstrable social or economic benefits of regional or national importance that outweigh the need to safeguard the site or species and that adequate compensation and mitigation measures are provided when damage to biodiversity/geodiversity interests are unavoidable.

In order to conserve and enhance the environmental capacity of the District all new development should maximise opportunities to achieve net gains in biodiversity and geodiversity in accordance with the Berkshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Berkshire Local Geodiversity Action Plan. Opportunities will be taken to create links between natural habitats and in particular, strategic opportunities for biodiversity improvement will be actively pursued within the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas identified on the proposals map in accordance with the Berkshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

Explanation of the Policy

5.88 West Berkshire supports a rich and diverse range of biodiversity and geodiversity assets which reflect both the underlying geology and soils and traditional management practices that have been carried out over many years. The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for conserving and enhancing this richness and diversity both for its own sake but also the positive contribution that it makes to the overall quality of life and sense of place for residents and visitors to West Berkshire in both urban and rural areas.

5.89 The most important sites for biodiversity and individual wildlife species which receive statutory protection have protection under international and national legislation. Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are internationally important and are afforded the highest level of protection. Candidate SACs and proposed SPAs will be afforded the same level of protection as those already designated.

5.90 There are currently three SACs within the District:

- Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain
- River Lambourn
- Kennet Valley Alderwoods

5.91 There are no SPAs within West Berkshire although there is a very small part of the District (256 hectares) around Beech Hill within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. The 5km boundary has been determined by Natural England as a buffer area to regulate development near the SPA. It is possible that certain types of development within this area may affect the SPA. They would therefore require an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations (28) to determine whether or not they would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA.

5.92 An Appropriate Assessment of all Core Strategy policies has been carried out to ensure that the Core Strategy will not be detrimental to the conservation objectives of European sites. This concluded that the Core Strategy, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any of the European sites within the District or those within 5 km of the District boundary.
5.93 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are nationally designated sites which have important wildlife or geological value. There are currently 51 SSSIs within West Berkshire covering 1470 hectares.

5.94 The District contains a range of habitats and geological features of local significance designated as Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites. Local Wildlife Sites are non-statutory sites of significant value for the conservation of wildlife. These sites represent local character and distinctiveness and have an important role to play in meeting local and national targets for biodiversity conservation. Site selection criteria have been devised and agreed across the three counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Local Wildlife Site designations will continue to be assessed by the Council throughout the lifetime of this plan, following recommendations by the Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum, in order to keep them up to date. There are currently 493 Local Wildlife Sites covering 6325 hectares.

5.95 Site selection criteria for Local Geological Sites have been drawn up by the Berkshire Geoconservation Group and there are currently five sites in West Berkshire covering 150 hectares.

5.96 Habitats and Species of Principal Importance for Biodiversity in England are published by the Government under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Ancient woodland is also identified as important in PPS9 and is the most extensive natural habitat remaining in West Berkshire. Ancient semi natural woodland currently covers 2894 hectares. There are a further 1164 hectares of plantation on ancient woodland sites which could potentially be restored.

5.97 Regulation 37 of the Habitats Regulations requires the encouragement of the management of features in the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna. These features are defined as linear features or stepping stones which are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. By protecting these natural habitats and networks across the District, the Council will be able to avoid or repair fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats and ultimately conserve and enhance our priority natural areas and the connections between them. This element of the policy closely links with the Green Infrastructure policy.

5.98 The Berkshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) builds upon national and regional targets for biodiversity enhancement. Therefore the Council will seek opportunities to support the delivery of the Berkshire BAP. There are many opportunities for biodiversity and geological enhancement in all parts of the District and not just on identified sites.

5.99 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA) have been identified by the Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum and agreed by the South East England Biodiversity Forum (SEEBF). There are 17 which have currently been identified across the District (see Appendix D ‘Biodiversity Opportunity Areas’). They are the areas where biodiversity improvements are likely to have the most beneficial results at a strategic scale. The Council will therefore pursue net gains for biodiversity in and around BOAs and projects which seek to enhance biodiversity within West Berkshire, particularly based on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, will be supported.

5.100 The West Berkshire Living Landscape project is one example of where the Council is actively working to implement strategic biodiversity enhancements in partnership with the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). There are other areas across the District where there may be the potential for similar projects, such as the Kennet Valley East BOA to the south of Reading.

29 available at http://ww2.westberks.gov.uk/InternetMapping/Map.aspx
30 Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)
31 http://berksbap.org/html/action_plan.html
32 http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14881 and http://www.bbowt.org.uk/content.asp?id=24722 The project is based around the Greenham and Crookham Plateau and part of Kennet Valley East BOAs on the edge of Newbury and Thatcham and includes Greenham Common, Thatcham Reedbeds and BBOWT’s Bowdown Woods Nature Reserve. The project aims to improve this unique grouping of internationally and nationally designated biodiversity sites. Covering more than 27 square kilometres of...
Delivery and Monitoring

The Council will deliver this policy through a variety of mechanisms, but primarily through more detailed policies contained in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD and the development control process, together with partnership working in the Living Landscape project, the Pang, Kennet and Lambourn Countryside Projects, the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre and as a member of the Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum and the AONB Council of Partners.

Changes in areas of biodiversity importance; the condition of SSSIs; the distribution and status of selected species; and the active management of local sites will be reported in the AMR.

Green Infrastructure

Policy CS 19

Green Infrastructure

The District’s green infrastructure will be protected and enhanced. The Council will work with partners, including parish councils and the community to address the District’s green infrastructure needs and deficiencies as set out in the forthcoming Green Infrastructure SPD.

New developments will make provision for high quality and multifunctional open spaces of an appropriate size and will also provide links to the existing green infrastructure network. Specific standards for provision within new developments will be identified in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD and through the masterplanning for strategic sites.

Developments resulting in the loss of green infrastructure or harm to its use or enjoyment by the public will not be permitted. Where exceptionally it is agreed that an area of green infrastructure can be lost a new one of equal or greater size and standard will be required to be provided in an accessible location close by.

5.101 Green infrastructure is the network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities. West Berkshire is generally well provided for in terms of green infrastructure and it will be important to protect and increase this provision in the future, to meet the future needs associated with new development.

5.102 For the purposes of this Core Strategy, green infrastructure is defined as:

- Parks and gardens, including parks, country parks and formal gardens
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces – including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas.
- Green corridors – including river and canal banks, cycleways and rights of way.

lowland heathland, ancient woodland, reedbeds, rivers and streams, it is one of the key delivery mechanisms for ensuring biodiversity gains across the Greenham Common area. Taking a strategic approach to the restoration and enhancement of existing priority habitats, and the reconnection of fragmented sites through the creation and enhancement of new sites, green corridors and networks will ensure the potential for biodiversity improvement in this area is realised.
- Outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces, either publicly or privately owned) – including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas.
- Amenity green space (most commonly, but not exclusively, in built up areas) – including informal recreation spaces, green spaces in and around housing and village greens.
- Provision for children and teenagers – including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops, and other more informal areas (eg ‘hanging out’ areas, teenage shelters)
- Allotments, community gardens and urban farms
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Lakes and waterways
- Green roofs and walls.

5.103 The green infrastructure (GI) of the District is important for many reasons. It contributes significantly to the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors, in terms of both visual amenity and for sport and recreation purposes, particularly in the urban areas where access to the countryside is more limited. GI creates a sense of place allowing for greater appreciation of valuable landscapes and cultural heritage. It increases access to the countryside and supports healthy living.

5.104 In addition GI plays an important role in flood management and sustainable design, makes a positive impact to combating climate change and provides opportunities for sustainable transport, and the production of food, for example within public allotments. In addition it contributes significantly to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, by creating an ecological network allowing for the movement of wildlife along corridors and facilitating the colonisation of new areas.

5.105 Particular assets in terms of natural and semi-natural spaces include:

- the Thatcham Nature and Discovery Centre and Reedbeds,
- Greenham Common and Snelsmore Common near Newbury, and
- Wokefield Common near Burghfield Common.

5.106 Within the main towns, Northcroft Park, which has Green Flag status and Victoria Park are an integral part of Newbury, the Memorial Playing Fields and Dunstan Green play an important role in Thatcham, while Calcut Linear Park provides an important resource for the people of Calcut and Tilehurst. In addition smaller spaces can be just as valuable in both urban and rural communities; for example the recreation ground at Burghfield, the Croft in Hungerford, and Newbury Lock are all examples of open spaces that are highly valued.

5.107 Waterways are an important part of the District’s GI, with the Kennet and Avon Canal being a popular route for narrow boats, walking and cycling and an important tourist attraction as well as the Rivers Thames, Enborne, Lambourn, Pang and Kennet. There are 1168 kilometres of public rights of way and two national trails pass through the District, The Ridgeway and the Thames Path.

5.108 Sporting provision ranges from established sports clubs with good facilities such as Newbury Rugby Club, Newbury Town, Thatcham Town and Hungerford Town football clubs, and Falkland Cricket Club to facilities for amateur sport like Henwick Playing Fields and Newbury Athletics Club. In addition there are boating and sailing facilities at Burghfield and Theale, canoeing on the Thames at Pangbourne and a large number of golf courses throughout the District.

5.109 An assessment of open space and leisure need carried out in July 2005 suggested that the District is well catered for in term of the quantity of open space. This perception is supported by open space assessments of two of the largest urban areas in the District, Newbury and the Eastern area. These concluded that these areas have above average levels of sports facilities and open space, when compared to national standards. The studies found that there was room for improvement in
terms of quality, but that quality standards were also above national standards. A Green Infrastructure SPD will set out the Council’s comprehensive approach to protecting and improving the network of GI in West Berkshire.

Delivery and Monitoring

This policy will be implemented through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, the forthcoming Green Infrastructure SPD, the determination and monitoring of planning applications and appeals, and the use of planning obligations in planning agreements or planning conditions.

Provision of open space and recreational facilities will be monitored in the AMR.

Historic Environment and Landscape Character

Policy CS 20

Historic Environment and Landscape Character

In order to ensure that the diversity and local distinctiveness of the intrinsic landscape character of the District is protected and enhanced, the natural, cultural and functional components of its character will be considered as a whole. In adopting this holistic approach, particular regard will be given to:

a) The sensitivity of the area to change

b) The retention of the individual identity of separate settlements and parts thereof

c) The conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of heritage assets and their settings.

Proposals for development should be informed by and respond to:

a) the distinctive character areas identified in relevant landscape character assessments including Historic Landscape Characterisation for West Berkshire and Historic Environment Character Zoning for West Berkshire.

b) features identified in various settlement character studies including the Newbury Historic Character Study, Conservation Area Appraisals and community planning documents which have been adopted by the Council such as Parish Plans and Town and Village Design Statements.

c) the nature of and the potential for heritage assets identified through the Historic Environment Record for West Berkshire and the extent of their significance.

5.110 One of the key issues facing West Berkshire is the conservation and enhancement of the distinctive local character of both the natural and built environment. The high quality diverse landscape character with its rich cultural and natural heritage contributes to the overall quality of life of everyone in the District. Using this as a positive tool in accommodating necessary change is an important challenge for the Core Strategy.
The character of the landscape in West Berkshire is defined by historic processes that have shaped and formed the landscapes that exist today. Having an understanding of these processes and the way the historic environment of the District has influenced settlement patterns, the individual identity of separate settlements and their sense of place, is essential when accommodating future development. The conservation, protection and enhancement of the District’s historic environment is therefore a key aim of the policy.

### Historic environment designations in West Berkshire

- 52 Conservation Areas
- Approximately 1900 Listed Buildings
- Approximately 90 Scheduled Monuments
- 12 Historic Parks and Gardens - 3 of which, Aldermaston Court, Sandleford Priory and Shaw House, are currently on the English Heritage Register of ‘Heritage at Risk’
- 1 Registered Battlefield, Newbury 1 (1643) - currently on the English Heritage Register of ‘Heritage at Risk’
- Over 5000 other heritage assets recorded in the Historic Environment Record

The ability of a particular area to accommodate future growth without it having any adverse effects on its character will continue to be an important factor when considering the future location and nature of development. It is essential that new development should help sustain and/or create landscapes with a strong sense of place and local identity. Respecting and enhancing the distinctive landscape character of the District is therefore given considerable weight in line with national and regional policy which acknowledges that a suitable approach to development in one part of the District may not be acceptable in another part.

74% of the District is part of the North Wessex Downs AONB which adjoins the Chilterns AONB along the River Thames, the District boundary, before sweeping south, encircling Newbury, to encompass the northern reaches of the rolling chalk hills of the Hampshire Downs. The AONB is characterised by the quality of its chalk landscape which ranges from remote open downland, dramatic skyline escarpments, contrasting wooded downland, and the small scale intimate settled river valleys of the Lambourn and Pang.

Outside the AONB the River Kennet from Newbury to Reading lies within a distinctive broad corridor of an open lowland landscape characterised by a variety of wetland habitats including wet meadow, reed bed and flooded gravel workings. Further south there are small areas of remnant heath with the Ministry of Defence also occupying large tracts of land at Aldermaston and Burghfield.

