

Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016

Plan as recommended for adoption

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Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016

Foreword

1.01 This Structure Plan for Berkshire has been produced by the six Unitary Authorities through a Joint Strategic Planning Unit, which has served Berkshire since the abolition of Berkshire County Council in 1998. The Joint Unit was established by the six Unitary Authorities in 1998 to carry out the core strategic planning functions of the former County Council on their behalf, and is jointly funded by them. The Plan was recommended for adoption by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee for the Berkshire area on 13th July 2004.

Relationship of this Plan to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

1.02 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act)¹ came into force in September 2004. This was after consideration of responses to the consultation on Proposed Modifications to the Deposit Draft Structure Plan but prior to the adoption of the Plan.

1.03 The Act establishes provisions that replace regional planning guidance and structure plans with regional spatial strategies. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East Region, which includes Berkshire, is called the 'South East Plan' and is currently being prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA), the regional planning body. Local plans, including those for Minerals and Waste, are each replaced by a suite of documents referred to as 'Local Development Documents' (LDDs).

1.04 To avoid confusion and for consistency please note that references in this plan to 'Local Plans' also refer to 'Local Development Frameworks' under the new Act. Guidance drawn from regional planning guidance will need to be considered within the context of the South East Plan.

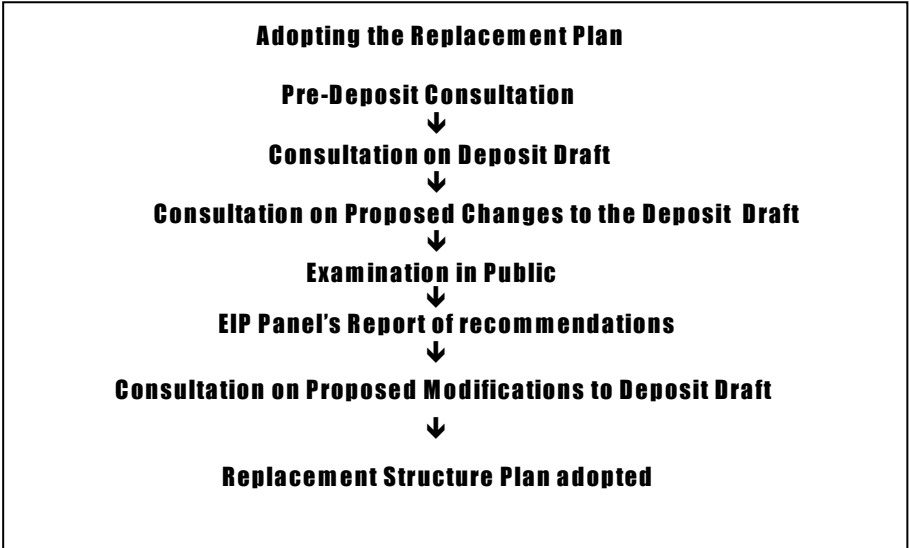
1.05 In the interim, between the enactment of the Bill and the adoption of RSS and LDDs, it is anticipated that the Unitary Authorities will 'save' policies in this Structure Plan for up to 3 years after its adoption. These, with Local Plans, will form part of their Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) until their Local Plan policies are superseded by those adopted under the new Act. The details of this process will be set out in their Local Development Schemes.

¹ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Chapter 5, TSO 2004

Adopting this Joint Structure Plan

1.06 A structure plan is the broadest-based kind of statutory development plan. It has legal standing and because of this its preparation has to follow a strict procedure before being adopted by the six Unitary Authorities. Figure 1.1 below summarises the various steps followed by the Unitary Authorities.

Figure 1.1 : Key Stages in the Preparation of the Plan



Throughout the process the Plan has been assessed according to a sustainability appraisal methodology, and the results published alongside each stage of the Plan. Details of the sustainability assessment process are in paragraphs 2.14 to 2.18, and the objectives used are listed in Appendix 1.

Figure 1.2: Key Dates in the preparation of the Plan:

March 2002	Publication of the Deposit Draft and associated papers for statutory public consultation.
March - April 2002	Deposit Draft put 'on deposit' - the 6 week statutory public consultation period.
May - Nov 2002	Publication of sustainability assessment, consideration of this and responses to the Deposit Draft.
March 2003	Publication of Proposed Changes to the Deposit Draft.
September 2003	Examination of the Plan in public by an independent panel appointed by the Planning Inspectorate.
December 2003	Report of the Examination in Public Panel published.
March - April 2004	Proposed Modifications to the Deposit Draft put 'on deposit' – the 6 week statutory public consultation period.
December 2004	Adoption of the Plan by the six Unitary Authorities.

1.07 Further copies of the Plan can be obtained from the Joint Strategic Planning Unit, or from our website – www.berks-jsu.gov.uk.

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CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION

2.01 A structure plan is a document that provides a broad strategy over a wide area – normally a geographical county - for managing development locally. Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham District Council are the planning authorities in Berkshire and they have co-operated to produce this Structure Plan. The Plan covers the period 2001-2016.

2.02 The Deposit Structure Plan consists of a ‘written statement’, setting out the Unitary Authorities’ policies, and a key diagram, which illustrates the main spatial features of the Plan.

2.03 In addition, the Unitary Authorities have prepared an explanatory memorandum, which explains the basis for the overall strategy, provides the background to the approved policies and outlines how they consider the policies are to be interpreted and implemented. For ease of use, the policies are incorporated in the explanatory memorandum.

2.04 In considering proposals for development, regard should be given to all policies in the Plan and not just those in specific topic chapters.

2.05 The preparation of a structure plan takes place within a wider context. This extends from national policy right down to the local level. A diagram showing the planning framework within which this Plan was produced is shown below. The Plan must be compatible with the Government’s wider aims, including that development should more sustainable.

Figure 2.1: The Planning Framework



National and Regional Planning Guidance

2.06 The Government has published a series of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), which set out national land use policy on a wide range of subjects. This Structure Plan has been prepared having regard to the content of these PPGs.

Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) for the South East

2.07 The Government indicated in 1999 that it intended to strengthen the co-ordination of land use and transport planning at regional level. Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9)² was published in March 2001. The key principles are:

- Urban areas should be the main focus for development.
- Greenfield development should only be undertaken after other alternatives have been considered, and it should have full regard to social, environmental and transport costs of location.
- Development in the South East should encourage more sustainable patterns of activity and a less dispersed pattern of development.
- Planning policy should build on London's "world city role" and the South East's international connections.
- Economic opportunities need to be increased by raising skill levels and reducing inequalities between different parts of the Region.
- There should be enough housing, especially affordable housing, for all who need to live and work in the Region to encourage social inclusion and avoid pressure for housing in adjoining regions.
- Development of housing should be more sustainable, with a better mix of sizes, types and tenures, related to household structure and people's ability to access it.
- Development should be located and designed to make more sustainable use of the Region's natural resources and reduce pollution.
- The Region's biodiversity and landscape should be protected.
- There should be economic diversification to sustain the life of the countryside and rural communities.
- The Government expects there to be less dependence on long distance movement for access to jobs, services, etc. and reduced reliance on the car.
- The Government proposes transport investment to support the spatial strategy, maintaining the existing network, enhancing access to more concentrated development, overcoming bottlenecks and supporting higher capacity, less polluting modes of transport.

² Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) for the South East, Government Office for the South East Government Office for East of England and Government Office for London, TSO 2001

Transport

2.08 RPG9 was one of the first to be produced under new procedures for giving regional planning greater weight. The transport aspects, making up the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), were not fully developed by 2001. The transport chapter of RPG9 has been subject to an early review by SEERA, and was the subject of a public examination in July 2003³. Following the Panel's report, the Secretary of State published Proposed Changes to the Draft RTS in March 2004⁴ and the final strategy in July 2004. In parallel, the Government has sponsored a range of transport studies, which will have a major influence on the Region. These multi-modal studies aim to explore how transport difficulties might be solved by making use of all transport modes – private and public – within a corridor. As their results become available, they will be considered by SEERA and the Government. This Structure Plan is guided by the interim transport strategy contained in the draft RTS.

Western Policy Area

2.09 The Western Policy Area is a notional description of the area to the west and south of London. Divided into 3 sub-regions, the Berkshire Unitary Authorities fall largely into one, the Thames Valley sub-region, with parts of the administrative districts of Bracknell Forest and Wokingham being encompassed by a second, the Blackwater Valley.

2.10 RPG9 (para 12.49) states, 'the Thames Valley sub-region is characterised by concentrations of business service employment and high-tech, knowledge-based industries and by the increasing pressure on local infrastructure, land resources and house prices'.

2.11 Further growth in this area therefore needs to occur in a form, which minimises the additional pressures on land and labour resources, particularly in 'hot spots' (RPG9 para 12.46).

Local Plans and Joint Minerals and Waste Plans

2.12 Just as the Structure Plan is guided by regional policy, so it in turn sets the context for local plans produced by the individual Unitary Authorities. These guide development control and translate the policies of the Structure Plan into actual site allocations on the ground.

2.13 A Minerals Local Plan and a Waste Local Plan are produced for Berkshire, jointly by the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities. The policy context for these plans is set out in the Minerals and Waste chapters of the Structure Plan. Both plans contain policies which provide a basis for making decisions on minerals and waste planning applications in the County and minimise the harm to the environment caused by the development of minerals or waste facilities.

³ Regional Planning Guidance 9 Draft Replacement Chapter 9 "From Crisis to Cutting Edge" Draft Regional Transport Strategy, SEERA January 2003

⁴ Proposed Changes to the Draft Regional Transport Strategy (Chapter 9 of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East RPG9) GOSE 2004

Sustainable Development

2.14 The Government issued 'A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK'⁵ in the light of the Rio Summit in 1992. This sets out four main aims:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone,
- effective protection of the environment,
- prudent use of natural resources, and
- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

2.15 The UK Strategy also includes a set of sustainability objectives, which cover all the main sustainability issues, and which can be used to guide the assessment of sustainability issues in each plan area. In keeping with the principles of sustainable development, each plan-making body has to develop its own list of sustainable objectives on which its plan should be based. The sustainability objectives also form the basis of the longer term monitoring of structure plans.

2.16 These objectives have been used to assess all the different aspects of the Plan to ensure its sustainability. The process was as follows:

- the sustainability objectives were developed (these are listed in Appendix 1),
- the vision, spatial vision and cross cutting themes in the Plan were assessed,
- a range of potential housing sites were assessed (against the objectives) with the most sustainable being considered for identification in the Plan, if required,
- the policies were assessed.

2.17 To ensure the sustainability of the Plan throughout all its different stages of development, it is vital that the assessment process works alongside the developing Plan. The sustainability assessment of the Plan is therefore an iterative process and the Berkshire Plan was assessed at each stage (Deposit Draft, Proposed Changes and Proposed Modifications).

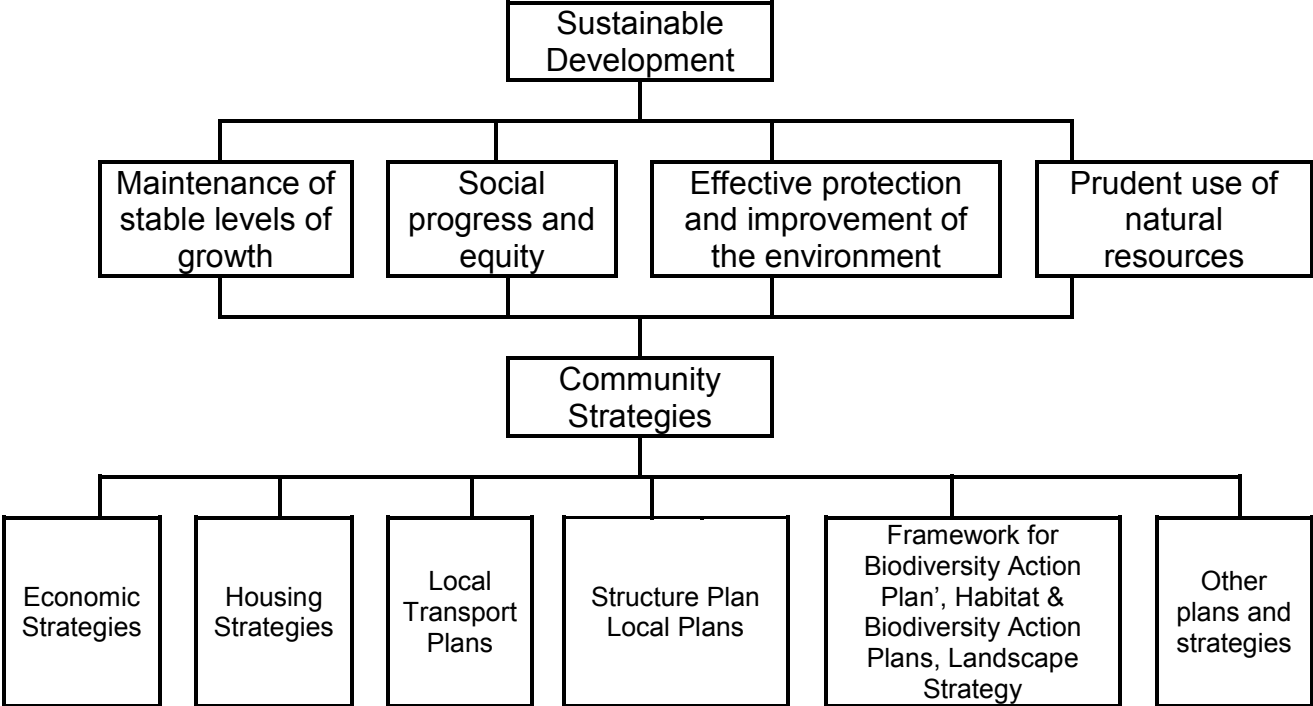
2.18 At each stage the results of the assessment were published and where necessary appropriate changes made to the Plan.