Settlements are a key component of the landscape and in West Berkshire most settlements can trace their origins back over many millennia. A variety of rural settlement forms can be seen from the nucleated patterns common on the chalk downs to the more dispersed patterns found in the southern part of the District. A key feature of even the larger settlements is the way in which few have coalesced in recent times and so the blurring of the physical distinction between places has largely been avoided.

The policy aims to protect and enhance this diversity and local distinctiveness through the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). This provides the framework for informed decisions to be made as to whether different landscapes should evolve by:

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For the purposes of this policy the Council has used the European Landscape Convention definition of landscape “An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.” (Council of Europe 2000). It applies to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside; and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection. The ELC was signed by the UK Government in February 2006 and became binding from March 2007.
5 Core Policies

- Conserving the existing and historic character;
- Enhancing existing character by introducing new features into the landscape;
- Strengthening or restoring a previous character; or
- Creating a new character when a sense of place and local distinctiveness have been eroded or lost.

5.117 There are a number of relevant landscape assessments covering the District, including the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Landscape Character Assessment (34), the Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (35) and the Newbury District Landscape Assessment (36). LCA is particularly valuable when looking at landscape sensitivity, whether that be the inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself or its sensitivity to a particular type of change.

5.118 In addition, Historic Landscape Characterisation (37) and Historic Environment Character Zoning (38) will be used by the Council to inform and support planning decisions. At a more detailed level these will be supplemented by the use of relevant settlement character studies, including the Newbury Historic Character Study (39) and adopted Conservation Area Appraisals. The Council is currently undertaking a programme of Conservation Area Reviews, through the production of Conservation Area Appraisals. These will be formally adopted and published by the Council to support the policies contained within this Core Strategy and other subsequent DPDs. The Council also intends to compile a ‘local list’ of heritage assets across the District which will be used to support and inform policies.

5.119 It is essential that as the landscape evolves in a holistic way it also reflects the value that the public places on it. The Council actively encourages the production of community planning documents such as Town and Village Design Statements and Parish Plans and where they have been adopted or endorsed by the Council will use them to inform and support the policies contained within this Core Strategy and other subsequent DPDs.

Delivery and Monitoring

The Council will deliver this policy through a variety of mechanisms, but primarily through more detailed policies contained in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD and the development management process.

The number of Listed Buildings, Battlefields, and Historic Parks and Gardens at risk, together with the number of Conservation Areas with an up to date Conservation Area Appraisal will be reported in the AMR.

Section 6 Monitoring Framework

6.1 The Core Strategy sets out how much development is intended to happen where and when, and how it will be delivered. Planning Policy Statement 12 (1) states that there must be clear arrangements for monitoring the strategy. This section sets out how the implementation of the policies in the Core Strategy will be monitored, with regard also to the requirement to monitor the Government's Core Output Indicators and any relevant National Indicators.

6.2 The purpose of monitoring is to assess whether the policies of the Core Strategy and other documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework are achieving the objectives and intended policy outcomes, whether they are having any unintended consequences and whether they are still relevant or require a review.

6.3 Each of the Core Strategy policy sections includes a statement on the delivery of the policy and what monitoring will be undertaken. The tables below contain more detail on the monitoring indicators and how they will be measured.

6.4 The Council has taken an objective-led approach to the selection of targets and indicators, which will provide a consistent basis for monitoring the performance of the strategy against the overall objectives. The indicators have been chosen to provide a guide to overall progress and will be kept under review in the light of the changing local, regional and national context. In addition the council is required to monitor the potential significant effects of the policies and proposals, as identified through the Sustainability Appraisal.

6.5 The effectiveness of policies should be assessed, wherever possible, against measurable targets. Where it is not possible to set meaningful local targets, regional or national targets may be appropriate. Some policies aim to deliver a qualitative rather than a quantitative outcome. In such instances it is appropriate to monitor whether the policy is delivering the intended trend or direction of travel. For some policies measurable targets may be set through subsequent Development Plan Documents or Supplementary Planning Documents.

6.6 The Council produces an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Framework and assessment of the effectiveness of the policies in the Core Strategy and in future Local Development Documents. This monitoring will indicate whether any changes need to be considered if a policy is not working or if the targets are not being met. The report must be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of December each year, reflecting the situation at the end of the previous financial year. The AMR will be published on the Council's website.

### Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy and Policies SP2-6 are monitored through the whole range of indicators for the Core Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A focus on previously developed land</td>
<td>Core H3: New and converted dwellings on PDL</td>
<td>60% of new development on PDL over plan period</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core BD2: Employment floorspace on PDL</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Development in accord with the spatial strategy</td>
<td>Dwelling completions within settlements of District Hierarchy and geographical areas</td>
<td>Distribution in accordance with Policies SP1 - SP6</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
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### Policy CS1 – Delivering New Homes and Retaining the Housing Stock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Delivery to meet requirements of South East Plan</td>
<td>Core H1: Plan period and housing targets</td>
<td>Maintaining residual annual average rates of completions</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core H2: Housing trajectory</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To maintain at least a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completions on windfall sites</td>
<td>To assess trends</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS2 – Housing Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing distribution in accordance with spatial strategy</td>
<td>Housing completions within settlements of District Hierarchy and areas of District</td>
<td>Distribution in accordance with Policies SP1 - SP6 and CS2</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A focus on previously developed land</td>
<td>Core H3: New and converted dwellings on PDL</td>
<td>60% of new development on PDL over plan period</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of allocated sites</td>
<td>Housing completions on allocated sites</td>
<td>Phased development to maintain housing land supply</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Policy CS3 – Newbury Racecourse Strategic Site Allocation

### Policy CS4 – Sandleford Strategic Site Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of strategic sites with associated infrastructure</td>
<td>Housing completions</td>
<td>Phased delivery</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed infrastructure projects</td>
<td>Meet requirements set out in infrastructure delivery plan.</td>
<td>Service providers and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS5 – Housing Type and Mix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of a mix of housing types and sizes</td>
<td>Density of new development</td>
<td>Developments over 5 units to be built at densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing mix by type and size on completed sites</td>
<td>Mix of housing types and sizes to reflect local needs</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS6 – Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of infrastructure to meet community needs</td>
<td>Completed infrastructure projects in accordance with infrastructure delivery plan</td>
<td>Meet requirements set out in infrastructure delivery plan.</td>
<td>Service providers and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developer contributions through Section 106 legal agreements</td>
<td>Development to meet requirements set out in SPG “Delivering Investment through Sustainable Development” or any replacement guidance.</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Policy CS7– Affordable Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing to meet local needs</td>
<td>Core H5: Gross affordable housing completions</td>
<td>35% of total net completions over plan period to meet South East Plan target</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net affordable completions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location of completions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applications including contribution to affordable housing</td>
<td>100% of applications where policy applies</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No target</td>
<td></td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS8– Rural Exception Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing to meet local needs in rural areas</td>
<td>Gross affordable housing completions on rural exception sites</td>
<td>To meet local needs demonstrated through Local Housing Needs Surveys</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location of completions</td>
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</table>

### Policy CS9– Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide requirement set out in South East Plan</td>
<td>Core H4: Net additional pitches</td>
<td>Target will be set in partial review of South East Plan</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Policy CS10 - Employment and the Economy

### Policy CS 11 – The Rural Economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support economic development and provision of diverse range of job opportunities</td>
<td>Core BD1: total amount of additional employment floorspace</td>
<td>No target but assess trend</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core BD3: Employment land available</td>
<td>No target but assess trend</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type in employment or regeneration areas</td>
<td>No target but assess trend</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Losses of employment land</td>
<td>No target but assess trend</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Policy CS12 - Hierarchy of Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractive and vibrant town and district centres</td>
<td>Core BD4: Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses</td>
<td>No target, assess trends</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retail vacancy rates</td>
<td>No target, assess trends</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS13 - Equestrian/Racehorse Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for Equestrian/Racehorse Industry</td>
<td>Commitments and completions of equestrian related development</td>
<td>No target, assess trends</td>
<td>Berkshire JSPU and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Policy CS14 - Transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More sustainable travel and improved accessibility to services</td>
<td>Accessibility of new residential development – percentage within 30 minute public transport time of specific facilities</td>
<td>To assess trends.</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable travel to schools - percentage of pupils arriving at primary and secondary school by car</td>
<td>To reduce the percentage of pupils arriving at school by car</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Additional indicators set out in Local Transport Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS15 – Design Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved design quality</td>
<td>Core H6: Housing quality – Building for Life Assessments</td>
<td>No target yet established, other than positive trend over time</td>
<td>In house assessments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Policy CS16 – Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New development should support the aim of achieving sustainable development</td>
<td>Core E3: Renewable energy generation</td>
<td>Positive trend</td>
<td>Thames Valley Energy statistics and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number and percentage of developments meeting required BREEAM and Code for Sustainable Homes standard</td>
<td>100% of eligible applications</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Policy CS17 - Flooding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No increase in properties and people at risk from flooding</td>
<td>Core E1: Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>EA and in house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The number of properties at risk from flooding (Flood Zones 2 and 3)</td>
<td>No increase in properties at risk from flooding</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Policy CS18 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity</td>
<td>Core E2: Changes in areas of biodiversity importance</td>
<td>To assess trends</td>
<td>Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)</td>
<td>Natural England target: 95% of area of SSSIs in favourable or recovering condition</td>
<td>TVERC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribution and status of selected species</td>
<td>To assess trends</td>
<td>TVERC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NI 197 Improved local biodiversity – active management of local sites</td>
<td>To assess trends</td>
<td>TVERC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Policy CS19 - Green Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provision of network of green infrastructure</td>
<td>Gains and losses of open space</td>
<td>To assess trends</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of new sports and recreation facilities</td>
<td>To assess trends</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open space managed to Green Flag Award Standards</td>
<td></td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Policy CS20 – Historic Environment and Landscape Character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Outcome</th>
<th>Delivery Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To respect and enhance the townscape and landscape character</td>
<td>Number of listed buildings at risk</td>
<td>Decrease in numbers</td>
<td>Heritage at Risk Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of battlefields and historic parks and gardens at risk</td>
<td>Decrease in numbers</td>
<td>Heritage at Risk Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Conservation Areas and percentage with up to date Conservation Area Appraisal</td>
<td>All Conservation Areas to have Conservation Area Appraisal</td>
<td>In house monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

6 Monitoring Framework
### Appendix A Strategic Objectives

A.1 The following table shows how the strategic objectives are linked with the Council Plan and the themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and which Core Strategy policies relate to each objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Objectives</th>
<th>Council Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities</th>
<th>Core Strategy Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 – Sustainable Development</strong></td>
<td>Council Plan 2007 – 2011</td>
<td>SP1 – Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cleaner and Greener</td>
<td>CS14 - Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High Quality Planning</td>
<td>CS15 - Design Principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safer and Stronger Communities</td>
<td>CS16 - Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy</td>
<td>CS17 - Flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prosperous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2 – Housing Growth</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 – Housing Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To exceed regional and national targets for CO2 emissions reduction and deliver the District’s growth in a way that helps to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change.</td>
<td>To meet housing needs in a way that secures the provision of affordable and market housing to meet local needs in both urban and rural areas of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cleaner and Greener</td>
<td>• High Quality Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High Quality Planning</td>
<td>• Including Everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safer and Stronger Communities</td>
<td>• Protecting Vulnerable People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prosperous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2 – Housing Growth</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 – Housing Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To deliver 10,500 homes across West Berkshire between 2006 – 2026 in accordance with the South East Plan. These homes will be delivered in an effective and timely manner, will maximise the use of brownfield land and access to facilities and services and will be developed at densities which make the most efficient use of land whilst responding to the existing built environment.</td>
<td>To meet housing needs in a way that secures the provision of affordable and market housing to meet local needs in both urban and rural areas of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cleaner and Greener</td>
<td>• High Quality Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High Quality Planning</td>
<td>• Including Everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safer and Stronger Communities</td>
<td>• Protecting Vulnerable People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prosperous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Core Strategy Objectives

**District.** To provide homes in a way that promotes sustainable communities, providing a mix of house sizes, types and tenures to meet identified needs, and respond to the changing demographic profile of the District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Objectives</th>
<th>Council Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities</th>
<th>Core Strategy Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                         | • Affordable Housing • Promoting Independence • Vibrant Villages • Safer and Stronger Communities | CS2 – Housing Distribution  
CS5 – Housing Type and Mix  
CS6 – Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery |
| Sustainable Community Strategy | • Prosperous • Stronger • Safer | CS7 – Provision of Affordable Housing  
CS8 – Rural Exception Sites  
CS9 - Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
CS13 – Equestrian / Racehorse Industry  
CS15 – Design Principles |

### 4 – Economy

To provide for a range of sizes and types of employment land and premises in the right locations to respond to changes in economic activity, the location of new residential development and the specific needs of the rural economy, including the equestrian and horseracing industries.

| Council Plan 2007 – 2011 | SP1 – Spatial Strategy | CS2 – Housing Distribution  
CS10 – Location and Type of Employment Development  
CS11 – Rural Economy  
CS13 – Equestrian / Racehorse Industry |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| • High Quality Planning  
• Including Everyone  
• Thriving Town Centres  
• Vibrant Villages  
• Promoting Independence | CS2 – Housing Distribution  
CS10 – Location and Type of Employment Development  
CS11 – Rural Economy  
CS13 – Equestrian / Racehorse Industry |
| Sustainable Community Strategy | • Prosperous • Stronger | CS2 – Housing Distribution  
CS10 – Location and Type of Employment Development  
CS11 – Rural Economy  
CS13 – Equestrian / Racehorse Industry |