2.19 The planning process does not operate in isolation. Each of the six Unitary Authorities produce a number of plans that also implement the policies of RPG9. These cover issues including housing, the economy, the natural environment and transport. Those that are common to all six Unitary Authorities and relate most directly to issues in RPG9 are shown in the diagram and discussed below.

⁵ "A Better Quality of Life: A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK", DETR, HMSO 1999

Figure 2.2

**Implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda:
The Structure Plan and other Strategies**



Community Strategies

2.20 Community Strategies set out how councils will promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well being of their area and are intended to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and social inclusion in the UK⁶. They are prepared in consultation with local agencies and undertaken through local strategic partnerships (LSP), and need to complement development plans⁷. They provide an overarching framework for the various other council strategies.

The Economy

2.21 All six Unitary Authorities produce economic strategies that set out their individual authorities’ plans for economic development in their area. These are set in the context of current local issues and will take into account regional guidance, including RPG9 and the Regional Economic Strategy (RES)⁸ prepared by South East England Development Agency (SEEDA).

The Natural Environment

2.22 The six Unitary Authorities are represented on the Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum, established in 1990 to co-ordinate the actions of those working to protect and enhance the wildlife and natural features of Berkshire. In 1999, the

⁶ Community Strategies were introduced as a new statutory duty under the Local Government Act DETR, HMSO, 2000.
⁷ ‘Preparing Community Strategies: Government Guidance to Local Authorities’ 12/90 DOE HMSO, 1990.
⁸ Regional Economic Strategy for South East England 2002-2012, SEEDA, 2002/03.

Forum compiled 'A Framework for Biodiversity Action in Berkshire'⁹ which updates the previous county framework, 'A Nature Conservation Strategy for Berkshire'¹⁰. The Forum is currently in the process of preparing six countywide Habitat Action Plans (HAP). These are five-year management plans for habitats including heathland, woodland and farmland. Each Unitary Authority is responsible for developing these further at the local level. Some, such as Bracknell Forest and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have already produced local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs). These name specific species that the Unitary Authorities will seek to protect – and in so doing preserve habitats for a range of other species. RPG9 sets out the importance of protecting the natural environment in the explanatory text to Policy E1 and Policy E2.

Housing

2.23 The impact of a buoyant economy on housing is highlighted in RPG9 and PPG3¹¹. Housing strategies are produced by each Unitary Authority to set out how they will deal with local housing need, and meet central and local government priorities and objectives, such as tackling social exclusion. Unitary Authorities then receive funding from central Government to help implement them. Some aspects of housing strategies deal directly with planning issues such as bringing empty homes back into use, reducing under-occupation and securing provision of affordable housing.

Transport and Movement

2.24 Each of the six Unitary Authorities is responsible for producing a Local Transport Plan (LTP). This sets out how transport will be managed over a five-year period, and deals with issues such as improving public transport, increasing accessibility to and between different modes of transport, and improving safety and security. A good transport system in Berkshire is of key importance, not only for the economy, but also for people's quality of life.

Other Strategies

2.25 In recent years the Government has signed up to a number of international agreements, primarily concerned with sustainable development, and focussed on major aspects of this agenda such as climate change, Local Agenda 21 and social equity. These commitments are translated into action through a range of plans and programmes at the local level, many of which are, to differing degrees, implemented through or coordinated with, the planning process. The number, scope and influence of such plans differs between Unitary Authorities as each has different resources, priorities and needs to be met.

⁹ Berkshire County - A Framework for Biodiversity Action in Berkshire, Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum, 1999

¹⁰ A Nature Conservation Strategy for Berkshire, Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum, 1994

¹¹ PPG3 Housing, 2000

CHAPTER 3

VISION

3.01 In preparing the Plan, the Unitary Authorities consulted various organisations and individuals on what they thought were the key issues in the planning arena in Berkshire. The results were:

- Transport - especially undertaking long-term and co-ordinated planning of transport; reducing the need to travel; co-ordinating land use and transport planning.
- Housing – making it relevant to the people that need it in terms of price and form; enabling more local decision making on housing issues; using previously-developed land and limiting the numbers.
- Urban Renaissance - making development mixed, so that it includes community facilities.
- The quality of the environment.
- The Economy – making it more locally focussed; providing homes with jobs.

This Plan aims to address these key issues and others, within the ability of the Unitary Authorities to do so.

3.02 The following sections set out a vision of Berkshire as the Unitary Authorities would like to see it by the year 2016. Its purpose is to provide a point of reference for the individual policies in the Plan – the Unitary Authorities should be working towards the kinds of objectives set out in the vision.

General Principles

- The overall vision for Berkshire is one of sustainable development and the creation of diverse, sustainable urban and rural communities.
- Berkshire will continue to play a major role in the national and international economy, resulting in an increasing level of prosperity among its population.
- The area's affluence will be spread more evenly within the community.
- Berkshire's natural resources of water, air, land, minerals and energy will be carefully managed so as to ensure their availability to future generations.
- The area will be home to scenic and architectural assets in town and country, and to a wide variety of species and habitats. These assets will be protected for future generations and for their own sake.

Economy

3.03 Berkshire will be a place where sustainable economic growth of national and international significance is taking place in a natural environment with exceptional attributes. This growth will include existing firms, incoming firms and newly established enterprises. Berkshire will be at the forefront in managing this growth so that its impacts on the environment are minimised and maximum use is made of existing resources, including previously-developed land and the local labour supply. It will also be an area where innovative partnerships between businesses and the community deliver environmental and social benefits. More of the older industrial areas will be regenerated and an increased proportion of the area's output will involve activities, which add substantial value per worker. Nevertheless, these changes will not have been at the expense of key business activities, which support

the local economy. These will have been maintained, so as to enable effective operation of the economy, and also contribute to economic diversity.

Housing

3.04 Berkshire will have a housing stock of good quality and there will be a range of housing to suit all households, including those who are unable to afford suitable market housing and those who have special needs.

3.05 In making additional provision from 2001, maximum use will be made of previously-developed land and buildings within settlements. Particular attention will have been given to encouraging access to services and facilities by sustainable modes of transport, and to promoting mixed communities, regeneration and renewal.

Transport and Accessibility

3.06 People will have easy access to work, leisure, education, retail, health and other services, and to each other. The need to travel and the distance that it will be necessary to travel will be less than at present because careful choices will have been made as to the location of commercial, leisure and residential development as well as education and health facilities. In addition, there will be a wider use of information and communications technology, which will reduce the need for some face-to-face contact.

3.07 Berkshire will be a place in which new ways of conducting business and other activities (for example, changes in the hours of working) are employed so as to minimise transport problems. There will be improved integration of different modes of transport and greater choice of means of travel with information about the options. Where suitable alternatives can be provided, the relative role of the private car will be less than at present.

Built and Natural Environment

3.08 Berkshire in 2016 will be an area where substantial development pressures have been managed so as to maintain and where possible enhance the coherence, integrity and understanding of the area's biodiversity; the character and heritage of its settlements; and its important and characteristic countryside assets, including the Berkshire Downs, the lowland heaths and forests and the River Thames and its tributaries.

Natural Resources

3.09 The quality and quantity of Berkshire's natural resources (water, air, land, minerals) will be conserved as their use is kept within sustainable levels and, where possible, their quality enhanced. The increased use of environmentally sustainable development techniques will mean levels of waste will drop to sustainable levels as more material and land is routinely re-used. The contribution of secondary/recycled minerals and other materials in construction will be maximised whilst at the same time environmental interests and people's living conditions will be safeguarded. A commitment to the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet renewable energy targets will be evident through the steady increase in energy efficiency and in the proportion of energy generated and consumed in Berkshire from renewable

sources, both through incorporation of energy efficiency and energy conservation principles in development, and power generation from renewable sources.

Quality of Life

3.10 In 2016 the towns of Berkshire, including their inner areas, will be attractive and safe places which people choose to live in. The quality of buildings, streets, squares and green open space in towns will be safeguarded and improved. All parts of towns will have a high quality of public services and other facilities. Nobody who lives in the countryside will have to suffer severely restricted opportunities as a result of their location. The diversification of rural economic and social activity will have been encouraged within a framework of self-sustaining private and community-based rural initiatives.

Equality of Opportunity

3.11 The Unitary Authorities will have worked with a variety of agencies to make sure that housing provision addresses the needs of all members of the community, and that the economy makes good use of all the skills, and potential skills, of the community. All people will have easy access to the activities they wish to undertake. This access will be provided both physically, through communications technology or transport, and through the provision of training opportunities and facilities for those with special needs, thus widening the opportunities available to all.

Parts of Berkshire

3.12 The Unitary Authorities propose that the different Major Towns, small towns and rural areas of Berkshire will develop as follows:

Major Towns

Bracknell

3.13 By 2016 Bracknell will be a culturally self-confident centre, hosting a wide range of shopping and leisure activities. It will be the home of a number of major national and international companies but will also be a place where new businesses can easily be created and grow. The town's accessibility will be increased by connections to Heathrow and improved links to London and other areas including the Blackwater Valley. There will be a rebuilt town centre easily reached by public transport and enabling a good standard of short-term access by car. The new centre will contain expanded shopping, leisure and office employment together with a major housing element. Between now and the end of the Plan period the town will continue to grow, building on the investments made in the 1970s and 1980s. New housing areas will be developed so as to maximise the opportunity for public transport use.

Reading

3.14 Reading's communities will be sustainable and have good access to a range of local facilities, services, housing and employment. The quality of the environment will continue to improve, and become a clean, safe and desirable place in which to

live, work and visit. Reading will continue to develop as a regional centre serving the wider Thames Valley, providing commensurate opportunities for shopping and entertainment. It will provide headquarters for a number of major national and international companies and will be an environment where new business can start up and flourish. Reading town centre will be transformed by high quality large scale mixed use development providing major expansion of employment, retail, leisure and housing in a highly accessible location. Pedestrian movement through the centre will be improved by opening up new routes across road and rail barriers. Reading Station will become a nationally significant interchange between European, UK, regional and local services and between train and bus and other forms of transport.

3.15 In the suburbs there will be increased development of housing and services in locations with good links to public transport services. The district and local centres in this wider urban area will perform an increasing role of providing services to local populations within easy reach of them. Travel from the suburbs to the centre will, for many people, usually take the form of improved public transport. On the periphery, sites such as park-and-ride, business parks and retail parks will increasingly become multi-functional centres with interchanges linked by a fast public transport system. Green corridors along the Rivers Thames and Kennet will be protected and enhanced as a recreational and ecological resource.

Wokingham

3.16 Wokingham town will continue to have a market-town role. Its shopping centre will be revitalised and its role as an employment centre, taking advantage of its excellent location, will be consolidated. There will be a continuation of housing development, both within the town and on the edge, with full integration with infrastructure provision, including transport. Transport investment will include the rebuilding of Wokingham Station.

Newbury

3.17 Newbury will continue to develop as an important business centre while maintaining its role and character as a market town with strong links to the surrounding rural areas. New residential development will continue to occur through redevelopment of sites within the built-up area and will be linked to infrastructure provision. Accessibility to the national road and rail network will continue to ensure that the town is an attractive location for existing and incoming businesses. There will be enhancements to public transport to create improved links between the towns' business and residential areas.

Slough

3.18 Slough's role will reflect its location close to London and Heathrow. The town will build upon its diverse employment base through the regeneration of its existing business areas to provide high quality premises, which meet the needs of modern businesses. Major headquarters buildings will be restricted to the town centre and airport related warehousing directed to the eastern part of the Borough. Slough's local housing needs will predominantly be met on previously-developed land in the urban area which will help to lead to a rejuvenation of the town's existing neighbourhoods and estates.

3.19 A large part of Slough town centre will undergo comprehensive redevelopment which will create a high quality built environment incorporating new areas of open space, housing, cultural, leisure, education and transport facilities. This will also include a significant increase in employment in the centre and help to underpin its role as an important sub-regional shopping centre. Measures will be introduced to increase accessibility for all members of the community to all parts of Slough through the improvement of public transport. The town centre will become a significant transport hub with enhanced train and bus interchange facilities, including new links to Heathrow.

Windsor

3.20 Windsor will continue to be one of the most popular tourist centres outside London. Its historic character will be protected and enhanced. Its role as a major shopping destination will be strengthened, but the needs of visitors will continue to be balanced against the needs of the local community. The town is a significant employment and residential centre. These uses will continue to develop where growth can be accommodated in a sustainable manner and in a way, which is compatible with its special character. Mixed-use developments will be encouraged. A key part of the strategy will be to reduce the level of traffic movements within the historic core and central shopping area.

Maidenhead

3.21 Maidenhead's role as an important business location will be sustained. Its town centre will undergo major regeneration in the Plan period, with the intention of revitalising it as a balanced community providing for retail, employment, residential and leisure uses. It will also expand its position as a civic and cultural centre, assisted by transportation and infrastructure improvements. New housing and employment development and redevelopment will occur in other parts of the town.

Small Towns and District Centres

3.22 The small towns and district centres of Berkshire will perform a valuable role in providing local employment and services and reducing the need for local people to travel to obtain their day-to-day requirements. This role will be strengthened by limited housing, retail, leisure and employment development, which will respect their differing characters, and by improvements to access to and within their centres.

Rural Areas

3.23 The Berkshire countryside will continue to be divided into two broad areas. The east of the County will consist of accessible rural settlements while those in the west of the County will retain more of their rural character and have a much greater mix of accessible and more remote rural settlements. However, new technology and working practices will lead to an increased number of people working and living in the County's rural settlements and this will result in an increased level of community activity and self-sufficiency. The negative trends in provision of local services, seen in the 1980s and 1990s, will be halted and many settlements will have a full range of local services including shops, pubs and community facilities.

3.24 New housing development will be focused in existing settlements in infill schemes and may tend to be of a higher density than in the past. However, it will respect and enhance the traditional character and visual assets of the area. It will be targeted to meet the needs of local people and key workers and to where it can support local services and create mixed communities.

3.25 Agriculture will continue to play a major role in the rural economy of Berkshire but there will be increasing diversification into areas like alternative growing practices, farmers' markets, and provision of farm-based leisure services. Other new and existing rural enterprises will also play an important role in contributing to the rural economy. New technology and working practices are likely to lead to an increased number of people who both work and live in the County's rural settlements, although this will not necessitate any significant increase in office and related development in rural areas.

3.26 The open countryside will offer increased leisure opportunities for local residents and visitors. There will be a general opening up and increased promotion of the whole countryside including the numerous areas of parkland, the Thames and its tributaries and the downlands in the west. This promotion will lead to an increase in the number of visitors coming to the area to make use of these countryside facilities.

3.27 There will be a much greater understanding of, and protection given to, Berkshire's historic assets and landscape character, with an increased level of assessment, recording and strategy development. This knowledge and protection will be mirrored in the County's biodiversity, which will be protected and enhanced for its intrinsic worth.

Flexibility and Change

3.28 This vision of Berkshire in 2016 is positive and specific and yet it should not be set in stone. As a consequence of technical changes and globalisation, it is increasingly difficult to envisage what the world will be like in 2016. Successful areas will be those, which are able to adapt themselves to new circumstances. The Unitary Authorities undertake to monitor the social, economic and natural environment in Berkshire and the world outside. In the course of so doing, it may become necessary to adjust the vision accordingly.

Bringing the Vision into reality

3.29 This section has set out the Unitary Authorities' Vision for Berkshire, across a range of issues. The Plan uses this vision to provide a set of overall values, which inform the Structure Plan policies. Each chapter is set out in a format, which provides a context for the policies, explaining why they are needed and how they will be carried out.

CHAPTER 4

SPATIAL STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Context

4.01 In order to deliver the 'Vision' for Berkshire set out in the preceding chapter, the Plan sets out a series of structural policies that together provide a spatial strategy and framework necessary to guide future development.

4.02 Berkshire is characterised by a series of well connected towns, from Newbury in the west to Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead in the east. Central Berkshire, which lies between the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the west and the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) to the east, has seen a continuous period of peripheral growth that has tended to focus on the distinct but highly interconnected settlements of Bracknell, Wokingham and Reading.

4.03 The over-arching objective of the Plan (Policy DP1) is to ensure that existing urban areas and settlements, which contain the majority of our communities, infrastructure, services and places of employment, are the principal focus for future development. Such a strategy is a pre-requisite for securing the long term urban and suburban renaissance required by RPG9. Implicit in this strategy is the re-use of previously-developed land within existing settlements, consistent with Government advice and RPG9.

4.04 The strategy focuses on maximising the role of seven Major Towns to perform a whole range of functions – home, work and leisure. At the heart of this approach is the regeneration of town centres and this is illustrated by proposals for major mixed-use (commercial and residential) regeneration schemes in Bracknell, Reading, Slough and Newbury. The vision for all the Major Towns and their specific roles are set out in Chapter 3, together with visions for small towns and district centres. The strategic transport network links the Major Towns together and will be the focus for transport investment in the Plan area (see Policies T1 to T3).

4.05 All these aspects of urban and suburban renaissance are brought together in Policy DP5, which requires development to contribute to an overall improvement in the quality and relative sustainability of our urban and suburban areas and communities, through promoting mixed-use development and high quality design.

4.06 Berkshire contains a large extent of rural land. The east of the County consists of accessible rural settlements while those in the west of the County retain more of their rural character and have a much greater mix of accessible and more remote rural settlements. Policy DP8 aims to provide for a renaissance of the County's diverse rural communities through housing targeted at the needs of local people and at supporting local services and creating mixed communities.

4.07 Although Policy DP1 sets out the overall strategy, different land uses require distinct locational strategies, and these are clearly set out in Policy DP2, Policy E1, Policy H3 and Policies S1 to S4. To complement this approach, Policy DP4 seeks to ensure that adequate infrastructure and services accompany such development. To complete the picture, the Plan also contains Policy DP3, Policy DP6 and Policy DP7

that address the role of land outside settlements and the mechanisms by which settlements retain their separate identity and do not coalesce.

4.08 The overriding aim of the Plan is to concentrate development within our established urban areas, but the Plan acknowledges that not all of the future development proposed can be accommodated within existing settlement boundaries and that sustainable urban extensions may be required. The housing distribution contained in Policy H2, along with clear criteria for site selection set out in Policy H3 effectively provides the framework for local plans to identify sustainable urban extensions where necessary.

Policy DP1 : Spatial Strategy

Development will normally be located in settlements. The scale of development in a settlement shall be related to its current and future:

- (i) accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking; and***
- (ii) level of other infrastructure, services and employment.***

The Major Towns of Newbury, Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell, Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor and their contiguous built-up areas will be the principal focus for major development. Other settlements will provide locations for development, provided such development is commensurate with the attributes of the settlement as defined in (i) and (ii) above. Local plans will define the boundaries of settlements, including any extensions required to accommodate the provisions of this Plan. Outside settlements, development will be severely limited. The Strategic Transport Network will be developed to facilitate movement between the Major Towns referred to above, with particular reference to alternative modes of travel to the car.

Reason for the Policy

4.09 The purpose of a structure plan is to provide a statement of the overall strategy for development and the use of land in the area. The overall strategy for Berkshire is set out on the key diagram (page). This shows the Major Towns and the links between them. The Plan intends that investment in new and refurbished buildings should be concentrated in the Major Towns and that investment in transport should be concentrated on facilitating movements of people and goods between them. This approach will divert the growth in journeys away from other routes and will encourage the use of sustainable means of transport.

4.10 The Major Towns represent a substantial investment in buildings and infrastructure, including investment in transport routes and interchanges. They contain most of the employment and leisure opportunities in the County. Under these circumstances the principles of sustainable development would indicate that it is prudent to build on existing patterns of development.

4.11 This general approach has a number of further advantages. Once the countryside has been developed it is very difficult to reclaim it. If development were spread out across the whole County it would be heavily car-dependent and costly to provide with infrastructure. It is widely accepted that the area's roads could not cope with unrestrained growth in the use of cars. One way of maximising the choices of travel available to people is to seek to locate the destinations of people's journeys at places where access by public transport or walking and cycling is easiest.

Concentration of activity in urban areas helps support the continued success of towns. It also helps to try to ensure that as many different kinds of activities are located in as few different places as possible, so that one journey can serve a variety of purposes.

How it will be carried out

4.12 This general spatial strategy is carried forward by the other policies in the Plan. In particular, the Strategic Transport Network is covered by Policy T2. The location of housing development is dealt with by Policy H3. Major employment development will be focussed principally on the centres of Major Towns and is covered by Policy E1. Major shopping and leisure development will be focussed on the centres of Major Towns and is covered by Policies S1 to S3. Other major development will be focussed on the centres of Major Towns and is covered by Policy DP2. Outside settlements, development will be severely limited and be in accordance with Policy DP6. Local plans will also carry forward the spatial strategy in their own policies.

4.13 For the avoidance of doubt, 'major' is defined as a development involving a net increase in housing of more than 100 units, a net increase in retail floorspace of more than 2,500 sq.m or a net increase in office floorspace of more than 2,500 sq. m or another employment development with similar levels of employment. Developments involving other uses or mixed-uses will be assessed on their individual merits against this Policy. Policy T4 provides a basis for considering the transport impacts of development. Planning authorities will also have regard to the cumulative impact of development proposals, where several come forward within a short period of time.

4.14 The contiguous built-up area centred on Reading Borough includes settlements in the surrounding districts of Wokingham and West Berkshire. Local plans will indicate the precise boundary of this contiguous built-up area, but in general terms it includes those settlements contiguous with Reading which are located north of the M4 motorway.

Policy DP2 : Major Development other than Employment, Housing, Retail or Leisure

1. Major development not covered by policies E1, H3 or S1 to S4, including major education or health facilities, will be located:

- (i) in or adjoining the centres of the Major Towns of Newbury, Reading, Wokingham, Maidenhead, Bracknell, Slough and Windsor;**
- (ii) if no suitable site is found, then at principal intersections of public transport routes or district centres within the above urban areas, including any proposed extensions of those areas;**
- (iii) if no suitable site is found, then elsewhere on public transport corridors within the above urban areas.**

2. The scale of the development shall be related to the accessibility of the site by cycling, walking and public transport.

Reason for the Policy

4.15 To direct facilities used by many members of the public to locations where they will be accessible to the largest number of people, whether or not they have access to a private car.

How it will be carried out

4.16 Those seeking to carry out developments covered by this Policy will be expected to show that they have carried out a sequential test to choose the most sustainable site. They will also show how their intended catchment is able to access the chosen site by alternatives to the private car. To illustrate the relationship between scale of development and accessibility, proposed developments drawing from a large catchment should aim to locate where access by public transport has the best possible fit to the catchment, or where there is a realistic possibility of providing it. They should show the degree of fit between their intended catchment and the supporting network of existing and proposed public transport services. This policy is intended to deal with major development proposals that are likely to be significant trip attractors, and whose catchments are at least as wide as the settlement within which they are proposed. Examples of such uses could include public service facilities, such as health, education, police, probation and the judiciary.

Policy DP3 : Green Belt

1. The Metropolitan Green Belt in Berkshire will comprise:

the Boroughs of Slough and Windsor & Maidenhead, apart from the towns of Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead and the settlements of Ascot, Colnbrook, Cookham Rise, Cookham Village, Datchet, Eton (with Eton Wick Road) Eton Wick, North Ascot, Old Windsor, Poyle, South Ascot, Sunningdale, Sunninghill, Wraysbury;
the part of Wokingham District north and east of Twyford but excluding Wargrave;
the part of the Borough of Bracknell Forest north of Binfield and Warfield and east of Bracknell.

2. The precise boundaries of the Green Belt, and of the settlements enclosed by, but excluded from it, have been identified in local plans. Green Belt boundary changes will only be made in exceptional circumstances through local plan reviews.

3. Planning permission will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for new buildings for any purpose other than:

- (a) agriculture and forestry;***
- (b) essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;***
- (c) limited extension, alteration and replacement of existing dwellings;***
- (d) limited infill in recognised settlements defined in local plans;***
- (e) small-scale affordable housing on other sites in recognised settlements defined in local plans; or***
- (f) limited infilling in, or redevelopment of, existing major developed sites identified in local plans***

Reason for the Policy

4.17 To prevent the outward sprawl of London; to prevent the coalescence of towns in east Berkshire; to safeguard the countryside from unnecessary encroachment; to preserve the setting of historic towns and to assist urban regeneration. The Berkshire part of the MGB forms part of a ring around London whose general treatment is best handled at regional level. RPG9 advises that there is no regional case for reviewing the existing green belt boundaries in the South East.

How it will be carried out

4.18 Through local plans and development control. Existing local plans in Berkshire define the detailed boundaries of the green belt. Changes to these should only be made through the local plan review process. In making changes, local plans would need to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances apply, that consideration has been given to the possibilities for development within the urban areas contained within the green belt, or in areas beyond it, and that the proposals promote the most sustainable form of development.

Policy DP4 : Provision of Infrastructure, Services and Amenities

1. Before proposals for development are permitted, the local planning authorities will require to be satisfied that infrastructure, services and amenities made necessary by the development are provided, or will be provided at the appropriate time, so as to ensure the proper planning of an area.