### 5 – Infrastructure Requirements

To ensure that the infrastructure needs arising from the growth in West Berkshire are provided in a timely and coordinated manner, which has kept pace with development in accordance with the detail set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Document.

| Council Plan 2007 – 2011 | SP1 – Spatial Strategy | CS2 – Housing Distribution  
CS6 – Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| • High Quality Planning  
• Safer and Stronger Communities  
• Thriving Town Centres  
• Better Roads and Transport  
• Vibrant Villages  
• Protecting Vulnerable People | CS2 – Housing Distribution  
CS6 – Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery |
<p>| Sustainable Community Strategy | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Objectives</th>
<th>Council Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities</th>
<th>Core Strategy Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prosperous</strong></td>
<td>Council Plan 2007 – 2011: Cleaner and Greener, High Quality Planning, A Healthier Life</td>
<td>SP1 – Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safer</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy: Greener, Prosperous, Healthy</td>
<td>CS18– Biodiversity and Geodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stronger</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>CS19– Green Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 – Green Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ensure that West Berkshire</td>
<td>Council Plan 2007 – 2011: Cleaner Greener, High Quality Planning, Better Roads and Transport, Thriving Town Centres, Vibrant Villages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contains a strong network of</td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy: Greener, Prosperous, Stronger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-connected and multi-functional green infrastructure which provide an attractive environment to live, work and spend leisure time, providing benefits for health and opportunities for formal and informal recreation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prosperous</strong></td>
<td>Council Plan 2007 – 2011: High Quality Planning, Thriving Town Centres, Vibrant Villages</td>
<td>SP1 – Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safer</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy: Prosperous, Stronger</td>
<td>CS2 – Housing Distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stronger</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>CS6 – Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7 – Transport</strong></td>
<td>Council Plan 2007 – 2011: Cleaner Greener, High Quality Planning, Better Roads and Transport, Thriving Town Centres, Vibrant Villages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To put in place a sustainable transport network which supports the growth in West Berkshire, links existing and new development, prioritises walking, cycling and public transport and provides a genuine choice of modes. Traffic management measures will minimise the impact of new development on the existing network.</td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy: Greener, Prosperous, Stronger</td>
<td>CS14 – Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greener</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy: Prosperous, Stronger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prosperous</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stronger</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8 – Retail</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To achieve growth in retail activity and consequent increase in the vitality and vibrancy of town centres in West Berkshire. To meet the range of shopping needs for residents and visitors largely through the completion of the Parkway development and through the regeneration of Thatcham town centre. To provide for local shopping need in Town, District and Local centres to serve the needs of existing and future residents.</td>
<td>Council Plan 2007 – 2011: High Quality Planning, Thriving Town Centres, Vibrant Villages</td>
<td>SP1 - Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prosperous</strong></td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy: Prosperous, Stronger</td>
<td>CS12 – Hierarchy of Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stronger</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>CS10 – Location and Type of Employment Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9 – Heritage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>CS11 – Rural Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Objectives</th>
<th>Council Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities</th>
<th>Core Strategy Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To ensure that development to 2026 is planned, designed and managed in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of the built, historic and natural environment and habitats in West Berkshire. | - Cleaner and Greener  
- High Quality Planning  
Sustainable Community Strategy  
- Greener  
- Prosperous | CS15 – Design Principles  
CS18 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
CS20 – Historic Environment and Landscape Character |
Appendix B Housing Land Supply

Housing Land Availability Position at 31st March 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>South East Plan Requirement 2006 - 2026</th>
<th>10,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings completed 2006 - 2009</td>
<td>2,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwellings with planning permission</td>
<td>2,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal of dwellings completed and with planning permission at March 2009</td>
<td>4,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining dwellings for which land is required 2009 - 2026</td>
<td>5,997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Components of Housing Land Supply

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic site allocations</td>
<td>2,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small site windfall allowance for period 2019 - 2026</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified sites, allocations in Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD and windfall</td>
<td>3,057</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B.1 The housing land supply position will be reviewed annually and reported in the AMR, together with the specific list of deliverable sites which form the five year land supply required by PPS3.
Housing Trajectory

B.2 The site-based trajectory compares past performance on housing supply to future anticipated supply. Current commitments at March 2009 that have been assessed as deliverable or developable, allocated sites, the strategic sites at Newbury Racecourse and at Sandleford, identified large and medium sites (some of which will be allocated in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD) together with a cautious small site windfall allowance for the final years of the plan, have all been phased over the plan period. The resultant graph illustrates the projected level of completions.

B.3 The trajectory will be updated annually as part of the annual monitoring process and reported in the AMR.

Figure 8 Housing Trajectory
Figure 9 Composition of Housing Supply
Appendix C AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield

C.1 REPPIR (Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001)

C.2 West Berkshire Council has 2 REPPIR sites which are AWE, (A) near Aldermaston and AWE(B) near Burghfield. Both have on and off-site emergency plans. The off-site plans are subject to multi-agency exercises undertaken on a 3 year basis as required.

C.3 There are zones around each site within which development is monitored and assessed as to the impact it will have on the off-site plan. There is a Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) for each site, which corresponds with the Inner Planning Zones defined by the HSE. In addition there are middle and outer zones, which can also be affected by future development, depending on the type and size of the development. These zones are defined by the HSE on the basis of risk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWE (A)</th>
<th>AWE (B)</th>
<th>Development Affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inner</td>
<td>3km</td>
<td>1.5km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>3- 5km</td>
<td>1.5- 3km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer</td>
<td>5- 10km</td>
<td>3-5km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

Map 1 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

1. Berkshire Downs Escarpment
2. Blewbury to Streatley Downs
3. Buckleberry Plateau
4. Burghfield to Tadley Plateau
5. Farnborough to Leckhampstead Valley
6. Greenham and Cookham Plateau
8. Kennet Valley West
9. Kennet Valley East
10. Lambourn Downs
11. Lambourn Valley
12. Loddon Valley South
13. Lower Pang Valley and Sulham Stream
14. Snelsmore Common and Woodlands
15. Walbury and Inkpen Hill
16. West Reading Woodlands and LNRs
17. Yattendon and Basildon Woodlands
### Appendix E Local Plan Policies replaced by Core Strategy

E.1 Details of how Core Strategy policies replace saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Strategy Policy</th>
<th>Superseded West Berkshire District Local Plan Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP1</td>
<td>OVS.1, ENV.18, HSG.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP2</td>
<td>SHOP.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS4</td>
<td>HSG.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS5</td>
<td>HSG.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS6</td>
<td>OVS.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS7</td>
<td>HSG.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS8</td>
<td>HSG.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS9</td>
<td>HSG.17, HSG.17A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS10</td>
<td>ECON.2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS13</td>
<td>ECON.8, ECON.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS15</td>
<td>ECON.2A, OVS.2, OVS.9, OVS.11, ENV.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS16</td>
<td>OVS9, OVS.10,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS18</td>
<td>ENV.8, ENV.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS19</td>
<td>ENV14, ENV.31, RL.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS20</td>
<td>OVS.2, ENV.1, ENV.4, ENV.33, ENV.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E.2 The remaining saved policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan will be replaced by the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD upon adoption.

E.3 Policies that were not saved by the Secretary of State beyond September 2007 are as follows: OVS.3A, OVS.4, ENV.2, ENV.3, ENV.5, ENV.6, ENV.7, ENV.9A, ENV.10, ENV.11, ENV.11A, ENV.11B, ENV.12, ENV.13, ENV.15, ENV.21, ENV.25A, ENV.25, ENV.26, ENV.28, ENV.30, ENV.32, ENV.34, ENV.35, ENV.36, ENV.37, ENV.39, ENV.40, HSG.2, HSG.4, HSG.7, HSG.10, HSG.15, HSG.16, ECON.2, ECON.3, ECON.4, SHOP.1A, SHOP.4, TRANS.2, TRANS.4, TRANS.5, RL.3A, RL.4A, RL.6, RL.7
## Appendix F Glossary

The following terms are referred to in the Core Strategy document and accompanying consultation material.

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal approval by the Council of an LDD where upon it achieves its full weight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
<td>AMR</td>
<td>Annual statement analysing the implementation of policies. Produced in December. This is a statutory requirement of the new planning system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Assessment</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Regulations require that an appropriate assessment is carried out to determine the impact of plans and projects on sites of European importance for nature conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Action Plan</td>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>A Development Plan Document which focuses on a specific area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity Action Plan</td>
<td>BAP</td>
<td>A Plan with a list of actions designed to protect and restore biological systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td></td>
<td>LDDs normally have to fit in to the policies set out in higher documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>The overall spatial planning policies and objectives for an area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td></td>
<td>In this context, the local planning authority; in this case West Berkshire Council. References to full Council are to the meeting of all elected members which is the Council’s supreme decision making body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of the Council’s aims and priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Plan Document</td>
<td>DPD</td>
<td>A statutory document which is the primary consideration in determining planning applications. It is required to undergo public testing (inquiry or examination before an independent inspector or panel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence Base</td>
<td></td>
<td>Background information on the District, including its needs and predictions of what might be needed in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination (in Public)</td>
<td>EiP</td>
<td>In this context the forum at which an independent inspector considers the soundness of a development plan document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td></td>
<td>In this case, the Council’s lead decision making body comprised of elected members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Office</td>
<td>GOSE</td>
<td>Grouping of Government departments working at regional level – see GOSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government's Proposed Changes</td>
<td></td>
<td>A stage within the preparation of the South East Plan, whereby the Government set out their proposed changes to the draft plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Trajectory</td>
<td></td>
<td>Diagram showing housing delivery and expected trends of development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inset map</td>
<td></td>
<td>Specific section of a Proposals Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td>An identified set of nationally adopted design principles based around 16 design features to ensure that new homes are accessible and easily adaptable to meet changing needs as people get older.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Development Document</td>
<td>LDD</td>
<td>Either a Development Plan Document or a Supplementary Planning Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Development Scheme</td>
<td>LDS</td>
<td>The public programme for producing elements of the Local Development Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Development Framework</td>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>The portfolio of Local Development Documents that provides the framework for delivering the spatial strategy for the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Strategic Partnership</td>
<td>LSP</td>
<td>A grouping of local stakeholders – local councils, business, voluntary sector – working together in the local community. The local LSP is the West Berkshire Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material consideration</td>
<td></td>
<td>A factor or document which can be taken into account in deciding a planning application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td>A check of the effectiveness of policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Action plans produced by and for local communities, setting out a vision for how the local community would like to develop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Inspectorate</td>
<td></td>
<td>National agency which supplies independent planning inspectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Policy Guidance</td>
<td>PPG</td>
<td>Government statement of its planning policy. Gradually being replaced by PPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Policy Statement</td>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Government statement of its planning policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Options Core Strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>The draft Core Strategy which outlines the Council’s preferred approach to development in West Berkshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously Developed Land</td>
<td>PDL</td>
<td>Previously Developed Land. Defined by Government as land which ‘is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure (PPS3, Appendix B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals Map</td>
<td></td>
<td>Map showing policy areas on an Ordnance Survey map base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public examination</td>
<td></td>
<td>See Examination (in Public) above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Planning Guidance</td>
<td>RPG</td>
<td>Government planning policies for a region. Replaced by RSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Spatial Strategy</td>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Government planning policies for the region. Now part of the development plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saved Development Plans or Policies</td>
<td></td>
<td>The new system allows all existing Local and Structure Plans to be saved until September 2007. Some policies may be saved for a longer period through agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East Plan</td>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>RSS for the South East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>An integrated planning/development strategy aiming to achieve a range of objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td></td>
<td>In this context an organisation or individual with an interest in local planning matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Community Involvement</td>
<td>SCI</td>
<td>Adopted document setting out how the Council will involve the community in the planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Broad planning policies for a whole County. Being replaced by local DPDs and RSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stage at which a prepared DPD is presented to Secretary of State. Similar to the deposit stage under the old system in that formal representations can be made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Planning Document</td>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>A local development document which does not have DPD status but which is taken into account as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Planning Guidance</td>
<td>SPG</td>
<td>Planning guidance produced under the previous planning system. They give additional guidance in support of policies in statutory planning documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A single appraisal tool which provides for the systematic identification and evaluation of the economic, social and environmental impacts of a proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy</td>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>Strategic objectives and action plan produced by LSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitary authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>A single tier local authority providing a full range of local government functions. West Berkshire Council is a unitary authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Design Statement</td>
<td>VDS</td>
<td>Local design guidance produced by local community and adopted by the Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Berkshire Partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>The local LSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Berkshire Planning Strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Council’s original Core Strategy. Submitted to Government in September 2006 and subsequently withdrawn. The Core Strategy is now known as the West Berkshire Core Strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Affordable housing definition

Affordable Housing is defined in Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (PPS3), as;

‘Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a low enough price for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision’. (PPS3)

The Council uses the above definition of affordable housing (as set out in PPS3) and defines the term affordable as accommodation which is available at a price or rent which is not more than 30% of a household’s net income. The Council will accept the following tenures as affordable accommodation:

- Social rented accommodation: housing provided at or below the Housing Corporation target rent levels.
- Intermediate accommodation: housing provided at prices and rent levels above those of social rent but below market prices and rents. This can include:
  - Intermediate rented accommodation: housing provided on the same basis as social rented housing, but at rent levels above target rents and below open market rents.
  - Shared ownership accommodation: housing provided on a part rent and part sale basis, as both the occupier and a housing association own equity in the property. Shared ownership is commonly referred to as Homebuy.
  - Rent to Buy: accommodation whereby the property is let at an intermediate or affordable rent, with an option to purchase as shared ownership at a later date.