2. To this end, local planning authorities may seek contributions to be made by landowners or developers to provide additional infrastructure, services or facilities where they are:

- (i) needed to enable development to take place;**
- (ii) directly related to the proposed development; and**
- (iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.**

Reason for the Policy

4.19 To ensure that development does not impose unwarranted costs upon public services, or alternatively result in an unsatisfactory form of development.

How it will be carried out

4.20 Local plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will set out the detailed requirements for infrastructure, services and amenities to be provided in association with development. However, the specific case of transport infrastructure is also addressed in Policy T4, that of water supply in Policy EN7 and that of provision of facilities for waste management in Policy W4. Sewerage is covered by this Policy.

Policy DP5 : Quality of Urban and Suburban Areas

1. Urban and suburban areas, especially town, district and local centres and their surroundings, should include a variety of land uses in close proximity. These should include employment opportunities, services and amenities for the needs of the population that lives or works locally and a substantial element of housing, including a wide variety of housing types including affordable housing.

2. The development of urban and suburban areas should produce a relationship between buildings and open spaces which provides an attractive sense of place and ample safe public space for walking, recreation and other leisure or civic activity.

3. Urban and suburban areas should be characterised by buildings of good design which are accessible to all members of the community.

4. Movement around urban or suburban areas, especially around town, district and local centres, should be made safe and pleasant to undertake by foot or cycle. Movement around, to and between town, district and local centres should be made easy by public transport.

Reason for the Policy

4.21 Urban areas and some suburbs and outer estates have been regarded as residual locations. Those people and firms who could afford to leave them did so, leading to problems of social exclusion. The aim of urban policy should be to make all urban areas attractive, so that people with the choice choose to be there. One aspect of the urban problem has been the creation of areas in towns in which there is only one use of land, be it housing, factories or offices. This means that areas become dead at certain times of day, and it is difficult for workers or residents to reach shops and services. Another aspect is the perceived overcrowding of towns, which makes people prefer the peripheral suburbs and the countryside. While many Berkshire towns have been developed at quite low average densities, the use of space has not always been efficient, with some places having large acreages devoted to roads and residual paved or grass spaces of little character. People do not necessarily feel they are living in spacious surroundings with access to greenery and light. Work to improve the public realm would assist in making towns attractive. Part of the crowded feel of towns arises from the difficulty of movement around them. Often movement on foot or on cycle is made difficult by the priority afforded to motor vehicles. The quality of life in towns would be improved by making it easier to make short journeys on foot or cycle.

4.22 The policy focuses on the town, district and local centres within the urban area because these represent the localities most likely to offer opportunities for redevelopment. They are also, or should be made to be, the most accessible locations within the urban area. Therefore they are the most suitable places in which to seek an increase in the intensity of use of land to provide a variety of uses. Focusing on the centres would enable the provision of leisure opportunities, jobs and services within easy access of people's homes. Finally, centres are the symbols of their hinterlands. Improvements to the centres will have an impact on the greatest number of people.

How it will be carried out

4.23 The planning system will have a role to play in producing better quality urban and suburban areas, although it is only one of many players. Unitary Authorities, through their local plans or other strategies, can put together proposals for the revitalisation of particular quarters of town centres, or neighbourhoods elsewhere in towns. Transport Development Areas provide opportunities for area revitalisation around nodes of high accessibility by sustainable transport. Unitary Authorities can work with developers to ensure that the principles in Policy DP5 are incorporated when planning applications are being considered.

4.24 Other policies in this Plan assist in “urban renaissance”. Policy DP1 and others concentrate major development in town centres. This helps achieve a flow of investment and should promote a high level of demand for services from the working population in them. Policy H6 seeks to make better use of land for housing, and in particular seeks higher housing densities in centres. This will mean that future housing development is targeted on the centres rather than being more spread out over the countryside.

Policy DP6 : Land Outside Settlements

1. Land outside settlements will be safeguarded for its own sake as a non-renewable natural resource.

2. In addition, land outside settlements should only be used for purposes appropriate to rural areas, and in particular should:

- (i) make a contribution to the economy through agriculture, forestry and other activities that can only be undertaken there, or by providing immediately accessible job opportunities for those who live there; or**
- (ii) provide the population with easily accessible opportunities for informal recreation.**

Reason for the Policy

4.25 The countryside merits protection for its own sake. The habitats and landscapes which it contains have taken many years to develop. They are a natural resource, which is fragile and cannot be replaced if lost or damaged. The Unitary Authorities also wish to see the countryside continuing to perform human-related functions of providing recreation, a sense of identity, food production and for many of those who live there, a livelihood. In relation to (ii), the urban fringe can present particular problems with pressures for development, sometimes accompanied by the degradation of the land.

How it will be carried out

4.26 Other policies in the Structure Plan develop these principles – in particular Policy DP7 (Gaps and Green Wedges), Policy DP8 (Rural Communities), Policy EN1 (Landscape), Policy EN2 (Agricultural Land) and Policy EN3 (Biodiversity). Local plans will include detailed policies on development in the countryside following the principles in Policy DP6. Development in the countryside will be controlled using structure and local plan policies. Other measures may be needed to promote the proper management of land in areas such as the urban fringes, for example by the

Unitary Authority working in partnership with landowners and agencies such as the Countryside Agency, Thames Valley Groundwork, English Nature and the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Some greenfield development is likely to be needed to carry out the policies in this Plan (in particular, meeting the housing allocations in Policy H2). However, this will be done through local plans and will, where necessary, involve the local plan redefining the settlement boundary. Further guidance on the identification of land for housing development is given in Policy H3.

Policy DP7 : Gaps and Green Wedges

1. The Councils will preserve the setting and separate identity of settlements and protect areas of the open countryside, which penetrate urban areas and provide access to the countryside for residents of urban areas. This will be achieved by the identification and maintenance of Gaps and Green Wedges.

2. Local Gaps will be identified in local plans where there is a need:

- (i) To protect the setting and identity of settlements and avoid their coalescence; or**
- (ii) To retain a coherent structure of settlement pattern; or**
- (iii) To retain the openness of an area; or**
- (iv) To provide access and recreational opportunities for adjacent communities**

3. Green Wedges will be identified in local plans on open land, which provides (or has the potential to provide) landscape corridors between the countryside and the centres of urban areas for informal recreation and for the movement of fauna.

Reason for the Policy

4.27 The distinction between Berkshire's built-up areas and the open or largely undeveloped areas around and between them is important. Due to pressure for development there is a real threat of settlements coalescing, with the subsequent loss of the separate identity of individual settlements and the coherence of the existing settlement pattern. In order to protect the existing open character of land between settlements, it is important that Gaps are identified to steer development away from areas where there is a real threat of coalescence occurring. Gaps comprise open land that separates distinct settlements.

4.28 Similarly, there is a need to provide real access and recreational benefits for all, and to retain the benefits of having open countryside near to where people live. Some areas that perform this function are under threat from development and it is important to give them further protection

4.29 Green Wedges are areas of open space penetrating built-up areas. They may be important for providing green routes from town centres out into the countryside for informal recreation and wildlife movement, as well as opportunities for informal recreation close to built-up areas. For this reason they may merit protection from development. There may be potential for extending such wedges outwards from towns in cases where urban extensions are planned, so as to shape the pattern of future development.

4.30 Most Gaps and Wedges lie entirely within the jurisdiction of a single planning authority, and it is appropriate that these are identified and protected in the relevant local plan. Where areas of land justify being identified as Gaps or Green Wedges and they cover more than one Unitary Authority area, it will be necessary for the Authorities concerned to work together to ensure that they are maintained.

How it will be carried out

4.31 As part of a comprehensive review in accordance with para 4.16 of PPG7¹², local plans will identify, justify and delineate the exact boundaries of the Gaps and Green Wedges where these perform the function of preserving the separate identity of settlements; protecting areas of countryside which penetrate urban areas for their recreational or wildlife value; or providing access to the countryside for residents of urban areas. Where necessary, local plans will also include policies to maintain the Gaps and Wedges. These policies will ensure that development will only be permitted if it does not threaten important open areas or the separation of settlements that are close together. In some cases, policies in this Plan (for example, Policy H2) may result in development of greenfield land between settlements. In establishing the boundaries of such development, local planning authorities will ensure that adequate provision is made for the maintenance of Gaps and Green Wedges. All Gaps and Wedges should only extend to the lifetime of the structure or local plan and the need for them should be reviewed each time the plan is reviewed.

Policy DP8 : Rural Communities

The Councils will seek to strengthen rural communities and the rural economy by:

- (i) encouraging appropriate rural enterprise, including the diversification of farm business;**
- (ii) promoting a more equitable, and locally based, provision of services;**
- (iii) supporting development which preserves or enhances the range of rural community facilities and makes the rural community more self-sufficient;**
- (iv) ensuring that new development is concentrated in local service centres;**
- (v) supporting the provision of affordable housing in appropriate locations which meets the proven needs of local people and/or key workers within the rural community;**
- (vi) ensuring that development is of a scale, form and layout which conserves or enhances the character of its surroundings, and involves a relationship between buildings and spaces which achieves a sense of place;**
- (vii) ensuring that buildings are accessible to all members of the community.**

Reason for the Policy

4.32 The rural areas in Berkshire have undergone considerable change in recent years and there is ever increasing pressure for growth and further change. This is clearly illustrated by the current pressures on the agricultural industry. Although farming continues to make a significant contribution to the rural economy, its

¹² PPG7

The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development, 1997

continuing viability may depend on diversification into non-agricultural activities, which support existing agricultural uses.

4.33 The structure of rural communities has altered, as people travel further afield to find work, and house prices have risen, making it difficult for many local people to stay in their local rural community. Local services are declining and access to them growing more difficult as village schools, post offices, shops and pubs close, thus placing more reliance on the car and leading to the social exclusion of those without access to private transport. To counter this trend, development plans in Berkshire should play their part in promoting prosperous and inclusive rural communities where people can both live and work. This can include the concentration of development that does occur in rural areas in larger villages which can act as local service centres, so that people's chance of being able to reach services, and the viability of those services, are maximised. Policy H5 refers to the needs of communities for provision of affordable housing.

How it will be carried out

4.34 Where appropriate, and in conjunction with town/parish councils, their local communities and the relevant rural and environmental bodies, such as the Countryside Agency and Community Council for Berkshire, the Unitary Authorities will assess the economic and social needs of their rural areas and develop comprehensive rural strategies to underpin and revitalise their communities.

4.35 Local plans will contribute to revitalising rural settlements by devising positive development plan policies for rural economic activity, and housing and social needs which meet the needs of rural communities, whilst respecting the character of the countryside and the local distinctiveness of the area. They will provide more detailed guidance on the scale and nature of development, which is appropriate in different parts of rural Berkshire, having regard to the remoteness or accessibility of the area.

4.36 Where appropriate, the Unitary Authorities will encourage people in rural areas to take a more active role in their communities through the community planning process. The preparation of Parish and Town Plans (being promoted by the Countryside Agency with the assistance of the Community Council for Berkshire) enables local communities to take a holistic approach and to set out a vision for their areas, which will both contribute to the community strategy process and inform the planning process at a local level.

4.37 The aims and strategies of these studies, the policies in the Structure Plan and those in local plans will be implemented through development control. LTPs will have scope to develop innovative approaches to managing transport demand in rural areas, for example through the development of shared services: telecommunications will be able to help address problems of remoteness, particularly in the western part of the area. Unitary Authorities may also have an important role to play as direct providers of services.

Policy DP9 : Blackwater Valley

1. The Blackwater Valley Area is identified as a sub-region to support its role as an area of regional importance.

2. The local authorities of Berkshire that fall within the Blackwater Valley will work closely with other authorities in the Blackwater Valley Area to provide a co-ordinated land use, transportation and environmental strategy for the area, which is consistent with this Structure Plan; and to ensure that development is provided in an integrated and sustainable way.

Reason for the Policy

4.38 The Blackwater Valley Area covers parts of Bracknell Forest Borough and Wokingham District and parts of the Boroughs of Guildford, Surrey Heath and Waverley in Surrey and Rushmoor Borough and Hart District in Hampshire. It has a population of around 300,000 people. It has recently undergone rapid employment expansion, including business park development at Farnborough Airfield, where there are also substantial future employment commitments. This is placing further pressures on transport infrastructure and the labour market within the area.

How it will be carried out

4.39 The Berkshire Unitary Authorities recognise both the importance of the Blackwater Valley Area as a significant sub-regional focus of population and employment, and its relationship with the south-east part of Berkshire. The Unitary Authorities support the need for this sub-region to be planned in a co-ordinated way, taking into account the housing, transport and economic needs of the area, as well as the need to safeguard internationally significant environmental resources. A priority will be to address the transport infrastructure problems which already exist and which would be exacerbated with further development. Consultants were commissioned to study the area and reported in March 2003¹³ with recommendations for its future. The relevant Unitary Authorities will take these findings into account when preparing their local plans.

¹³ Blackwater Valley - Sub Regional Study, Blackwater Valley Network, 2003

CHAPTER 5

ENVIRONMENT

Context

5.01 Berkshire is a relatively small county and, by the standards of the South East, one of the most intensively developed and economically buoyant. At the same time, it contains large areas of landscape of national importance such as the North Wessex Downs AONB, and a wealth of fauna and flora, for example the Wraysbury Gravel Pits designated under the European Birds Directive, and Windsor Forest and the Great Park proposed as 'Special Areas for Conservation' (SAC). These sites merit protection in their own right. In addition, the area has a rich historic heritage, ranging from places of international importance, such as Windsor Castle, down to more locally important monuments and landmarks.

5.02 The balance between maintaining a thriving economy and meeting the housing and other needs of local people on the one hand, and protecting the area's heritage and natural resources on the other, is particularly difficult to manage in an area of development pressure such as Berkshire. However, the two should not necessarily be seen as being in conflict. Maintaining and enhancing the diversity and attractiveness of the natural environment is an important factor in retaining business investment and long-term economic prosperity, and also adds to the quality of life for residents and visitors in less tangible ways.

5.03 It does, however, mean that development needs to be accommodated in a way, which is different to that of the past. It means strict control of the use of greenfield land and making the most of previously-developed land; care in the choice of locations for development and steps to minimise people's need to travel. With regard to the form of development itself, it will require measures for waste prevention and minimisation; pollution control; management of surface water drainage and water efficiency measures; energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy; and the use of renewable and recycled materials. This chapter sets the context for the more detailed application of these policies in local plans and other strategies.

Policy EN1 : Landscape

1. Landscape Character

The distinctiveness of county- and district-level Landscape Character Types and Areas will be maintained in line with the strategy option developed for each area.

2. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Within the North Wessex Downs AONB the primary aim of conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape will be given priority over other considerations. Development which affects the AONB will only be permitted where it would support the conservation or enhancement of the AONB or would foster the economic and social well being of the area, provided also that such development is compatible with the primary aim of the AONB. Major development will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that:

- (i) there is a proven national interest; and**

- (ii) **there are no alternative sites available or the need cannot be met in any other way; and**
- (iii) **appropriate provision can be made to minimise harm to the environment**

Reason for the Policy

5.04 The Berkshire landscape contains a wide variety of natural and man-made landscapes. Much of the west of the County is designated as part of the North Wessex Downs AONB. In conserving the AONB and its setting it is important to consider the impact of development, both inside and adjacent to it. Although the AONB is of nationally recognised landscape importance and commands the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, it is important that the qualities of the whole of the County's landscape are recognised, so that all the features that give it its historical or local character can be identified, protected or enhanced. In addition to the North Wessex Downs AONB, Berkshire has other well-known landscapes of regional or national significance. These include the river valleys of the Thames, Kennet, Lambourn, Loddon and Pang, the Colne Valley Regional Park, Windsor Great Park and the lowland sandy heaths along the borders with Hampshire and Surrey.

5.05 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000¹⁴ it is a statutory requirement that a Management Plan is prepared, by local authorities, for each AONB in England. A Management Plan has been prepared for the North Wessex Downs AONB¹⁵ by the Council of Partners (the advisory partnership body whose primary purpose is to enhance and protect the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB) on behalf of the constituent local authorities. It is a strategic document, which provides an integrated, and objective led approach to guide future decisions affecting the AONB. The objectives and policies contained in the Plan will be used to guide and inform planning policies for the next 20 years and was adopted by West Berkshire Council in March 2004.

How it will be carried out

5.06 A Berkshire-wide Landscape Character Assessment¹⁶ (BLCA) has been carried out which highlights geographical Character Types, their component Character Areas, and brief strategy options. The Assessment has been informed by (and will be used in conjunction with) the North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Assessment¹⁷, which was undertaken at a similar scale by the Countryside Agency in 2002. The BLCA will act as the context for the development of district-level assessments, where required, which will identify the landscape character in more detail and allow the Unitary Authorities to develop management strategies that best suit the condition and quality of each area. They will also act as a guide to local plans and development control by indicating the particular local qualities of the landscape, which development proposals should respect. Development proposals should be informed by and fully justified in terms of the BLCA.

¹⁴ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, HMSO 2000

¹⁵ North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan, 2004

¹⁶ Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment, The Berkshire Unitary Authorities Joint Strategic Planning Unit, 2003

¹⁷ North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Assessment, 2003

Policy EN2 : Soil Quality and Agricultural Land

The Councils will seek to:

- 1. ensure soils are protected from loss, degradation or pollution, to protect their ecological and economic functions;**
- 2. preserve the best and most versatile agricultural land from development which would irretrievably prevent its use for agricultural production except where sustainability considerations suggest otherwise.**

Reason for the Policy:

5.07 Soils perform an important range of economic and ecological functions including assisting water filtering and drainage and supporting biodiversity. It is therefore important that they are protected and managed in a way that ensures their quality is maintained and improved, as remediation is costly.

5.08 The value of land as a national agricultural resource has to be taken into account where development could irreversibly prevent its future use for agricultural production. Development on agricultural land should only take place once the scope for other more sustainable alternatives has been fully explored. Where the development of greenfield land has been fully justified it will normally be directed to suitable sites with the lowest agricultural quality. However, in some cases sustainability issues will suggest otherwise. This may occur for example where ecological considerations in Policy EN3 or site accessibility requirements in Policy H3 outweigh agricultural considerations.

How it will be carried out:

5.09 Thorough local plans and development control The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) undertakes assessments of agricultural land PPG7 paragraph 2.17 provides examples of sustainability considerations and the Draft Soil Strategy for England sets out the Government's overall approach for the sustainable use and protection of soil.

Policy EN3 : Biodiversity

1. Habitats designated, or proposed for designation, as important for nature conservation at an international or national level or which support protected, rare or endangered species, will be protected from development and from any adverse impacts of development that may affect them directly or indirectly in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

2. On habitats designated, or proposed for designation, as important for nature conservation at local level, development will only be permitted where sustainability considerations override nature conservation issues.

3. Elsewhere in Berkshire's towns and countryside biodiversity and the integrity or continuity of landscape features (including river corridors and waterways), which are of importance for wild fauna and flora will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced. Where appropriate, opportunities to create new habitats of biodiversity interest should be exploited in development proposals. Opportunities should be exploited to create new habitats to compensate for past losses of biodiversity over the years.

4. Relative to the level of protection above, measures to avoid and minimise disturbance to sites, habitats or species, and compensation for residual harm or loss of biodiversity resource, will be included in development proposals.

Reason for the Policy

5.10 Berkshire supports a rich and unusual diversity of wildlife and natural features, which reflect both the underlying geology and soils and traditional management practices that have been carried out over many years. These habitats and species are not just confined to the countryside but also play a valuable role in urban areas. This biodiversity is being threatened by a number of sources, including pollution, climate change, neglect, land use change and development pressure and there is therefore a need to protect the County's biodiversity as a national and global asset. Opportunities should also be exploited to create new habitats, which will go some way to compensate for past losses of biodiversity over the years. This Policy aims to meet requirements set out in the Habitats Directive¹⁸, the Wild Birds Directive¹⁹, the Conservations (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994²⁰, PPG9²¹ and the UK BAP. It provides the Unitary Authorities with a framework for dealing with the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the County.

How it will be carried out

5.11 In considering proposals, which affect sites that are important for their biodiversity value, the Unitary Authorities will weigh the need for and impact of the development against the sites' conservation objectives in accordance with the protection afforded to it under relevant legislation and government planning guidance. Where damage or disturbance is deemed unavoidable, the Unitary Authorities will, through development control, ensure that the impact of development on biodiversity, habitats and protected species is mitigated and where there is residual harm, compensated. Compensation could include the long-term support of existing habitats or the creation of new ones including in urban areas. The advice of English Nature shall be sought when drawing up mitigation or compensation measures.

5.12 In addition, designated and proposed sites of international importance will be protected from development that threatens their integrity as advised in PPG9 paragraphs 37 and C10; and development affecting sites of national importance will be considered with regard to guidance given in PPG9 paragraphs 27-36. Designated and proposed sites of international and national importance will be identified in local plans and are shown (as at July 2003) in figure 5.1 overleaf, listed in Appendix 2 and mapped in the BLCA.

5.13 Where a development may have a potential impact on biodiversity, the Unitary Authorities will require proposals to be accompanied by a biodiversity impact assessment. Local plans will also include details of the criteria against which a development affecting a site will be judged. Sustainability considerations are outlined in PPG7.

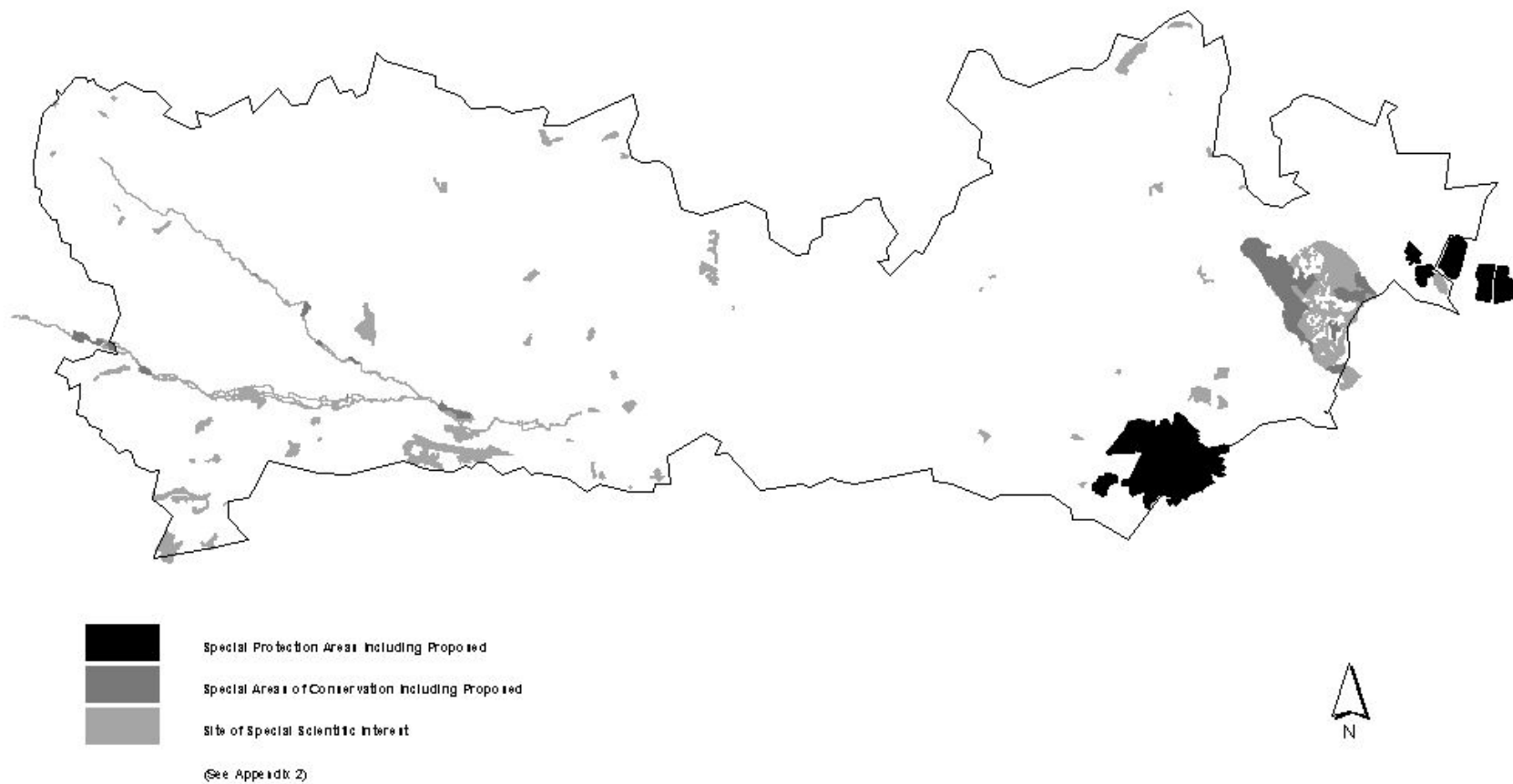
¹⁸ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the "Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora" (EC Habitats Directive) 2004

¹⁹ Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the "Conservation of Wild Birds" (EC Wild Birds Directive) 2004

²⁰ Conservations (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994, HMSO 1994

²¹ PPG9 Nature Conservation, 1994

Figure 5.1. National and International Designations



5.14 Where appropriate, the Unitary Authorities will produce Biodiversity, Habitat and Species Action Plans (SAP). 'A Framework for Biodiversity Action in Berkshire' provides the Unitary Authorities with an agreed foundation upon which to base their actions, and translate national targets identified in the UK BAP to the local level. A series of countywide HAP will also be prepared for those nationally important habitats, which lie within Berkshire. At the local level, local biodiversity action plans will be produced which will be developed into effective local partnerships to take forward actions into the future. Sites suitable for the restoration and re-creation of national and local BAP priority habitats will be safeguarded in local plans. Where appropriate, local authorities will assist and consult the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC).

Policy EN4 : Historic Environment

1. Historic features and areas of historic importance and their settings will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced. The Councils will only allow development if it has no adverse impact on features or areas of historic importance.

2. Proposals will be expected to have regard to the wider historic environment and will only be permitted when they would conserve or enhance the character or setting of Berkshire's historic landscape and built environment.