Affordable housing is normally and preferably provided on-site and through Housing Associations (Registered Social Landlord; RSL). Affordable housing can sometimes be provided on sites owned by the Housing Associations, but more often the provision comes through obligations placed on developments by the planning system. It is important that affordable housing units are retained within the affordable housing stock in perpetuity, regardless of tenure.
Title of Report: Proposed changes to the Contract Rules of Procedure

Report to be considered by: Council

Date of Meeting: 21 January 2010

Forward Plan Ref: C1887

Purpose of Report: To consider and approve the changes to the Contract Rules of Procedure.

Recommended Action: To delegate authority to the Head of Legal and Electoral Services in consultation with the Head of Finance to implement the changes to the Contract Rules of Procedure in Appendix 1.

Reason for decision to be taken: Changes are required to implement consequential effects of the Public Contracts (Amendments) Regulations 2009 coming into force on the 20th December 2009 as a result of the EU Remedies Directive.

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Audit report on Contract Letting; Remedies Directive.

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Plan Priorities:

- CPP1 – Support our communities through the economic recession – to alleviate the impact on different communities and individuals who find themselves out of work and/or disadvantaged
- CPP3 – Reduce West Berkshire’s carbon footprint – to reduce CO₂ emissions in West Berkshire and contribute to waste management, green travel, transportation and energy efficiency

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Themes:

- CPT5 - Cleaner and Greener
- CPT13 - Value for Money

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

- Improved governance, compliance and practices.

Portfolio Member Details

Name & Telephone No.: Councillor Keith Chopping - (0118) 983 2057
E-mail Address: kchopping@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 08.12.2009
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</thead>
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<td><a href="mailto:therring@westberks.gov.uk">therring@westberks.gov.uk</a></td>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Solicitor (Contract and Procurement)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implications**

**Policy:** This is a revised policy due to changes in legislation.

**Financial:** The changes to CRoP have been recommended by the Finance & Governance Officer Group and agreed by the Corporate Board.

**Personnel:** Changes are needed to improve working practices and take into account changes in legislation.

**Property:** Changes are needed in order to avoid challenge under the amended Regulations for 20th December 2009.

**Risk Management:** Changes are needed in order to avoid challenge under the amended Regulations for 20th December 2009.

**Equalities Impact Assessment:** The introduction of Equality Impact Assessments has been discussed previously with the Principal Policy Officer.

**Is this item subject to call-in?**

**Yes:** ☐  **No:** ☒

If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☒
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position ☐
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months ☐
- Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐
Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 The Contract Rules of Procedure (the Rules) which form Part 12 of West Berkshire Councils Constitution are required to be updated due to the following reasons:

- to implement the legislative changes (in particular the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2009) and ensure the language used in the Rules is consistent with the current legislation;
- to implement Council’s current policies;
- to implement recommendation contained in the WBC audit reports;
- to better reflect working practices: and
- to implement a number of recommendations made by the Council’s Finance & Governance Officer Group (FAGG).

2. Proposals

It is recommended that the Council approves the attached Appendix 1 containing the Rules with amendments tracked. The following is a brief summary of the main changes that have been made to the Rules:

2.1 Section 12.1.9 requires the need for Heads of Service to carry out a sustainability impact assessment. This implements the Council’s policy on sustainability.

2.2 Section 12.1.19 implements the EU treaty principles of non-discrimination, transparency and equality in tender competitions. It also requires the need for Heads of Service to carry out an equality impact assessment. This implements legislative provisions and Council’s policy on equality.

2.3 Section 12.1.20 deals with financial leases and the need for such procurements to be authorised and recorded.

2.4 Section 12.3 implements new advertising thresholds from the European Union and generally updates the process requirements.

2.5 Section 12.6.1 and 12.6.2 clarifies the position with regard to responsibility and authority for entering into contracts.

2.6 Section 12.6.4 provides that the lower financial threshold be increased from £5,000 to £10,000.

2.7 The removal of approved supplier status and discontinuation of the approved supplier database and select lists. Previously section 12.5.

2.8 Sections 12.8.1 to 12.8.3 now clarify the procedure and the circumstances in which exceptions are allowed. This is particularly important in light of the new regulations.

2.9 Section 12.8.6 gives guidance to the Corporate Directors on exercising their powers under 12.8.6.1 to 12.8.6.3, which relates to social care arrangements.
2.10 Section 12.8.7 now places an obligation for WBC controlled schools to follow the Rules.

3. Conclusion

3.1 It is recommended that the amendments to the Contract Rules of Procedure as tracked in the annex are approved
Executive Report

4. Introduction

4.1 The Contract Rules of Procedure (the Rules) which form Part 12 of West Berkshire Councils Constitution are required to be updated due to the following reasons:

- to implement the legislative changes (in particular the Public Contracts (Amended) Regulations 2009) and ensure the language used in the Rules is consistent with the current legislation;
- to implement Council’s current policies;
- to implement recommendation contained in the WBC audit reports;
- to better reflect working practices; and
- to implement a number of recommendations have been made by the Council’s Finance & Governance Officer Group (FAGG).

5. Proposals

It is recommended that the Council approves the attached Appendix 1 containing the Rules with amendments tracked. The following is a brief summary of the main changes that have been made to the Rules:

5.1 Section 12.1.9 requires the need for Heads of Service to carry out a sustainability impact assessment. This implements the Council’s policy on sustainability.

WBC’s Sustainable Procurement Policy defines Sustainable Procurement as an approach that meets needs for goods, services, works and utilities, in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy whilst minimising damage to the environment. Sustainable Procurement should consider the environmental, social and economic consequences of design; non-renewable material use; manufacture and production methods; logistics; service delivery; use; operation; maintenance; re-use; recycling options; disposal; and suppliers’ capabilities to address these consequences throughout the supply chain.

5.2 Section 12.1.19 implements the EU treaty principles of non-discrimination, transparency and equality in tender competitions. It also requires the need for Heads of Service to carry out a equality impact assessment. This implements legislative provisions and Council’s policy on equality.

5.3 Section 12.1.20 deals with financial leases and the need for such procurements to be authorised and recorded. Such leases are recorded on the Council’s Balance Sheet and may have EU procurement rules implications.

5.4 Section 12.3 implements new advertising thresholds from the European Union and generally updates the process requirements. This is amended to provide consistency with the EU procurement rules.
5.5 Section 12.6.1 and 12.6.2 clarifies the position with regard to responsibility and authority for entering into contracts.

5.6 Section 12.6.4 provides that the lower financial threshold be increased from £5,000 to £10,000.

5.7 The removal of approved supplier status and discontinuation of the approved supplier database and select lists is recommended was previously in section 12.5 of the Rules.

The Rules include references to approved supplier status; this is misleading as any contractor passing a PQQ process would be included on the database regardless of whether they had actually contracted with WBC. The database is rarely used, as the information held is largely historic and is therefore not fully reliable as the basis of future decisions. The database also duplicates aspects of the Council’s main Agresso supplier list.

FAGG recommend the removal of the blanket approved supplier status and discontinuation of the ‘approved supplier database’. Section 12.5 of the Rules is to be rewritten to reflect that PQQs should only be used for the particular project for which they were sought. Suppliers will be encouraged to keep electronic copies of information they submit and update this for any new submissions. The Agresso supplier database has been amended to reflect the date a PQQ was completed.

5.8 Sections 12.8.1 to 12.8.3 now clarify the procedure and the circumstances in which exceptions are allowed. This is particularly important in light of the new regulations.

5.9 Section 12.8.6 gives guidance to the Corporate Directors on exercising their powers under 12.8.6.1 to 12.8.6.3 which relate to social care arrangements.

5.10 Section 12.8.7 now places an obligation for WBC controlled schools to follow the Rules.

6. Conclusion

6.1 It is the recommended that amendments to the Contract Rules of Procedure as tracked in the annex are approved.

Appendices


Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Governance and Audit Committee

Officers Consulted: Andy Walker, David Holling, Ian Priestley, Steve Duffin, Shiraz Sheikh, Amanda Dennis

Trade Union: Not consulted
Part 12

Contract Rules of Procedure

Document Control

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author:</td>
<td>Moira Fraser – Democratic Services Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Owning Service</td>
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Change History

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If you require this information in a different format, such as audio tape or in another language, please ask an English speaker to contact Moira Fraser on 01635 519045 who will be able to help.
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12.1 **Introduction**

12.1.1 **Application of Rules of Procedure**

Subject to any specific provisions to the contrary, these Rules apply in every case where the Council enters into an agreement with another person for the supply of goods, materials or services to, or the execution of work for, the Council. These regulations apply equally to tenders and quotations.

12.1.2 **Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972**

These Contract Rules of Procedure are made under the provisions of Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 and govern the making of contracts for and on behalf of the Council. They include provision for competition, and regulate the manner in which tenders are invited.

12.1.3 **Statutes**

The statutes and statutory instruments that currently affect these Regulations are as follows:

- Local Government Act 1972;
- Local Government Act 1988;
- Education Reform Act 1988;
- Local Government and Housing Act 1989;
- Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Local Government Act 1992;
- Local Government Act 1999;
- Local Government Act 2000;
- The Public Contracts Regulations 2006.
- The Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2009

12.1.4 **Amendments**

Any amendments to the above or new legislation will be deemed to be included in these Rules without the need for a specific reference here.

12.1.5 **Purpose of Rules**

These Contract Rules of Procedure apply to all Officers and Teachers involved in the letting of orders or contracts for works, services and supplies for the Council, whether funded from Revenue or Capital Sources. They provide a basis for true and fair competition by providing a transparent and auditable procedure which, if followed, will give confidence that a fully accountable and unimpeachable contract regime exists within the Council.
These Contract Rules of Procedure have been designed to reduce the volume of work and the need to report to the Executive on contract matters. However, this only works if Members and the District Auditor can be confident that robust procedures and controls exist for the invitation, evaluation, acceptance, managing and monitoring of contracts throughout the Council.

12.1.6 Protection of the Council’s Legal Position

These Contract Rules of Procedure protect the legal position of the Council in respect of compliance with EU and UK law and in its contractual dealings with external suppliers and contractors. They protect the interests of Members, Officers and the Citizens of West Berkshire. The Head of Legal and Electoral Services shall have ultimate responsibility for ruling on and interpreting these Contract Rules of Procedure.

12.1.7 Seeking Advice

Officers who may be letting a contract must seek appropriate advice at the earliest possible opportunity. The Head of Legal and Electoral Services, Head of Finance or such officers as nominated by them shall advise on the procurement strategy and contractual arrangements.

12.1.8 The Council

In these Contract Rules of Procedure the expression “the Council” shall be deemed to include reference to the Executive, Select Committees, Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission, or Regulatory Committees or any person or persons acting in accordance with delegated authority on behalf of the Council. The expression “the appropriate Committee” shall mean the Executive, Select Committees, Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or Regulatory Committees responsible for the contract concerned.

12.1.9 Sustainable Sources

Goods or services which are known to be, or where there is strong evidence to believe they could be, harmful to the environment and where there are other adequate options, will not be used. Wherever practical, only materials from sustainable sources will be used. Heads of Service must ensure that all procurement exercises over £50k and any procurement exercises below this value that have a significant impact on the Council’s sustainability must undergo a sustainability impact assessment as part of the project appraisal (see 12.1.8)

Officers should make themselves aware of the Council’s Sustainable Procurement Policy and any guidance notes. For advice about the application of this policy or about sustainable products officers should contact the Contract and Procurement Unit.
12.1.10 Monitoring Officer

The Council has designated that the Head of Legal and Electoral Services be the Monitoring Officer.

12.1.11 Particularly Complex Contracts

Where the Council is considering embarking upon a particularly complex contract and that involves using competitive dialogue or such other procedures as permitted by law it shall be the duty of the responsible Head of Service to consult with the Head of Legal & Electoral Services to ensure that such negotiations are authorised by law and by these Contract Rules of Procedure and are from the outset conducted by a team of Officers possessing the professional skills appropriate to the proposed transaction.

12.1.12 Preparation of Contract Specification

The Head of Service letting the Contract shall ensure that the appropriate technical specification is prepared. This should clearly set out the works, services and supplies which are required by the Council and the manner in which they are to be provided.

The Head of Service must obtain and make full use of all the necessary professional and technical resources to ensure accurate and comprehensive documents are prepared.