Reason for the Policy

5.15 Although Berkshire has experienced a large amount of economic growth and development, it still contains a wide variety of historic buildings and landmarks. It is important that these are conserved, as they provide an insight into the County's past and ensure that it retains its individual identity and sense of place. The features of historic importance covered by this policy include ancient monuments, historic buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological remains, battlefields and the historic landscape including field patterns, hedgerows and green lanes. It is not only the features of historic heritage themselves, but the wider historic environment, which is of significance. Insensitive development that intrudes on the setting of important sites and buildings can compromise their value.

How it will be carried out

5.16 In line with PPG15²², new development should not damage buildings or structures of historic importance or their settings, whether they are listed or not. Where features of historic parks and gardens exist in isolation from their original context, the features themselves and their settings should be preserved. Development affecting landscapes listed in the 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'²³ will only be permitted where a registered landscape or its setting is unharmed.

²² PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, HMSO 1994

²³ Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, English Heritage

5.17 In accordance with PPG16²⁴, where development is proposed in areas of archaeological potential, developers may be required to commission an independent assessment of the site (in consultation with the local planning authority) prior to the application being determined. This will assist the Unitary Authorities in deciding whether development is appropriate. Where development is permitted, the Unitary Authorities will need to be satisfied that appropriate arrangements have been made for assessment, excavating and recording on the site. Where possible archaeological remains should be preserved in situ and should be protected from unnecessary disturbance by new development through sympathetic design. The Unitary Authorities maintain a Sites and Monuments Register (or Historic Environment Records), which will assist in the identification of the areas where archaeological investigation is most likely to be needed.

5.18 At an early stage in the local plan process local planning authorities will, where appropriate, assess the wider historic landscape within their areas. These assessments will be used to guide the local plan process and development control, by helping to steer development to areas, and managing its form, in order to ensure that it will not adversely affect the historic environment.

5.19 Exceptions to this policy will only be allowed where it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to protect the heritage and that no alternative is possible.

Policy EN5 : Air Pollution and Nuisance

Development should not give rise, either by itself or cumulatively with other developments, to unacceptable levels of noise, smell, dust, light or noxious emissions affecting areas beyond the site boundary, or to unacceptable levels of air pollution. In addition, existing and future levels of environmental nuisance should be taken into account when the location of uses sensitive to disturbance such as new houses, schools and hospitals, is planned.

Reason for the Policy

5.20 The activities of modern society, in particular industrial processes and transport, can easily pollute the natural environment and cause disturbance to people. This policy aims to avoid such harm to people's quality of life and to natural habitats. It also contributes to meeting the UK's international obligations.

How it will be carried out

5.21 Through local plans and development control in consultation with the Environment Agency. Local plans will have regard to PPG24²⁵ in respect of noise pollution. In line with PPG23²⁶ they will also include criteria against which applications for potentially polluting development may be determined. In addition to implementing this policy, and as a consequence of their other responsibilities the Unitary Authorities will investigate the need to identify Air Quality Management Areas.

²⁴ PPG16 Archaeology and Planning, HMSO 1990

²⁵ PPG24 Planning and Noise, HMSO 1994

²⁶ PPG23 Planning and Pollution Control, HMSO 1994

Where these are deemed necessary the Unitary Authorities will draw up and monitor Air Quality Management Plans.

Policy EN6 : Prevention of Flooding

1. Development proposals will avoid adding to flood risk, either within the development site or elsewhere. Measures to employ sustainable drainage solutions will be encouraged.

2 Local planning authorities and developers will carry out a flood risk assessment based on a sequential approach when identifying new development sites, or assessing development proposals to ensure that the site can be developed and occupied safely and to prevent adverse flooding effects elsewhere in the catchment.

3. New development in the functional flood plain will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and will be limited to essential infrastructure. Redevelopment of previously developed land in the functional floodplain should not interfere with flood flows or with river management options.

Reason for the Policy

5.22 Flood risk is likely to increase in the future due to climate change. PPG25²⁷ underlines the importance the Government attaches to the management and reduction of flood risk in the land-use planning process: to acting on a precautionary basis and to taking account of climate change. To ensure this issue is adequately dealt with, and in line with PPG25, sustainable drainage solutions should be encouraged.

5.23 Functional floodplains are the unobstructed or active areas where water regularly flows in time of flood. Essential transport and utilities infrastructure that has to be located within the floodplain may be an appropriate exception to the principle of resisting development in these areas.

5.24 It is also important that the potential flood risk arising from new development and redevelopment of existing built-up areas is assessed against not just the immediately surrounding areas but the whole catchment.

How it will be carried out

5.25 The local planning authorities will liaise with the Environment Agency to ensure the most up to date flooding and climate change information is being used. PPG25 advocates the application of the risk-based approach and the sequential test for development sites and proposals. This approach has to be adopted in the identification of development sites and the assessment of all development proposals in or affecting areas of flood-risk. Any variance from the use of the test must be fully justified by the local planning authority concerned.

5.26 The Unitary Authorities will apply the criteria in paragraph 27 and Table 1 of PPG25 when considering new sites for development. When considering development proposals, the Environment Agency will have a lead role in providing advice on flood

²⁷ PPG25 Development and Flood risk

issues. This will include defining the areas of flood risk and supplying this information to the Unitary Authorities. Where development is acceptable in principle, sustainable drainage solutions should be employed to ensure that new development and redevelopment of existing built-up areas does not have an adverse effect elsewhere in the catchment. This may mean avoiding development, which might otherwise be acceptable, in some areas. Where this is not a viable option it is important that development is designed in a manner that allows it adequate flood protection but does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere in the catchment.

5.27 Proposals for development should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment to ensure that the site can be developed and occupied safely. Development proposals will avoid adding to flood risk elsewhere. Unitary Authorities will apply a precautionary approach to any uncertainties that may arise. Local planning authorities will also need to be satisfied that no reasonable options are available in a lower-risk category, consistent with other sustainable development objectives. Where alternative lower-risk sites are not available, adequate flood protection or other mitigation measures will need to be made. These measures may require planning obligations to fund the provision and future maintenance of flood defence works including sustainable drainage measures. Local plans will set out their detailed arrangements for sequential testing and risk assessment.

Policy EN7 : Development and Water Resources

- 1. Development will only be permitted where existing water resources are adequate, or where they can be augmented in time to support the proposed development without adversely affecting existing water resources. Development proposals on sites with any existing water resource problems will be required to identify and incorporate plans for their resolution. Where appropriate, new development will include techniques to improve efficiency in the use of water.**
- 2. Development should not give rise to deterioration in the quality of groundwater or surface water, or their amenity and biodiversity.**

Reason for the Policy

5.28 Groundwater resources need to be protected from over-abstraction to ensure that they remain available to provide water supply and support habitats. There are parts of the Plan area where the expansion or intensification of urban land uses may run into water supply difficulties. It is essential that new development does not reduce the amount of water available to existing users (especially in times of drought) or produce undesirable impacts on the water environment and water quality.

How it will be carried out

5.29 Through liaison with the water companies and the Environment Agency to ensure that proposals in local plans and planning applications coincide with the availability of sustainable water resources; through liaison with the Environment Agency in their production of catchment management abstraction strategies to prevent development having a negative effect on water quality; and through the implementation of water efficiency measures. The Unitary Authorities will include policies in their local plans that encourage best practice in managing the

consumption of water. Other infrastructure requirements such as provision of sewerage services may be required in accordance with Policy DP4.

Policy EN8: Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

- 1. All forms of development will maximize the opportunity to incorporate current best practice in energy efficiency and energy conservation into their design, layout and orientation.**
- 2. Generation of energy from renewable resources should be considered, and implemented wherever feasible, in all development proposals, provided that adverse impacts on landscape, biodiversity and local amenity are avoided.**
- 3. Development proposals for the generation of electricity and heat from renewable sources will be encouraged, provided that adverse impacts on landscape, biodiversity and local amenity are avoided.**

Reason for the Policy

5.30 This policy encourages measures to meet Government objectives²⁸ to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% of 1990 levels by 2012, and increase the proportion of energy electricity generated in UK from renewable sources (to 10% by 2010).

5.31 Reducing the amount of energy we use is the most effective way of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases such as Carbon Dioxide that contributes to climate change. Passive solar design assimilates natural heat and light and can significantly reduce the need for energy for heating and cooling from fossil fuels. Energy efficient technologies, and those that utilise renewable resources such as solar energy or ground source heat, are likely to become increasingly cost effective to install during construction.

5.32 Generating electricity close to where its fuel source is produced and electricity is needed reduces loss caused by transport and transmission: and heat from Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants needs to be used locally. Developments should therefore be encouraged to incorporate measures that harness energy from renewable sources, provided that amenity and the natural environment are safeguarded.

5.33 SEERA's 'Proposed Alterations to RPG9 - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy'²⁹ suggests the Thames Valley sub-region (which includes Berkshire) achieves a minimum 8% of energy generation from renewable sources by 2016 and sets proposed renewable energy targets of 140 mega watts electricity (Mwe) installed capacity by 2010 and 209 Mwe by 2016. The key resources that are expected to contribute to the achievement of these targets are:

- Biomass (60%) - including CHP through use of wood, coppice, agricultural and forestry residue and dry biodegradable waste in facilities of a range of scales and through co-firing of conventional facilities.
- Wind (30%) - through a mixture of small clusters of wind turbines, single large turbines and also small turbines.

²⁸ UK Climate Change Programme 2000 Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs

²⁹ Proposed alterations to RPG9 - energy efficiency and renewable energy, SEERA, 2003

- Anaerobic digestion (5%) - of sewage and wet biodegradable waste.
- Solar (5%) - through incorporation of photovoltaic cells into developments.

How it will be carried out

5.34 Through local plans and development control. Local plans will include detailed policies on energy conservation and the development of renewable energy sources and include policies on appropriate locations for renewable energy installations. Development briefs and SPG may be used to guide developers and complement development plan policies. Developments using renewable energy or energy conservation measures will be expected to respect the amenity of their surroundings and to comply with the other policies in this Plan, in particular Policy W4 which deals with recycling and reduction of waste pollution from new development and Policy EN1 regarding the AONB.

CHAPTER 6

HOUSING

Context

6.01 Berkshire has experienced one of the fastest rates of housing growth of any part of the South East for the last four decades. The area was designated as part of a major growth area and only Buckinghamshire – which contained the new town of Milton Keynes – grew faster. Between 1961 and 1991 the housing stock of the area grew by over 130,000, almost doubling in size.

6.02 This changed with the publication of the 1994 version of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9 1994³⁰), which concluded that Berkshire and its surrounding areas were “now entering a period of adjustment, enabling infrastructure and services to catch up with the rapid growth of the recent past, and should no longer need to absorb continuing net inward migration throughout the 1990’s and into the next century” (RPG9 1994 paragraph 7.25). The 1994 RPG set a more modest rate of growth for the area and the most recent (March 2001) version of the Guidance has maintained the rate of housing development at about the same level, recognising that the Thames Valley area faces “increasing pressure on local infrastructure, land resources and house prices” and “considerable pressures on the transport network” (RPG9 paragraph 12.49).

6.03 Rapid growth over an extended period has fuelled local public concerns about the environmental and transport consequences that come with it. This may have been reinforced by the fact that large areas of Berkshire are protected (either as part of the MGB or as an AONB). This has meant that most of that growth has taken place in a relatively limited area in the centre of the County. Despite the “period of adjustment” referred to in 6.02 above, there is little evidence to suggest that there has been any significant catching up of the infrastructure and services over the last few years. Growth has continued to take place, albeit at a reduced rate, and the demand for services (and in particular for travel) has continued to increase. Public sensitivity about development makes it especially important that particular care is taken over the quality of any further house building arising from this Plan, although this will need to be addressed primarily through local plans and development control.

6.04 Despite the long period of rapid housing growth, the high cost of housing in the Berkshire area has been a matter of concern for decades. Needs range from those who are only marginally unable to compete in the market, to those in receipt of Housing Benefit, for whom market-price housing is a very remote prospect. A significant proportion of the local population is unable to meet the full costs of housing, and is dependent upon social landlords or other forms of subsidy. One aspect of the problem is the difficulty both public and private sector organisations face in recruiting key workers. These are employees who are essential to the functioning of the local economy, but who do not necessarily command sufficient income to enable them to compete for housing locally on the open market. They include teachers, police, health workers and a wide range of public service staff, as well as workers in public transport, catering and other industries. If these people are not available in the labour market in sufficient numbers, the consequences could be

³⁰ Regional Planning Guidance Number 9, GOSE, 1994

serious, both for the quality of life of everybody who lives locally, and the smooth running of the local economy.

6.05 RPG9 recognises that the affordability of housing is a problem and gives a provisional guideline for the region as a whole. This suggests that there may be a need to provide between 18,000 – 19,000 affordable dwellings per year. This represents between 46 - 49% of the total provision of housing in the wider South East Region covered by RPG9.

6.06 In November 2001, the Government gave planning permission for a fifth terminal at Heathrow Airport on the boundary of the Structure Plan area. In doing so, the Secretary of State had regard to the Inspector's Report into the proposal. The Inspector concluded that it was unlikely that Terminal 5 would generate a housing requirement over and above existing plan provisions (para 10.4.9)³¹.

6.07 The rapid growth of Berkshire over the last 30-40 years has involved a good deal of net in-migration. However, the level of housing now being provided for Berkshire in RPG9 does not allow for continued net in-migration. The new housing being proposed is likely to be offset by an increase in the number of households forming amongst the local population. This is caused by a number of factors, notably:

- a decrease in the number of people, especially the over 30s, living as couples, whether married or cohabiting; and,
- the general ageing of the population: there are fewer children (who tend to be in larger households) and more of the most elderly (many of whom live alone).

6.08 Whilst there will undoubtedly be a substantial number of new arrivals in the area, this is likely to be offset by large numbers of Berkshire people moving out of the area. Furthermore, an increase in the number of households does not necessarily imply an equivalent increase in population. Average household size has been falling over a considerable period, and is expected to continue to do so during the life of this Plan. One forecast shows average household size falling from 2.53 in 2001 to 2.33 in 2016. Forecasts of the overall population of Berkshire, based upon the housing figures in this Plan, suggest that it is likely to show a small increase of about 28,000 during the lifetime of the Plan. The economically active population will probably remain static during this period.

6.09 Recent Government guidance, in particular PPG3 has established a new approach to meeting the general needs of all those requiring housing. Instead of attempting to forecast need many years in advance and providing for it from the outset (predict and provide), the Government has opted for a system of 'plan, monitor and manage'. This involves keeping housing need under regular review and making additional releases of housing land as and when evidence of need for it emerges. The key elements of the Government's approach are:

- to make the greatest possible use of previously-developed land within urban areas, only releasing greenfield sites when the potential of the urban areas has been explored to its full;
- to ensure that the most sustainable areas are developed first; and,

³¹ The Heathrow Terminal Five and Associated Public Inquiries, Report by Roy Vandermeer QC, Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, 2001

- to encourage the efficient use of land by building at rather higher densities than are sometimes found in current developments.

6.10 The remainder of this chapter puts this new approach into practice.

Policy H1 : Overall Housing Provision

Provision will be made for the development of about 40,740 net additional dwellings between 1 April 2001 and 31 March 2016.

Reason for the Policy

6.11 The housing allocation at a county level is established through regional planning guidance, which sets an annual average rate of building for each county area. For Berkshire, this is 2,620 dwellings net per year. RPG9 states that its annual average level of provision only covers the period 2001–2006. However, it also states that development plans extending beyond this period should continue to make provision at the same rate until such time as a review of RPG9 has been carried out. The total provision in Policy H1 takes account of this requirement (2,620 x 15 = 39,300). In addition to the Berkshire figure set out in RPG9, provision has been made for the shortfall of about 1,180 dwellings, which is left over from the first two periods (1991-2001) of the previous 1991-2006 Structure Plan.

How it will be carried out

6.12 See paragraphs 6.30 – 6.33 which follows Policy H4.

Policy H2 : Housing Distribution and Phasing

The overall housing provision in Policy H1 will be distributed and phased as follows:

<u>Unitary Authority</u>	<u>2001- 2006</u>	<u>2006-2011</u>	<u>2011-2016</u>
Bracknell Forest	1,950	2,660	2,660
Reading	2,010	2,570	2,570
Slough	2,750	1,140	1,140
Wokingham	2,950	2,580	2,580
West Berkshire	3,900	2,590	2,590
Windsor & Maidenhead	1,360	1,370	1,370
Total	14,920	12,910	12,910

Reason for the Policy

6.13 One of the main purposes of the Structure Plan is to show how the county - level housing distribution in RPG9 is allocated between the individual Unitary Authorities. The provision is broken down into three phases, namely 2001-2006, 2006-2011 and 2011-2016. This has been done in order to deal expediently with the shortfall from the 1991-2006 Structure Plan and to harmonise the rate of development with that proposed in RPG9.

2001-2006

6.14 The base date for this Structure Plan is 2001. It therefore follows that a large element of the housing required for the first phase of the Plan is already committed either as outstanding planning permissions or as allocations in local plans. The Unitary Authorities consequently decided to distribute the dwellings amongst themselves according to the distribution set out in the previous 1991-2006 Structure Plan. However, in those Unitary Authorities, which have not completed their requirements for 1991-2001, the backlog has been added to their requirement for 2001-2006 in this Plan. In two Unitary Authorities, Reading and Windsor & Maidenhead, the level of completions expected for 2001-2006 is likely to exceed their allocations in the previous Structure Plan, so for these Unitary Authorities it was considered reasonable to make an increased allocation to take these predicted completions into account.

6.15 Completions in the period 2001-2006 will come from a range of sources. Whilst the aim will be to maximise the use of previously-developed land within the urban areas, there will also be a need to build on some greenfield sites in order to meet the provision required by 2006. This is particularly the case in Slough, where major MGB releases are required, as agreed through an Alteration to the previous Structure Plan.

2006-2011

6.16 The Unitary Authorities have decided that a number of factors should influence the distribution for this period. These include forecasts of household formation from within the existing population at a local authority level, an examination of where most employment development is likely to occur, the location of unconstrained land and the results of the Berkshire *Urban Potential Study 2000 (BUPS)*³² which was undertaken jointly by the six Unitary Authorities. This study covers the period 2000-2011 and involved a strategic survey of the urban areas of Berkshire, to see how many dwellings might be provided within those areas, under different assumptions.

2011-2016

6.17 For this period, the Unitary Authorities have decided to replicate the distribution used for the previous phase. This is because their intention is to continue to include the availability of urban previously-developed land as a major factor in the allocation process. The only indication currently available of what this might be, is drawn from BUPS, which runs to 2011.

6.18 Further details of the principles underlying the housing distribution are given in the EiP Housing Background Paper³³.

How it will be carried out

6.19 See paragraphs 6.30 – 6.33 which follow Policy H4.

³² Berkshire Urban Potential Study 2000, The Berkshire Unitary Authorities Joint Strategic Planning Unit, March 2002

³³ Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016: Housing Background Paper, The Berkshire Unitary Authorities Joint Strategic Planning Unit, 2003

Policy H3 : Location of Housing Development

- 1. Policy DP1 sets the over-arching principles for all development during the Plan period. In accordance with these principles the scale of housing development in a settlement shall be determined in relation to the accessibility of the settlement by public transport, cycling and walking and by the availability of infrastructure, services and employment. Major housing developments will primarily be located in and adjoining the Major Towns of Newbury, Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell, Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor and their contiguous built-up areas. Local plans may provide for housing in other locations where this would be in pursuit of other policies in this Plan.**
- 2. Housing development should therefore be located on (in order of priority):**
 - a. Previously-developed land and in existing buildings in urban areas;**
 - b. Extensions to existing urban areas with good public transport links to the rest of the urban area or with firm proposals to provide such links.**
- 3. Subject to these overriding considerations, housing development should:**
 - (a) Be on previously-developed land and in existing buildings if available; and,**
 - (b) Have good existing accessibility to jobs, shops, educational and other community facilities by modes other than the car, or be linked to firm proposals for achieving such accessibility; and,**
 - (c) Be on sites in areas with sufficient local capacity in existing infrastructure, including social infrastructure, or be linked to firm proposals to supply that infrastructure; and,**
 - (d) Be located and devised so as to support new infrastructure and provide sufficient demand to sustain local services and to build new, balanced communities which include affordable housing; and,**
 - (e) Take account of the physical and environmental constraints of land.**

Reason for the Policy

6.20 The overall spatial strategy (Policy DP1) is for an urban renaissance focused on the Major Towns, where major employment and retail activity will be concentrated. It is appropriate for major housing development to follow this approach. In accordance with Policy DP1, the scale of housing development should be proportionate to the accessibility of settlements and the level of services and infrastructure there.

6.21 The Government wants planning authorities to maximise the use of previously-developed land, empty properties and the conversion of non-residential buildings for housing, in order to prevent the unnecessary release of greenfield land for development which could lead to sprawling towns with outlying suburbs heavily dependent on private transport. It is important, for reasons of sustainable development, that previously-developed land in urban areas is developed as a priority. Calculations made by the Unitary Authorities indicate that around 75% of the

housing needed in the first two phases of this Structure Plan can be accommodated on urban previously-developed land. That would still leave a proportion to be provided elsewhere. The optimum way of doing this is in the form of extensions to urban areas, which are well linked to the existing area and its facilities.

6.22 The definition of previously-developed land excludes land such as parks, recreation grounds and allotments in built-up areas, which have not been developed previously, even though there may be buildings on this land. It also excludes land where there is a clear reason that could outweigh the re-use of the site (such as its contribution to nature conservation), or land, which has subsequently been put to an amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring redevelopment. (See PPG3 Annex C.)

6.23 There may be special circumstances where housing development would not comply with these considerations relating to location. For example, a Unitary Authority may wish to pursue the aims of Policy DP8 on creating and sustaining viable rural communities by permitting an element of housing for these communities. Such special circumstances will be set out in local plans.

6.24 In addition to the overriding priority of using urban previously-developed land, there are a number of other considerations, which need to be applied to the process of locating major housing development. It is important that new or replacement housing is located so that residents can reach their destinations easily by a choice of modes of transport. Such destinations include local facilities such as schools, and those, which may be further afield, such as places of employment. It makes good sense for new housing developments to follow proposals for any improvements to public transport, cycling and walking that are already being planned by the Unitary Authorities. This way, people can benefit from such improvements as bus priority corridors or new railway stations, as soon as they move in. Alternatively, the promoters of a housing development may themselves make plans to improve public transport to provide effective choices of transport to their future customers.

6.25 It is essential that new or replacement housing is provided with the infrastructure it needs. This could be physical, such as sewers and water supply, or social, such as sufficient school places. In many parts of Berkshire, the local choice of services is limited, and people have to travel outside their immediate localities to gain access to the facilities they need. Some such areas have limited affordable housing. New development can be planned to generate additional demand, which will help the survival and establishment of local services such as shops and provide communities with a greater variety of housing choices.

6.26 The administrative boundaries in Berkshire are such that the development of housing within one Unitary Authority may have consequences for the infrastructure or housing provision of a neighbouring one. In allocating land for housing at the local level, adjoining Unitary Authorities should therefore work together in determining the best locations for development in order to ensure that the housing requirement is delivered in the most sustainable manner.

6.27 While taking account of the above points, the location of major housing development must also take account of environmental considerations, as referred to in the Environment Chapter.

How it will be carried out

6.28 See paragraphs 6.30 – 6.33 which follow Policy H4.

Policy H4 : Managed Release of Sites

Local plans will identify sites for housing which accord with the criteria in Policy H3. Local plans will include phases, and will indicate the phase(s) in which individual sites will be released. The release of land will be based on the need to achieve the provisions for each Unitary Authority in Policy H2. Where appropriate, local plans will also incorporate reserve sites, which can be brought forward where monitoring demonstrates that there is likely to be a shortfall in the delivery of the housing requirement.

Reason for the policy

6.29 The Government's "plan, monitor and manage" approach means that careful attention should be paid to the release of sites for development, especially greenfield sites, because once these are built on there is no turning back. In previous years, there has been a tendency for the whole requirement for housing in a Unitary Authority to be assessed at the beginning of, say, ten years, leading to the allocation of greenfield land at the start of the period. Over the years, circumstances can change. For example, unpredicted sites involving previously-developed land in urban areas may emerge. On the other hand, alterations to national or regional planning policy may result in changes to the housing numbers required in a Unitary Authority. These events could mean that the early release of greenfield land ends up being premature.

How Policies H1-H4 will be carried out

6.30 The Unitary Authorities will prepare local plans, which aim to provide for a level of housing completions in each Unitary Authority in line with Policy H2. They will survey the potential of the land and buildings in their areas for housing development, and then identify sites for housing following the principles in Policy H3 above, taking account of a realistic assessment of the likelihood of sites coming forward for development. As a general rule, they will use urban previously- developed land in preference to other sources of housing land, other sustainability considerations in Policy H3 being equal. They will also determine the phasing of development and the timing of the release of land in order to give priority to the re-use of previously-developed land, control the pattern and speed of growth and ensure the co-ordination of adequate provision of infrastructure, using as a starting point the principles set out in Policy H4. The allocation of sites to phases will be undertaken in the light of the need to achieve the provisions for each Unitary Authority in Policy H2, taking into account the likely timing of the flow of completions from each site.

6.31 The sustainability of sites identified for housing will vary. At the time of plan preparation, the least sustainable should normally be allocated to later phases, providing that constraints, such as infrastructure provision, site assembly and preparation, permit the more sustainable ones to be developed first. Unitary Authorities should also consider the use of 'reserve sites' as a means of incorporating the 'plan, monitor and manage' approach in their local plans where this is appropriate to their local circumstances.

6.32 It is reasonable to assume that sites, which have not been identified in local plans, will emerge during the period of the local plan. Such “windfall” sites could prove more sustainable than the sites identified for later phases of the local plan. This is a further reason for the allocation of sites to phases. The local plans will need to include policies based on Policy H3, which will be used to determine applications for housing development on windfall sites. It is important that the treatment of these sites also follows sustainability criteria.