12.1.13 Provision of Appropriate Expenditure

A tender must not be invited unless appropriate provision for the expenditure has been included in the Council’s approved capital or revenue budget for the year in which the expenditure is to be incurred (or in budgets approved in draft for the next financial year by the Executive where the expenditure is to be incurred in that year) or unless the alternative financial provision is made by the Council under Financial Regulations. The budget must cover all preliminary and ancillary costs (which should include annual maintenance costs) and should be in the Budget and Policy Framework approved by Council and should be contained in the appropriate Forward Plan.

12.1.14 Failure to Comply with Rules

Failure to comply with these Contract Rules of Procedure by Officers will be viewed by the Council as a breach of the Officers Code of Conduct contained in Part 14 (Codes and Protocols) of this Constitution and may be considered a disciplinary matter.

12.1.15 Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE)

All Heads of Service should consult with the Head of Legal and Electoral Services, the Head of Human Resources and the Head of Finance or nominated Officer before any contract is entered into which affects the employment of the Council’s staff or the potential transfer of staff to the Council. Statutory periods of consultation...
(which must be complied with) apply to all contracts affected by TUPE.

**12.1.16 Claim Arising from a Contract**

Any claim arising from a contract, that is not clearly within the terms of the contract, must be referred to the Head of Legal and Electoral Services for consideration of the Council’s legal liability and to the Head of Finance or nominated Officer for financial consideration before any settlement is reached. It is also a reportable event within the scope of the Financial Rules of Procedure and must be reported accordingly. “Claim” here does not mean a variation to the contract that is within budget.

**12.1.17 Potential for Loss**

Financial values are irrelevant when considering potential loss to the Council. Heads of Service need to look at potential for loss. The maximum foreseeable loss must be established by a Risk Assessment and an Indemnity must be sought for that (subject to a £5 million indemnity being the minimum acceptable).

**12.1.18 Project Appraisal**

In keeping with good procurement practice project options appraisals and business case shall be carried out as follows:

- Contract value less than £50,000 – optional except where the project has a significant sustainability or equalities impact.
- Contract value greater than £50,000 and less than EU threshold – recommended.
- Contracts value exceeding EU threshold – mandatory.

Project appraisals form part of the project strategy and gateway process. Further explanation on how this operates can be obtained from the Contracts & Procurement Unit. (A fact sheet on how to carry out a project appraisal and what is expected is available from Finance).

**12.1.19 Equality in Procurement**

The Council must procure goods, services and works in a fair and transparent way treating all suppliers in an equal way. The Council must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that goods services and works that we buy must not cause offence or discrimination.

Heads of Service must ensure that all procurement exercises over £50k and any procurement exercises below this value that have a significant impact on the Council’s Equality Duty must undergo an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the project appraisal (see 12.1.8)

**12.1.20 Financial Leases**

Financial leases are leases which need to be accounted for in the Council’s Balance Sheet. When an officer wishes to enter into a
Financial Lease that effectively creates a Council asset permission must be sought in advance from the Head of Finance.

12.2 Compliance with the Constitution

12.2.1 Compliance with Rules

These rules consolidate all matters relating to contracts. Every order or contract made on or on behalf of the Council by an Officer of the Council, relating to either income or expenditure, must comply with these Contract Rules of Procedure.

12.2.2 Legislation

The Contract Rules of Procedure shall be subject to Directives 2004/18EC and any other procedures which may apply by reason of the United Kingdom’s membership of the European Union (EU). The extensive provisions of EU and UK legislation, especially the EU Public Procurement Directives, the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, the Local Government Act 1988 and associated Regulations, the Local Government Act 1999 and other relevant legislation e.g. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) apply to many of the contracts placed by the Council and must be complied with. EU and UK legislation will always take precedence over these rules.

12.2.3 Formal Exemption

The Council can formally exempt itself from any of these rules (Rule 12.8 (Exceptions to Contract Rules of Procedure refers). However, it may not exempt itself from statutory requirements (for example the Public Contract Regulations referred to in Rule 12.1.3 (Statutes)).

12.2.4 Non-Disaggregation of Contracts

Contracts must not be disaggregated in order to avoid these Contract Rules of Procedure or EU Directives. The contract value shall be the total cost of the supply, service or work to be procured over the contract term. Care must be taken that this does not breach the aggregation rules of the EU Directives.

12.2.5 Maintenance of Records

Adequate records must be maintained by all staff, consultants and agents to demonstrate that the provisions of these Rules and relevant legislation have been complied with.

12.3 European Procurement Rules

12.3.1 Seeking Advice

Advice must always be taken from Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or such officers as nominated by them Officer in respect of: applicability of the regulations to tendering;
• producing and advertising EU tender notices for publication in OJEU (“the Official Journal of the European Union”);
• preparing tender documents;
• award criteria for tender selection;
• evaluation process and debriefing;
• Notification of the decision.

### 12.3.2 Public Procurement Regulations

The procedures for the award of public works, public supply and public services contracts have been incorporated into The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2009 and cover the following categories of procurement:

- **Public Supply Contracts**
  The procurement of goods by purchase, lease, hire, or rental. Also see 12.1.20 Financial Leases.

- **Public Works Contracts**
  Contracts for the execution of works relating to building or civil engineering activities.

- **Public Service Contracts**
  All contracts which are not covered by the Public Supply or Public Works Contracts or which are pure Service Contracts. Services under this regulation are classed as either Part A or Part B. The regulations apply in their entirety to Part A services, and only in part to Part B services. If a contract is for both supplies and for services it will be a Supply Contract if the value of supplies is greater than that for services, and a Service Contract if the consideration for the services is greater than the value of the supplies. Further clarification on this can be obtained from the Contracts & Procurement Unit.

The categories have a different threshold value above which the regulations apply. These thresholds are re-valued every two years and published in the Official Journal. The current value can be obtained from Head of Finance or nominated Officer or from the Office of Government and Commerce (OGC) website at www.ogc.gov.uk. The threshold values for 2009/10 were £156,442 for goods and services and £3,927,260 for works contracts.

### 12.3.3 Public Procurement Regulations – Advertising of Procurements

The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 require that all contracts that are over the EU thresholds and subject to the full application of EU procurement rules to be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union.
However under the EU Treaty principles where the contract is of potential cross border interest then it must be publicised to ensure that providers from other member states have an opportunity to participate and the process is conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

Consideration should also be given to placing adverts in appropriate media e.g. the Council’s website, trade publications and local press.

All adverts for the Council website shall be posted by the Contracts & Procurement Unit who will collate and feed back expressions of interest to the sponsoring service unit.

No advert may be placed in any advertising medium prior to the despatch of any advert to be placed in the European Journal (this only applies to contracts for which advertisement in the Official Journal of the European Union is obligatory). Adverts or notices in the Official Journal of European Union will be placed electronically by the Contracts & Procurement Unit. All public notices and advertisements issued by the Council in respect of procurement shall be approved by the Contracts & Procurement Unit who will maintain a register of all advertisements placed.

Furthermore the advertisement to be placed in any UK trade magazine or journal may not contain more detail than the advertisement in the European Journal.

12.3.4 Public Procurement Regulations - Process Requirements

(a) Estimates of contract value are net of VAT.

(b) Aggregation rules apply so that a series of contracts for works of a similar character or services of the same type should be aggregated across the whole Council. Care must be taken that this does not breach the aggregation rules of the EU Directives. Guidance must be sought on the aggregation rules from the Head of Legal and Electoral Services. See also 12.2.4.

(c) Although there are a number of procedures available under the EU procurement regulations, in all circumstances the Restricted Procedure shall be used unless approval is obtained from the Head of Finance and/or the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or such Officer as nominated by them. The Restricted Procedure is effectively “selective” tendering as prospective tenderers who express an interest in tendering are “screened” before being invited to tender. The Restricted Procedure requires not less than five (provided there are five suitably qualified tenderers) tenderers be invited to tender.

(d) The Regulations cover the financial, technical, and economic qualifications, which should be taken into account in selecting
those tenderers who will be invited to tender. Officers must be very careful not to impose conditions which could be considered anti-competitive and that a European tenderer could not satisfy, for example, a condition that the tenderer must have a local office or prior inclusion on the Approved Supplier database.

(e) Officers are reminded that, in tender documentation, wherever appropriate, a contact shall require a minimum standard compliance with British Standard Specification of British Standard Code of Practice issued by the British Standards Institution or Public Authority Standard. The European equivalent standard must also be quoted and if there is no equivalent European standard then the words must be added “or other equivalent European standard will be accepted” or International standard recognised in another Member State. All contracts, so far as is practicable, shall require that goods and materials used in their execution shall have been produced in the UK, British Commonwealth or the European Community or any other Country having reciprocal trading agreements with the European Community. The Council cannot reject an offer from a contractor on the basis that materials, goods or services offered do not comply with any standards set out in the tender documents if the contractor can prove to the Council that what they are proposing will satisfy the requirements of the technical specification in an equivalent manner.

(f) The practice of nominating suppliers, sub-contractors or consultants in technical specifications must be justified by the subject of the contract and accompanied by the words “or equivalent”. Approval for the use of this method must first be sought from the Head of Finance or nominated Officer and the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or nominated Officer.

(g) The basis of award will be either ‘lowest price’ or ‘the most economically advantageous tender’. The basis of the award must be set out in the Official Journal of European Union notice. Where the most economically advantageous tender is the basis of the award then the criteria, which will be used to assess, must be set out either in the Official Journal of European Union or the tender documentation. Please refer to 12.7.6

(h) It is essential that Officers allow sufficient time for replies and vetting of tenders and evaluation of tenders. The procurement regulations provide minimum time periods which will also need to be built into the procurement programme. Timescales for the Restricted Procedure are the time between:
(i) the advert in the European Journal and the return of expressions of interest (30 days or 37 days depending on the method of dispatch); and

(ii) the sending out of the invitation to tender and its return (40 days).

These timescales can be reduced if a Prior Information Notice (PIN) has been issued (see 12.3.6), the OJEU is sent electronically, or the tender documents are available electronically. If you propose alternative timescales and alternative procedures please consult with the Head of Finance or Head of Legal & Electoral Service or such officer as nominated by them.

(i) When expressions of interest are returned the Officers involved in the tendering exercise will have to leave sufficient time to analyse replies with regard to financial requirements and other technical and economic qualifications for selection. It is also important to ensure that the Officers who need to be involved in analysing the tenders are made aware of the timetable for the letting of the contract as early in the process as possible.

(j) Where a contract that has been advertised is then let, the Head of Service concerned must ensure that a “Contract Award Notice” is sent to the European Journal within prescribed timescales of the date of award of the contract. The Contracts & Procurement Unit must be notified when a contract award has been made and will send a ‘Contract Award Notice’ to the OJEU electronically. There are notification requirement under the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations both to the successful and the unsuccessful tenderers. There are also “standstill” period requirements under the Regulations. Please seek further advice and guidance from the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or their nominated Officer.

(k) Where presentations or interviews are to be used as part of the evaluation procedure for tenders this must be communicated to tenderers within the tender documents. Presentations and interviews should not be used to moderate the entire tender scores. Those officers, members and other stakeholders evaluating the interview or presentation should be informed that they are not selecting the supplier but are only marking that particular element of the tender. Evaluation Guidance and a presentation checklist are available from the Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit.

12.3.5 Procurement Regulations – Procurement techniques

The Procurement Regulations provide for the following procurement techniques:
• Electronic Auctions – a repetitive process involving an electronic device for the presentation of new prices once tenders have been evaluated.

• Dynamic Purchasing Systems – an electronic framework agreement where indicative bids to enter into the framework can be made at any time and which call-off is subject to a competitive tender.

• Framework agreements – is an agreement or other arrangement between one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operator (e.g. providers) which established terms (in particular the terms as to price and where appropriate, quantity) under which economic operators will enter into one or more contracts with a contracting authority in the period during which the framework applies.

• The Contracts & Procurement Unit will determine the use of these techniques in any procurement process.

• There are four main competitive procurement procedures under the Regulations:
  - Restricted Procedure
  - Open Procedure
  - Competitive Dialogue
  - Negotiated Procedure

• in all circumstances Restricted Procedure shall be used unless approval is sought from the Head of Legal & Electoral Services.

12.3.6 Prior Information Notice (PIN)

Prior to the commencement of each financial year, Heads of Service are required to examine projected expenditure for all new significant procurements (including any with an anticipated contract value more than £50,000) for the forthcoming year.

Heads of Service must provide a procurement programme (indicating contract values) to the Head of Finance or nominated Officer by the end of March this is also required by the ‘Protocol for Member Involvement in Procurements over £50,000’. The Head of Finance or nominated Officer may decide that a “Prior Information Notice” (PIN) should be published in the European Journal for the year ahead for the whole Council for all relevant categories which exceed the EU thresholds as per Rule 12.3.2.

12.4 Prevention of Corruption

12.4.1 General

The public is entitled to demand of Local Government Officers conduct of the highest standard. Public confidence in their
integrity would be undermined were the least suspicion, however ill-founded, to arise that they could in any way be influenced by improper motives.

12.4.2 Member or Officer Interests

Where a Member or Officer of the Council has a personal or prejudicial interest, financial or otherwise in a contract or proposed contract, and is also involved in the process of letting or managing of that contract, this interest must be registered with the Monitoring Officer. In the case of a Member the interest must also be declared at the meeting of any committee, sub-committee or project board at which the Member is present and at which the contract or proposed contract is discussed. If the interest is prejudicial and the Member should leave the meeting and take no part in any discussions or seek to influence any decision.

In the case of ownership of shares Members should seek advice from the Head of Legal and Electoral Services as to the current level of share ownership accepted by the Standards Board as being de minimus for the purposes of declarations of interest.

12.4.3 Statutory Provisions

The following statutory provisions govern contracts and other matters:

- The obligations of elected Members to disclose interests in contracts and other matters and to refrain from speaking or voting thereon which are prescribed by Sections 94 to 98 and 105 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 19 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

- The duty of Officers to disclose interests in contracts as required by Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Section 117 also requires that “an Officer shall not, under cover of her/his office or employment, accept any fee or reward whatsoever other than her/his proper remuneration.”

- An Officer who contravenes the provisions of Section 117 shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine and additionally will be the subject of disciplinary proceedings by the Council.

- The duty of Members and Officers to adhere to the Codes of Conduct contained in Part 14 (Codes and Protocols) of this Constitution.

12.5 Tendering - General Principles

12.5.1 Preliminaries

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and the Head of Service to ensure all purchases of goods and services and works comply with
(a) legal requirements;
(b) EU Directives
(c) the Council Financial Rules of Procedure
(d) any code, guidance or conditions approved by the Governance & Audit Committee, the Executive or the Council to the exercises of powers delegated by them.

12.5.2 Authority

All transactions must fall within the powers delegated to the Chief Executive or Corporate Director or the Head of Service or must have been approved by a decision (in accordance with the Council’s Constitution) of the Executive, an authorised Member of the Executive, the Council or one of its committees or sub-committees.

No contract, agreement or other document shall be signed or sealed unless it gives effect to:

(a) a decision or resolution (in accordance with the Council’s Constitution) of the Executive, an authorised Member of the Executive or one of its committees or sub-committees; or

(b) a decision by an officer exercising delegated powers.

(c) 12.1.13.provisions have been adhered to.

12.5.3 Contract Thresholds

There are four thresholds to be followed when letting an order or a contract depending on the estimated contract value. Detailed procedure notes are available from Head of Finance or nominated Officer. Contracts must not be disaggregated in order to avoid thresholds. Contract thresholds shall be based on the TOTAL value of the contract. For example a three-year contract of £50,000 per year is valued at £150,000. In circumstances where the aggregation of annual values is not required to comply with EU or UK legislation the Head of Finance or nominated Officer can approve that the annual value shall apply for threshold classification.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Service to ensure that the Council is receiving best value for money in accordance with the duty imposed under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999.

12.5.4 Threshold 1 - Contract Values

Less than £10,000 for single, non-repetitive orders ONLY – telephone quotes acceptable.

The Head of Service or their delegated Officers may place non-repetitive orders under the value of £10,000 for works, goods and services, without inviting written quotations. The Head of Service or their delegated Officers must maintain written records of telephone quotations.
12.5.5 **Threshold 2 - Contract Values**

Between £10,000 and £49,999 – written quotations required.

The Head of Service or their delegated Officers must obtain a minimum of three written quotations must be sought from appropriate sources.

12.5.6 **Threshold 3 - Contract Values**

Between £50,000 and EU threshold.

These must be let as a competitive tender with Member involvement and advertised or taken from the appropriate Select List. A minimum of five tenders are to be invited.

The Head of Service or their delegated Officers are responsible for ensuring that the Tender Procedure is followed. Approval is required for Revenue and Capital projects in accordance with Rule 11.8 contained in the Financial Rules of Procedure.

[Additionally, Members of the Council involved in the competitive tender must follow the current protocol for member involvement in procurement in contracts valued over £50,000, available from the Contracts & Procurement Unit.]

12.5.7 **Threshold 4 – Contracts over EU Threshold**

These must be let as a competitive tender in accordance with EU Regulations. Please note statutory timetable and the need to consult with the Contracts & Procurement Unit who will ensure that tenders are invited in full compliance with Tender Procedures and EU Public Procurement Law and UK legislation.

The Head of Service or their delegated Officers must consult with the Head of Finance or nominated Officer.

[Additionally, Members of the Council involved in the competitive tender must follow the current protocol for member involvement in procurement in contracts valued over £50,000, available from the Contracts & Procurement Unit.]

12.5.8 **Invitation to Tender**

For contracts of £50,000 and over, tenderers must be selected from the response to a public notice or advertisement.

12.6 **Tendering Procedures**

12.6.1 **Introduction**

The rules set out here apply to all contracts with a value of more than £50,000 (Threshold 3 and above).

12.6.2 **Instructions to Tenderers**

The Head of Service must ensure that the tendering instructions specified in this regulation are issued to every person invited to tender, or who requests tender documents.
Every tender sum must be calculated by reference to the specification and any departure from the tender document or tender which is submitted subject to any unacceptable reservation, qualification or condition by the person submitting them may be treated as grounds for disregarding the tender.

The date, time and place for the receipt of tenders must be specified. State the day of the week as well as the date. This is a good check to ensure you are requesting the return of the tender on a day the Council offices are open.

Tenders must be submitted on a form of tender prepared and supplied by the Council.

Tenders received after the date and time specified for receipt will be disregarded unless the Head of Legal & Electoral Services considers the circumstances to be exceptional.

Any other departure from these regulations may lead to the tender being disregarded.

The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender, or to accept any tender in full.

Tenders must be submitted in a plain sealed envelope bearing details of the subject of the tender, and the date and time and place for its receipt, but no other name or mark which does or may identify the sender. It is essential that the correct Head of Service is named on the envelope so that tenders are forwarded to the correct destination on receipt.

12.6.3 Receipt of Tenders

All tenders for contracts must be addressed to the relevant Head of Service. It is the responsibility of the Head of Service to ensure all tenders for contracts are retained in a secure place.

All tenders received shall be stamped upon receipt with the date and time of receipt.

Tenders that are received late or are delivered to the incorrect address shall be marked accordingly and then shall be retained securely unopened by the relevant Head of Service after the valid tenders have been opened for a period of at least six weeks, upon which, they shall be destroyed.

Tender envelopes bearing marks identifying the sender shall also be retained securely unopened by the relevant Head of Service after the valid tenders have been opened for a period of at least six weeks, after which, they shall be destroyed.

12.6.4 Opening of Tenders – Refers to Sections 2b, 5 and 8

Opening of tenders over £50,000 must be recorded on the standard form (Form F021). It is the responsibility of the Head of Service to ensure that a copy of the completed form is sent to Finance. The tender opening is arranged by the Head of Service.
The opening is to be in the presence of the Head of Service or a nominated representative, an elected Member, and a representative of Finance. The Head of Service shall complete the tender opening form.

The standard form must be certified as correct by the elected Member present and witnessed by all other Officers present.

12.6.5 Tender Opening - Confidentiality and Security

The information obtained at tender opening is confidential to those involved in the opening process, and those directly involved in the tender evaluation. This confidentiality must be maintained. If any questions arise as to a breach of confidentiality, the Monitoring Officer shall be consulted over the appropriate action. To assist with tender confidentiality opened tenders shall be kept securely in a locked cabinet/office until the contract has been awarded.

12.6.6 Tender Evaluation – Refers to Section 9

The Contract Notice will state that tender award will be on the basis of either:

a) lowest price; or

b) the most economically advantageous tender based on criteria stated in the tender documents.

In most cases the latter will have been used and the tender documentation will clearly state the award criteria to be adopted.

12.6.7 Alterations to Tenders

Alterations to a tender sum will not be permitted except as provided below.

12.6.8 Tenders Submitted for the Execution of Work

In the case of tenders submitted for the execution of work and based on priced bills of quantities or schedules of approximate or provisional quantities or schedules of work which are submitted with the tender and form part of the tender documents the effect of errors in totalling, extensions or calculations or other errors or omissions discovered in the tenders will be ascertained and the details notified in writing to the tenderer who will be given the opportunity of:

(a) confirming the offer at the original amount; or

(b) withdrawing the offer; or

(c) amending the offer to correct genuine errors or omissions; or

(d) in the case of agency contracts amending his/her tender in a manner directed by the employing authority.

The tenderer will be required to confirm in writing either agreement to offer standing at the original amount or withdrawal of offer or
agreement to the adjusted tender amount. This must be given in writing before the decision to award the contract is made.

Contractors failing to bid should be asked, when requested to return the tender documentation, why they decided not to bid. Their response should be recorded on the file and a copy forwarded to the Contracts & Procurement Unit for future reference.

12.6.9 Acceptance of Tenders

If the tendered price cannot be met from the allocated budget or the scheme has materially altered then the Corporate Board must consider and approve a written report prior to acceptance of tender and that report should confirm that the tender offers Best Value to the Council.

The Head of Service concerned shall make suitable arrangements for recording any action taken by him/her to ensure there is an adequate audit trail explaining the reasons for decisions.

The appropriate Head of Service will be responsible for ensuring that:

a) tenders are reviewed in a timely manner against the set criteria for accuracy and completeness;

b) the examination is carried out by an employee independent of the tendering process;

c) there is evidence of checks undertaken recorded on the tender documents.

12.7 Exceptions to Contract Rules of Procedure

12.7.1 General

An exception to the Contract Rules of Procedure is an authority to approve either partially or fully to let a contract without complying with one or more of the Rules. An exception to the Rules for contract may be granted subject to conditions. An exception cannot be granted where a breach of any UK or EU legislation would be incurred.

Only the Head of Legal and Electoral Services and/or the Head of Finance or such officer as nominated by them may grant an exception to these Rules (see 12.8.2 below). Subject to statutory requirements applications for exception must be made in writing and in accordance with 12.8.2 and include an appropriate exception under 12.8.3 that is requested and the justification for the exception.

An application for an exception to the Rules will not be granted without a cogent reason. A lack of time caused by inadequate forward planning is not a cogent reason and will not permit an exception to the Rules. If an application is granted, the appropriate Director and/or the Head of Service responsible for the contract
must demonstrate that the price obtained is not in excess of the market price and that the contract represents best value for money.

### 12.7.2 Exception values and delegations

**For all contracts up to £49,999** the Head of Finance or nominated Officer must approve the exception.

**For contracts between £50,000 and EU threshold** the Head of Finance or nominated Officer will consult with the Head of Legal and Electoral Services and the appropriate Corporate Director.

**For contracts between EU threshold and £500,000** the exception will be dealt with by way of recommendation to the Corporate Board after consultation with the Head of Finance and with the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or such officer as nominated by them.

**For contracts over £500,000** the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or such officer as nominated by them will make a recommendation to the Executive.

### 12.7.3 Exceptional circumstances

An exception to the requirements to follow the tender or quotation procedure may be granted in the following circumstances:

(a) An unforeseen emergency arises and the work, service or supply is required urgently and would not therefore permit an invitation to tender or quote.

(b) For justifiable technical reasons works, services, goods can only be obtained from one supplier;

(c) Acquiring goods or services from a different supplier would result in incompatibility with existing goods and services or disproportionate technical difficulties;

(d) The proposed contract is an extension to or a variation of the scope of an existing contract, if permitted by EU or UK legislation.

(e) Government circular or legislation is in force which differs from these Contract Rules of Procedure.

(f) Negotiated tender with existing contractor where it is desirable in the best interests of the Council that a tender shall be invited for the execution of works or the supply of goods and materials from a contractor already engaged by the Council for a particular reason(s) but subject to compliance with EU or UK legislation.

(g) Contracts with professional persons in which the personal skill of those persons is of primary importance, and there would be no genuine competition but subject to compliance with EU or UK legislation.

(h) Contracts for the supply of goods or materials and services if:
(i) the goods or materials are sold at a fixed price and no reasonably satisfactory alternative is available;

(ii) the prices of the goods or materials are wholly controlled by trade organisations or government order, and no reasonably satisfactory alternative is available;

(iii) they are obtainable from only a limited number of Contractors, but in such case, a reasonable number of those Contractors shall be invited to submit tenders but subject to compliance with EU or UK legislation;

(iv) they are approved by a consortium of which the Council is a Member, except the Central Buying Consortium where the Council has adopted the Standing Orders of Hampshire County Council for the purposes of our membership and so purchases made through this route are exempt from these regulations;

(v) for other reasons there would be no genuine competition but subject to compliance with EU or UK legislation.

Where the work to be executed or the goods or materials to be supplied consists of repairs to, or the supply of parts for, existing proprietary machinery or plant.

12.7.4 Record Retention

Unsuccessful Tenders will be held securely by the issuing Service Unit for a period of not less than two years. After the stated period the tenders may be destroyed.

Expired Contracts may be archived upon expiry and may be destroyed after 6 years if the Contract is signed or 12 years if the Contract is under seal.

12.7.5 Contracts Register –

The Responsible Head of Service must formally notify the Head of Finance of the award of all contracts above £50,000 in value. This data shall be used to compile a register of Council contracts.

The data shall be used in the completion of the annual return of EU Procurement statistics and in collaborative opportunities with neighbouring authorities including those who are part of the Thames Valley Procurement Forum, the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit and Improvement and Efficiency South East.

The relevant Corporate Director approving the exceptions below at 12.8.6.1, 12.8.6.1 and 12.8.6.3 must do so with caution and where appropriate seek legal advice. These services usually fall into Part B of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 which means that they are not subject to the full application of the Rules. However the onus is on the Council to seek to ensure that such contracts are not of interest to other member states and each contract need to be looked at on a case by case basis. If there is a lot of repeat
purchasing of similar types of services or even where a single package is of high value then such contracts could be of inter member state interest and must be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union. Additionally there is an obligation to comply with the requirement of the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2009 which includes the placing of a transparency notice in the Official Journal of European Union. Furthermore there is a need to demonstrate value for money in public expenditure.

12.7.6 Social Services - Residential/Nursing Care
Subject to 12.8.6, the Corporate Director (Community Services) shall have authority to approve exceptions to these Contract Rules of Procedure where spot purchasing of residential/nursing care is restricted to providers who are included on the List of Residential and Nursing Care Accredited Providers, the conditions of which include prices specified by the Executive. Orders can be placed with a single provider.

(The Contracts & Procurement Unit needs a copy of the decision for the exceptions file.)

12.7.7 Social Services - Social Care Services
Subject to 12.8.6 the Corporate Director (Community Services) shall have authority to approve exceptions to these Contract Rules of Procedure where spot purchases of domiciliary care, is restricted to providers who are included on the Accredited List of Domiciliary Care Providers and the purchase is for an individual’s care package which is under £250 per week. Orders can be placed with a single provider.

(The Contracts & Procurement Unit needs a copy of the decision for the exceptions file.)

Value for money aspects can be demonstrated in inviting single tenders from the voluntary sector, especially in the case of an organisation providing a specialist service.

The existing voluntary sector provider has entered into a long term lease or similar arrangement or has made substantial capital investment in a building for the express purpose of providing a service under contract to the Council.

12.7.8 Social Services - Children and Clients with Special Needs
Subject to 12.8.6 the Corporate Director (Children and Young People) shall have authority to approve exceptions to these Contract Rules of Procedure for individual spot purchases for residential care for children or clients with special needs, where urgency and service need are integral to the provision.
12.7.9 **Educational Establishments**

Where a Governing Body of a school intends to enter into a contract for works, supply of goods or services the Headteacher or such persons as delegated by h must follow these rules and must seek advice from the Head of Finance or nominated Officer regarding the restrictions imposed by EU and UK legislation.

Where a Governing Body of a school intends to enter into a contract for works, supply of goods or services up to a value of £10,000, the Headteacher/Governing Body may set lower financial thresholds in order to maintain tighter control.

In general terms where these rules refer to Head of Service these duties and responsibilities will become those of the Head Teacher/Governing Body.

12.7.10 **Major Incident Plan**

When a major incident is declared the Council’s Major Incident Plan and/or Business Continuity Plan may be invoked. This in turn may lead to the need to incur additional unbudgeted expenditure. When this becomes necessary the Contract Rules of Procedure will be suspended and the Chief Executive, or an officer nominated by the Chief Executive, is then authorised to incur whatever expenditure is necessary in consultation with the Head of Finance.

A Corporate Director will act in the place of the Chief Executive if he/she is unavailable.

12.8 **Engagement of Consultants**

12.8.1 **Definition**

Consultants and advisors include any expertise, support, advice or formal consultancy that is obtained outside the Council for a fee or charge.

Consultants and advisors may be used in the following areas (and this list is not exhaustive):

- Advice on value for money reviews and evaluating tenders
- Policy and Strategy reviews
- Organisational and service reviews
- Job evaluation
- Financial planning or analysis
- Feasibility studies
- Marketing and business planning
- Public relations
- Computer and IT strategy
• Managing change
• Senior staff recruitment, selection and training
• Individual staff management e.g. community care
• Project Management
• Specialist advice relating to architectural, design projects
• Construction and regeneration projects etc.

Temporary agency staff (for example, for social care work, to provide maternity cover, etc) are not consultants or advisors and should be procured using the corporate contract for agency staff.

12.8.2 Guidance
Corporate Procurement and Contracts Unit has produced Guidance on use of consultants and advisors. This can be obtained from that office. This incorporates a form which must be completed and signed by the relevant Head of Service.

12.8.3 Procurement Process
• All consultants and advisors must be procured under the applicable tendering Rules at 12.6 and 12.7.
• All consultants and advisors must enter into a written contract with the Council in a form to be approved by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services. Such contracts come under the contract for services under the Rules and appropriate procedures under 12.6 and 12.7 must be followed and recorded in writing.

12.8.4 General
A worker will always be employed on a contract of employment unless the circumstances of the engagement fully support an alternative arrangement. The Payroll Manager must be consulted because of the potential tax implications of these arrangements.

No consultants shall be engaged unless the costs can be met from the allocated budget for the scheme/project or contract. The costs do not need to be allocated specifically for employing consultants in the budget, any part of the budget may be used to employ consultants provided the overall budget is not exceeded.

12.8.5 Counsel
Within budget, the Head of Legal and Electoral Services shall have discretion to select Counsel, obtain Counsel’s opinion and brief Counsel whenever it is considered expedient in the Council’s interest to do so.

12.8.6 Evaluation against Predetermined Criteria
Tender bids will be evaluated against predetermined criteria relevant to the particular circumstances e.g.:
12.8.7 Appraisals of Work

Tenderers may be asked to submit appraisals of their work from other clients to assist in the evaluation.

12.8.8 Letter of Engagement/Contract

The letter of engagement/contract for services sent to the approved Consultant must contain all of the following clauses (unless exceptions are agreed by the Corporate Director). The Head of Legal and Electoral Services or nominated Officer will provide advice on the form of contract and negotiations and the Head of Finance or nominated officer will provide advice on financial risk issues.

12.8.9 Clauses for Letter of Engagement/Contract

- The Consultant must agree that all documents and materials produced as a result of their engagement under the contract are the property of the Council and that copyright in all documents and materials so produced vests with the Council.
- The Consultant will be responsible for the provision of all major items of equipment and materials necessary to complete the task.
- The Consultant will be free to engage others considered necessary to complete the task at his/her own expense – but such sub consultants must be approved by the Council and must have suitable professional indemnity insurance.
- The Consultant will be responsible for the correction of faulty or incomplete work at his/her own expense.
- The Consultant will be responsible for determining how the work will be done.
- The agreed fee will be paid upon satisfactory completion of the specified work (or in instalments upon complete stages as agreed).
- The Consultant will have no right to terminate the engagement until all contracted work is completed satisfactorily provided that the Council is not at fault in causing the termination.
- The Consultant will be personally liable for all claims against him/her emanating from, or connected with this engagement.
• The Consultant will be personally responsible for all tax and National Insurance liabilities arising from the engagement.

• The Consultant must have professional indemnity insurance of a minimum of £5,000,000.

• The Consultant must comply with these Rules of Procedure (and for the purposes of the Code of Conduct referred to in the Council Rules of Procedure, they shall be deemed to be an “Officer”) subject to the modifications that the procedure to be followed in inviting and opening tenders shall be approved in advance by the appropriate Head of Service and the Head of Finance or nominated Officer.

• The Consultant must at any time during the carrying out of the contract, produce to the appropriate Head of Service or a designated representative, on request, all the records maintained by them in relation to the contract.

• The Consultant must on completion of a contract, transmit all records (or copies) to the appropriate Head of Service.

12.8.10 Commissioning Manager

The manager responsible for the running of the contract in the service area (“the Commissioning Manager”) will be responsible for monitoring progress of the contracted work.

The Commissioning Manager must report to his/her Head of Service if there are indicators that the work may not be completed within specified time limits or to quality standards.

12.8.11 Termination of Contract

Decisions to terminate a contract with a consultant before completion must only be taken in consultation the Contracts & Procurement Unit, Head of Legal and Electoral Services and the agreement of the Corporate Director. Similarly, a decision to withhold agreed payment on completion of contracted work, or at an agreed stage, can only be made by the Corporate Director in consultation with the Contracts & Procurement Unit and the Head of Legal and Electoral Services.

12.8.12 Invoices

Invoices from the Consultant must be verified by the Commissioning Manager as being within the agreed contract terms, and must be endorsed by the Head of Service or his/her delegated Officer before being submitted for payment.

12.9 Entering into a Contract

12.9.1 Contract Form

All contracts entered into by the Council must be in writing in a form approved by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or his...
delegated Officer. Standard Forms of Contract must be used wherever possible.

Where a Standard Form of contract cannot be used, or a Standard Form is to be amended, the Form of Contract shall be prepared/amended by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or his delegated officer. All Forms of Contract must specify inter alia:

(a) the services, supplies, work, materials, matters or things to be provided, had, or done;
(b) the price to be paid, with a statement of discounts or other deductions;
(c) the time or times within which the contract is to be performed;
(d) provision for the payment of liquidated damages, where the contractor fails to complete the contract or complete within the authorised timescales (where applicable);
(e) a clause empowering the Council to cancel the contract in circumstances of corruption, and to recover any loss resulting from such cancellation;
(f) a requirement for compliance with current legislation relating to health and safety at work, sex, race and disability discrimination and in general equalities legislation. Following is a non-exhaustive list of equalities legislation:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975;
- Race Relations Act 1976;
- Data Protection Act 1984;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003;
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003;
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003;
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004;
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004;
- Gender Recognition Act 2004;
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005;
- Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005;
• The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005;
• Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006;
• Equality Act 2006;
• Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006;

(g) a clause requiring full indemnity of the Council (usually provided by Public Liability Insurance);
(h) a clause requiring a performance bond (where applicable);
(i) a clause requiring contractors to warrant that performance and functionality will not be affected by date or other information technology functions;
(j) a clause which reflects the Council’s environmental and sustainability policies (where appropriate);
(k) a clause permitting the use of information for preventing and detecting fraud (where appropriate).
(l) a clause requiring the contractor to supply sufficient information in a timely manner to enable the Council fully and properly to comply with requests for information under the Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004;
(m) a clause requiring the contractor to keep details of the contractual arrangements confidential and not to disclose the same without the consent of the Council;
(n) a clause requiring contractors to co-operate with enquiries by overview and standards committees, Ombudsmen, the Standards Board for England, the Council’s internal and external auditors, Government departments and the European Commission and other legally-empowered persons;
(o) a clause detailing the liabilities and responsibilities relating to workforce matters where the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 apply; and
(p) in the case of the engagement of professional advisers, a requirement that the adviser shall at all times be fully covered by professional indemnity insurance and that, in relation to that contract, he or she shall confirm to the requirements of these Contract Rules of Procedure, the Council’s Financial Rules of Procedure and any direction from the Council, the Executive, a Committee or duly authorised officer.
12.9.2 **Contract Presentation**

Contracts under **£5,000** shall be in writing on an official order signed by the designated purchasing Officer.

Between **£5,000 and £50,000** contracts and one-off purchases shall be in writing in the form of a contract approved by the Contracts & Procurement Unit unless it is a standard form of contract with a specification attached if necessary.

All contracts over **£50,000 to EU threshold** - the form of contract must be approved and signed by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services who shall retain all relevant contract documents. The Head of Legal and Electoral Services must witness the affixing of the common seal of the Council to any such contract.

EU and over - the form of contract must be approved and signed by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services who shall retain all relevant contract documents. All contracts over the EU threshold will be sealed.

12.9.3 **Standard Clauses**

Every contract shall include wherever possible the standard clauses set out in Form F020A (available from the Contracts & Procurement Unit).

In every written contract for the execution of work or the supply of goods, materials or services, a clause shall be inserted to secure that the Contractor shall be prohibited from transferring or assigning directly or indirectly to any person or persons whatsoever, any portion of this contract without the written permission of the Council.

12.9.4 **Sub-letting**

Sub-letting of any parts of the contract except to the extent permitted in writing by the appropriate Head of Service shall be prohibited.

The contractor shall be responsible for the observance of this Regulation by sub contractors employed in the execution of the contract.

12.9.5 **Provision for Liquidated Damages**

Every contract which is estimated to exceed **£50,000** in value or amount, and is for the supply of services, execution of works (or for the supply of goods or materials by a particular date or series of dates) shall provide for liquidated damages unless the Head of Legal and Electoral Services and/or the Head of Finance or nominated Officer determines that such a provision is not required. The amount to be specified in each such contract shall be determined by the Head of Service concerned in consultation with the Head of Legal and Electoral Services and the Head of Finance or nominated Officer.
12.10 Legal Considerations

12.10.1 Relaxation of Indemnities

No relaxation of full indemnities releasing the Council from all liability whether provided by public liability insurance or other instrument should be allowed unless authorised in writing by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or the Risk Manager, the Head of Finance or nominated Officer.

12.10.2 Risk Assessments

Where a contract is estimated to exceed £50,000 in value or amount and is for the execution of works (or for the supply of goods or materials by a particular date or series of dates) the relevant Head of Service must undertake a risk assessment, in conjunction with the Head of Finance or nominated Officer to determine whether a Performance Bond or other suitable security should be required from the tenderers. This is to provide sufficient security for the due performance of the contract. A record of the risk assessment must be retained on the contract file for inspection.

Where it is felt necessary, such bonds required shall be for an amount equal to 10% of the value of the contract, and shall be taken up by the contractor with an insurance company, bank or other recognised financial institution approved by the Council. The bond shall be released on practical completion of the work.

12.10.3 Contractor’s Indemnities and Tax

It is a general principal that all contracts must “hold harmless” West Berkshire Council, its Members and Officers, against any loss or claim, however caused, arising from any contract and/or its execution, and that the Contractor will indemnify West Berkshire Council against all losses/demands/claims howsoever arising.

12.10.4 Need for Insurance

Every contract should be assessed for risk. If the risk assessment identifies the need for insurance the Head of Service must:

(a) in consultation with the Head of Finance or nominated Officer set adequate levels of insurance cover. This includes employer’s liability, public liability and any other as determined by the needs of the particular contract;

(b) in consultation with the Head of Finance or nominated Officer ensure that the required insurances are in fact held by the contractor and that the policies concerned are renewed, if necessary, during the period required;

(c) in consultation with the Head of Finance or nominated Officer who must ensure the contractor’s status under the Inland Revenue Construction Industry Tax Deduction Scheme (for construction contracts);
(d) in consultation with the Head of Finance set a consultants’ professional indemnity insurance (for Consultancy agreements), minimum £5,000,000 cover unless the Risk Manager feels that a greater amount is required if so determined by the risk assessment process.

12.10.5 Sealing of Documents

The Common Seal shall be in the Custody of the Head of Legal and Electoral Services and kept in a safe place at his/her discretion.

The Common Seal of the Council may be affixed to any document that has been approved by a resolution of the Council; or of the appropriate Committee or an Officer to which the Council or the Executive has delegated its powers on its behalf, provided that a resolution of the Council or of the appropriate Committee or Officer where that appropriate Committee or Officer has the appropriate authority authorising the acceptance of any tender, the purchase, sale, letting or taking of any property, the issue of stock, the presentation of any petition, memorial or address, the making of any rate, contract or order, or any other matter or thing, shall be a sufficient authority for sealing any document necessary to give effect to the resolution.

Provided also that the Common Seal of the Council may be affixed to any:

(a) Petition to be presented to Parliament against the promotion of any Bill or confirmation of any Provisional Order which the Council opposes.

(b) Mortgage in respect of a loan arranged by the Head of Finance or nominated Officer under the powers of Heads of Service approved by the Council.

(c) Incomplete form of transfer for the duly authorised sale of securities by the Council as necessary for the purposes of dealing with stocks and shares in accordance with the Stock Transfer Act 1963.

12.10.6 Affixing of Seal

The affixing of the seal shall be attested in writing by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services, or an Officer duly designated by him/her in accordance with the delegated powers conferred by the Council. An entry of every sealing of a document shall be made and consecutively numbered in a book to be provided for the purpose and shall be signed by the person attesting the sealing.

12.10.7 Signature of Documents

Where any document will be a necessary step in legal proceedings on behalf of the Council it shall, unless any enactment otherwise requires or authorises or the Council shall have given the necessary authority to some other person for the
purpose of such proceedings, be signed by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services.

Where it becomes necessary to execute any document on behalf of the Council not required by law to be under Seal, the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or an Officer designated by him/her in accordance with the delegated powers conferred by the Council shall be deemed to have authority to sign such a document accordingly. A register of such documents shall be kept by the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or Officer duly designated by him/her.

12.11 Contract Administration

12.11.1 Payment by Instalments

Payments to contractors on account of contracts shall be made on a certificate issued by the Head of Service (or private architect, engineer or consultant where engaged by the Council) as appropriate or by another Officer nominated by him/her in writing for the purpose. Each payment must be checked by a colleague and the check should be evidenced by initialling. Within each Service an independent sampled check should be done, on a rotation basis, of 5% of interim payments.

12.11.2 Variation to Contracts

Subject to the provisions of the contract in each case every variation shall be authorised in writing by the Head of Service (or private architect, engineer or consultant) and Head of Finance or by another Officer nominated by him/her in writing for the purpose. Any such extra or variation shall include the estimated additional cost arising from the variation and the method of payment to be applied i.e. contractual rates, agreed rates or reimbursable/daywork (please note that payment on a reimbursable/daywork basis should only be used when an item cannot be physically measured/quantified). When calculating the cost of variations cross referencing to Bill of Quantities rates or daywork sheets etc must be completed so as to provide a clear audit trail. Where rates used depart from those in the contract or others previously agreed notes should be made for the reason for their use.

Where the extra or variation, or total of extras or variations to date, exceed 10% of the contract sum or £50,000 whichever is the greater the approval of the Head of Finance or nominated Officer shall be required. Any variation with a financial implication should be discussed with the group accountant.

12.11.3 Final Certificate and Statement of Account

As soon as possible after practical completion and before issuing the final certificate under a contract, the Head of Service or consultant concerned shall obtain from the Contractor a full and
detailed final account contract statement in respect of the claim for the whole work, materials and things executed and delivered under the contract, with such receipted vouchers as may be necessary. Any adjustments made must be recorded and notes must be made of queries, discussions and actions taken during the process of calculating and agreeing the final account. The Head of Finance or nominated Officer shall be notified of the name of the account, the date the final sum is due, the final value of contract and the tender value.

The final certificate must be checked by the Head of Service or a person nominated by them and they should ensure that all defects have been actioned and documented.

The Head of Finance or nominated Officer may, to the extent he/she considers necessary, examine any final account contract statement and be entitled to make all such enquiries and receive such information and explanations as may be required in order to satisfy him/herself as to the accuracy of the account.

12.11.4 Claims from Contractors

Claims from contractors in respect of matters not clearly within the terms of any existing contract shall be referred to the Head of Legal and Electoral Services or nominated Officer and, where necessary, to the Head of Finance or nominated Officer for financial consideration before a settlement is reached.

12.11.5 Reporting of Final Contract Costs

A contract close-out report should be sent to the Corporate Contract and Procurement Manager detailing the contractors performance during the term of the contract.

The estimated final cost of a contract shall be reported to the Executive within four months of the issue of the practical completion certificate comparing the probable final and originally estimated costs, together with an explanation of any differences.

[Note: The Contracts & Procurement Unit can be contacted on (01635) 519860 or email procurement@westberks.gov.uk.]

12.11.6 Performance Management

Each Head of Service must ensure that consistent and robust monitoring takes place of all contracts in their Service and that this is fully recorded. Where possible a performance management clause must appear in all contracts at the time of procurement making performance management a contractual obligation.
Title of Report: Proposed Changes to the Constitution - Ward Member Speaking Rights at Planning Meetings

Report to be considered by: Council
Date of Meeting: 21 January 2010
Forward Plan Ref: C1997

Purpose of Report: To propose changes to the Council’s constitution to amend the procedures in respect of speaking rights for Ward Members at planning meetings.

Recommended Action: To amend paragraphs 7.13.3 and 7.13.4 of West Berkshire Council’s Constitution to include speaking rights for Ward Members and align them with the speaking rights of the other parties accorded this right.

Reason for decision to be taken: To formalise the opportunity for Ward Members (who are not a Member of the Planning Committee) to speak at Planning Committees.

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation:
- Local Government Act 2000
- Local Government and Public involvement in Health Act Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Themes:
- CPT4 - High Quality Planning
- CPT14 - Effective People

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:
Enhancing the decision making process

Portfolio Member Details
Name & Telephone No.: Councillor Graham Jones - Tel (01235) 762744
E-mail Address: gjones@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 17 December 2009
**Implications**

**Policy:** There are no policy implications

**Financial:** There are no financial implications associated with this report. Any travelling or subsistence claims from Ward Members will be met from existing budgets.

**Personnel:** There are no personnel implications

**Legal/Procurement:** This amendment if approved will require the Constitution to be amended

**Property:** None

**Risk Management:** None

**Equalities Impact Assessment:** Not required

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council’s Constitution currently makes provision for members of the public (including the applicant or their agent, objectors, supporters and parish/town council representatives) to speak during the consideration of any planning application at a West Berkshire Council Planning meeting provided that they give notice of their intention to speak to the Head of Planning and Trading Standards by 4.00pm on the day prior to the meeting.

1.2 The Constitution in paragraph 7.13.3 sets out the procedure and order of representations which is to be followed at the meeting. Paragraph 7.13.4 notes that the time allowed for speeches in respect of each of the groups shall not exceed five minutes or such a longer period as the Chairman may allow. There is currently no express permission in the Constitution which affords the Ward Member(s) an opportunity to address Planning Committees although they do have speaking rights at Licensing Hearings.

1.3 The Code of Conduct for Members of West Berkshire Council which was adopted by the Council on the 21 June 2007 under paragraph 12(2) (Effect of prejudicial interests on participation) states that:

“Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise”

1.4 It should be noted however that Regulation 12(2) only applies if a Ward Member has a personal and prejudicial interest in an application and has declared that interest at the meeting where members of the public have a right to speak.

1.5 Two recent planning meetings have highlighted the need to amend the Constitution. Following those meetings, officers received a request from Members to review the Constitution to give express speaking rights to Ward Members.

2. Proposals

2.1 It is therefore proposed to amend paragraphs 7.13.3 and 7.13.4 of the Constitution to include Ward Members as one of the groups of people who are expressly afforded speaking rights at planning meetings.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Officers are therefore taking forward a recommendation endorsed by the Governance and Audit Committee (05 January 2010) to full Council (Extraordinary Meeting on 21 January 2010) that the constitution be amended to permit Ward Members speaking rights at both Area and District Planning Committees which will reflect the Licensing position to ensure consistency between the two.
Appendices

Appendix A - Extract from Regulatory and Other Committees Rules of Procedure

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Governance and Audit Committee

Officers Consulted: Gary Lugg, Gary Rayner, Derek Carnegie, David Pearson, David Holling, Liz Patient, Sharon Armour, Andy Day

Trade Union: Not consulted
Part 7 Regulatory and Other Committees

Planning Applications

7.13.1 Speaking Rights
Members of the public shall be entitled to speak during the consideration of any application for any approval or consent required under Town and Country Planning legislation in accordance with Rules 7.13.2 to 7.13.5 below.

7.13.2 Notifying Head of Service
Any member of the public who wishes to speak shall notify the Head of Planning and Trading Standards by 4.00 p.m. on the day prior to the meeting.

7.13.3 Procedure
The following procedure shall apply in respect of each item where any of the aforementioned persons are present:

- Introduction of item by Officers;
- Representations by Parish/Town Council representative;
- Members' questions to Parish/Town Council representative;
- Representations by objector(s);
- Members' questions to objector(s);
- Representations by supporter(s);
- Members' questions to supporter(s);
- Representations by applicant or agent.
- Members' questions to applicant or agent;
- Representation by Ward Member(s) (if not on the Committee)
- Members' questions to Ward Member(s) (if not on the Committee)
- Consideration of application by Members.

[Note 1: Questions raised as part of the above process may only be asked to clarify a statement made and not to introduce new business.]

[Note 2: for the avoidance of doubt and in accordance with the Council's custom and practice should the Committee consider an application affecting more than one Parish and/or Ward the Chairman with the agreement of the Committee may allow additional speakers/representatives from the relevant Ward and/or Parish]

7.13.4 Time Allowed
The total time allowed for speeches in respect of each of the following groups of speakers shall not exceed five minutes or such longer period as
the Chairman may allow with the consent of the Council, Committee or Sub-Committee:

- Parish/Town Council representative;
- Objectors;
- Supporters;
- Applicant or agent;
- Ward Member(s) (if not on the Committee)

Where more than one individual representing the parties accorded speaking rights wishes to speak the Chairman may if he/she considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of the business of the meeting require that a spokesperson be appointed to represent the views of the objectors or supporters as the case may be.

7.13.5 Continuation of Meeting

Meetings of Committees and Sub-Committees shall not normally continue past 10.00pm. If, however, the Chairman believes that business can be concluded by 10.30pm, a Motion under Rule 7.6.2 (Motions which may be moved without notice) must be moved and supported by a majority of those Members present. All meetings will conclude by 10.30pm at the latest.

7.13.6 Suspension or Variation

The Chairman may:

- suspend the operation of Rule 7.13.4 above (Time Allowed) during the consideration of any application or for the remainder of the meeting if he/she considers it necessary so to do for the purpose of maintaining order at the meeting; or
- vary the order of representations if he/she considers that it is convenient and conducive to the despatch of the business and will not cause any prejudice to the parties concerned.

7.13.7 Referencing-up

Subject to Procedure Rules 7.3.4 (Referencing-up) and 7.3.5 (Exceptions), the Area Planning Committees may refer a planning application to District Planning Committee for determination. Recommendations from Area Planning Committees considered by the Development Control Manager and/or his representative to have a possible conflict with a policy that would undermine the Development Plan or the Local Development Framework, there is a district wide public interest or there is a possibility for claims for significant costs against the Council, will be referred to the District Planning Committee; or

Following a vote on the matter/application where the majority of Members of an Area Planning Committee so resolve will be referred to the District Planning Committee.