6.33 The Unitary Authorities will continue to monitor annually completions of housing against the assumptions made in the BUPS. Monitoring will pay particular attention to the rate of windfalls, which have occurred, and to how this compares to the forecasts, which were made in the BUPS. Assuming that the Government’s proposals for changing regional and strategic planning are made law, the Unitary Authorities will also use the results of monitoring the urban and other sources of land supply in contributing to the initial draft of the RSS to be published in January 2005.

Policy H5 : Affordable Housing

A proportion, based on local housing needs assessments, of the housing allocated to each Unitary Authority in Policy H2 shall be for affordable housing.

Local plans will include:

- (i) a statement of the overall number of affordable dwellings to be provided in the Unitary Authority;**
- (ii) a definition of “affordable housing” in terms of the relationship between local income levels and house prices or rents and local priorities for its provision;**
- (iii) a site-size or housing-number threshold above which affordable housing will be sought;**
- (iv) the amount of affordable housing to be provided on each housing site above the threshold.**

Reason for the Policy

6.34 To ensure that the housing needs of the whole community are addressed. Due to the high cost of housing in this area, many households do not have an income that is sufficient to enable them to afford housing (to rent or to purchase) at the prevailing market price. There is therefore a substantial need for affordable housing. The nature and scale of this need tends to vary from one area to another, as is revealed by local housing needs assessments. These will help provide the Unitary Authorities with the justification for seeking a particular level, type and mix of affordable housing. The Plan therefore allows the specific requirements to be set at a local level. As paragraph 6.05 states, the Government has estimated that there is a potential need for between 46-49% of the total housing provision at a regional level to come within the category of ‘affordable’.

6.35 Affordable housing is provided on private sector development sites as the outcome of a process of negotiation with the local planning authority. Government advice³⁴ is that, in England as a whole, this should only be pursued on sites of more than 25 dwellings or one hectare outside London. There are Unitary Authorities in Berkshire where local plans have already adopted a lower threshold of 15 dwellings or half a hectare and these policies may be carried through in the new round of local

³⁴ Circular 6/98 Planning & Affordable Housing 1998

plans where this is justified in the light of local circumstances and national planning guidance.

6.36 Unitary Authority boundaries within Berkshire do not always represent discrete housing markets. In particular, Reading and some of the adjoining areas of Wokingham and West Berkshire effectively function as a single housing market. The Unitary Authorities concerned will need to work together in order to properly assess the need for affordable housing and to ensure that the affordable housing needs arising from this urban area are being adequately met.

How it will be carried out

6.37 Each Unitary Authority will undertake a housing needs assessment on a regular basis. This will identify the extent and nature of affordable housing need within its area. RPG9 requires local authorities to ensure that assessments are undertaken in a consistent manner, particularly in sub-regions where there is evidence of cross-boundary movements, especially for journeys to work (RPG9 Policy H4). The Government has published guidance³⁵ on how to do housing needs assessments, which should aid consistency. Local plans and supplementary planning guidance will provide a definition of 'affordable' and set a local target for its provision. The Unitary Authorities serving the wider urban area centred on Reading will look to joint working to see that the needs of the whole area are addressed, using the available resources of land and existing buildings. Having undertaken their assessments, it will then be for the individual Unitary Authorities concerned to consider how their respective needs can best be served, through the implementation and subsequent management of housing developments in these locations. Where applicable, local plans will give separate consideration to the affordable housing needs of rural communities, and will decide whether special rural measures, such as exceptions policies, are appropriate. In identifying sites where affordable housing is to be provided, local plans will have regard to Policy DP8 and give particular emphasis to sites that are in locations that have good access by public transport to employment opportunities, cultural facilities and other services.

Policy H6 : Residential Density and Dwelling Mix

Residential development will make efficient use of land. Generally, this will be achieved by encouraging developments in excess of 30 dwellings per hectare (net). However, in areas with good public transport accessibility, or in areas where there are firm proposals to raise the level of accessibility to an acceptable standard, densities will be in excess of 50 dwellings per hectare (net). Schemes involving residential development will provide a variety of dwelling sizes and types.

Reason for the Policy

6.38 To minimise the amount of land needed for development and particularly the need for greenfield sites. To help secure the renaissance of the urban areas by increasing the intensity of use and number of people living in them. To comply with

³⁵ Local Housing Needs: Guide to Good Practice' Guide Department for Transport London and the Regions, HMSO 2000

Government policy, which discourages residential development, which makes inefficient use of land. To help meet the needs of all sectors of the population and to encourage the establishment of balanced communities.

How it will be carried out

6.39 By the local planning authorities, through local plans and development control. Each Unitary Authority will aim to ensure that residential schemes achieve densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) (net) in less accessible areas provided such proposals would not be harmful to the character of the surrounding area. Generally, schemes of less than 30 dph should be avoided. Densities over 50 dph should be achieved in areas with good public transport accessibility. In particular, the centres of the Major Towns of Newbury, Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell, Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor are the locations within Berkshire with the best combination of public transport accessibility and range of jobs and services. They also contain existing areas of high-density residential and commercial development, although these vary substantially in size from town to town. Therefore, to a varying degree in these town centres, there are likely to be opportunities for densities of considerably more than 50 dph³⁶. Unitary Authorities will have regard to this policy and to relevant guidance on good practice in drawing up more detailed local policies and proposals on the densities applicable to different parts of their areas in their local plans. Developers and Unitary Authorities will need to think imaginatively about designs and layouts that should make more efficient use of land whilst responding to the character of the surroundings. More detailed guidance on the densities that might be applied in different types of locations is given in the BUPS.

Policy H7 : Loss of Housing

Proposals for redevelopment or change of use resulting in the loss of residential accommodation will not be permitted unless they replace at least the number of dwelling units lost, normally within the proposal site.

Reason for the Policy

6.40 Development proposals that would result in the loss of housing may require local planning authorities to consider releasing more housing land, possibly on greenfield sites. There should therefore be no avoidable loss of housing. The presumption is that any losses will normally be replaced as part of the development proposal, in order to minimise the take-up of land for development and maximise the amount of housing that can be accommodated within existing settlements.

How it will be carried out

6.41 By the Unitary Authorities, through development control.

³⁶ Scenario 2 of the Berkshire Urban Potential Study 2000 suggests an average net site density of 115 dph on certain sites with a 'town centre' character.

Policy H8 : Gypsy Sites

1. Gypsy sites should :

- (i) meet an identified need,**
- (ii) have safe road access,**
- (iii) be located so as not to cause adverse impacts on neighbouring land,**
- (iv) be capable of sympathetic assimilation into their surroundings, and,**
- (v) revert to their former use if no longer needed.**

2. Gypsy sites should not normally be located in areas where development is severely restricted, such as the Metropolitan Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the North Wessex Downs AONB.

Reason for the Policy

6.42 Government advice³⁷ suggests that structure plans should include guidance on the provision of sites for gypsies residing in or resorting to the area. The combination of trade and residential uses often required of gypsy sites means finding suitable locations with appropriate facilities can be difficult.

How it will be carried out

6.43 The Unitary Authorities in Berkshire already run a number of gypsy sites. The Unitary Authorities may receive applications for additional gypsy sites and may use this policy to determine such applications, or use these principles to develop more detailed policies in local plans.

³⁷ Circular 1/94 Gypsy Sites and Planning 1994

CHAPTER 7

EMPLOYMENT

Context

7.01 RPG9 requires local authorities to develop positive strategies for areas where congestion or land shortages are constraining economic growth. They should identify 'hotspots' and develop policies to tackle local problems. Better use needs to be made of existing employment land, giving precedence to the re-use and more intensive use of developed land over the release of new land. Development should be concentrated where there is access by environmentally friendly modes of transport.

7.02 There has been a history of rapid employment growth in Berkshire and most of the urban areas of the County come within the definition of hotspots given in RPG9 (paragraph 7.6). Leading companies have located in the area independently, without the need for any intervention on the part of the public sector. The expansion of jobs has far outpaced the rate of growth of the labour force in recent years and looks set to continue to do so in the immediate future. The housing provision, set down in RPG9 and reflected in this Plan (Policy H1) would support a workforce by the end of the Plan period of approximately the same size as the current one. This is because household size is falling, and because the population is becoming older, so that a greater proportion are past retirement age. A continuation of current rates of employment growth and labour supply would not be sustainable in the longer term.

7.03 There are already signs that the surge in employment growth during the 1990s has led to at least two undesirable consequences – the escalation of house prices and an increase in the average length of journeys to work. House prices in Berkshire, for example, increased faster than the average for the South East between 1995 and 2000. This is a reflection of the rapid rate of employment growth, coupled with pay increases in certain industries. Successful firms can pay key staff enough to compete in the housing market, or can intervene directly in the market, for example by buying up properties for their staff to occupy. However, such a policy tends to reduce the supply of affordable housing that is generally available, and forces other incoming or newly forming households to look further afield. As a consequence, the Thames Valley has some of the longest car commuting journeys in the South East, which is undesirable from the point of view of stress, economic effectiveness and environmental pollution. It also deprives surrounding areas of their own labour supply, leading to an outward ripple effect across the South East region and beyond.

7.04 In November 2001, the Government gave planning permission for a fifth passenger terminal (Terminal 5) at Heathrow Airport on the boundary of the Structure Plan area. Terminal 5 is due to open in 2007. Heathrow Airport is a powerful economic driver in the sub-region and the Inspector for the Terminal 5 Inquiry concluded that Terminal 5 would result in an increase of some 16,000 jobs. Although the Terminal 5 Inquiry Inspector concluded there was little cause for concern over the impact of the Terminal on the labour market of the surrounding area, including Berkshire, it was recognised that Heathrow Airport is the largest single source of employment in the wider study area and that it is of considerable importance. The employment generated by the new Terminal, when combined with employment growth from within Berkshire itself, is likely to add to the pressure on the limited

growth expected in the Berkshire workforce. The conclusions of the Terminal 5 Inspector on the implications for housing pressure are described in paragraph 6.06.

7.05 The RES also recognises the balancing act that needs to be performed, to maintain a healthy regional economy. Whilst encouraging the attraction and retention of leading edge businesses and clusters, it recognises the threat that congestion poses to economic competitiveness, and the pressure on the environment that economic growth places upon the region's towns and rural areas alike. The strategy looks for sustainable patterns of development, combining economic prosperity, social well being and inclusion and environmental protection.

- 7.06 In the light of these pressures, the employment policies of the Plan seek to:
- (i) direct job-creating development to those locations which best meet the aims of RPG9;
 - (ii) look for forms of development that will help to achieve local and central Government's common wish to bring about an urban renaissance. Priority will be given to those developments, which can ameliorate the pressures that further growth will bring. There is potential for increasing employment through: (a) the development of remaining greenfield employment commitments and (b) the re-use and intensification of sites within existing urban areas, without needing to release further greenfield land. The first roll-forward of this Plan, in about 2006, can consider whether there is a need for further greenfield releases; and,
 - (iii) support the retention of those businesses which are essential to the smooth running of the local economy, but which may find it difficult to find suitable accommodation in the area without some assistance from the planning system.

7.07 The word "employment" is used in the Structure Plan as shorthand for 'office, industrial, storage and distribution activities, including research and development'. It is recognised that many people work in other kinds of activities, such as shops and leisure, education and health. The Plan contains special policies for these activities because, in addition to being major destinations for employees, they are also key destinations for customers.

Policy E1: Location of Employment Development

The centres of the Major Towns of Newbury, Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell, Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor should be the principal locations for major office development. In accordance with Policy DP1, the scale of such development should be consistent with the role of the Major Town as an employment location. Other existing employment areas within settlements will be acceptable as locations for employment development provided that the type and scale of activity and the number of trips generated by the development are appropriate to the accessibility of the location especially by means other than the car.

Reason for the Policy

7.08 The location of employment is critical in people's choice of travel to work. If we are to keep the growth in car use within manageable limits, it is important that as many people as possible have the option to travel to work by public transport or to

walk or cycle there. One means of doing this is by limiting the sporadic creation of employment development. As a significant generator of travel demand, major office development should be focussed on the centres of the Major Towns as they generally have the highest levels of accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. In addition, higher value office development is a key land use component in facilitating viable mixed-use urban regeneration. The Plan therefore directs most major office development to the centres of the Major Towns, where regeneration is a priority. However, the scale of such development should be consistent with the differing roles of these centres as employment locations (as described in Chapter 3; Vision) reflecting the differences in their scale and character, including accessibility.

7.09 Consistent with the definition of employment in paragraph 7.07, Policy E1 does not exclude the development of offices on existing employment areas within settlements outside the centres of the Major Towns, but it does recognise that there is a need to provide for a range of other employment uses in these areas, such as service industries and storage and distribution, and that to be sustainable, higher-density office development should be located in the most accessible locations. Having regard to the current level of commitments for employment floorspace, to labour supply considerations and to the potential for the areas identified in Policy E1 to provide additional floorspace, there is no need to make additional strategic land releases for employment for at least the period prior to the first review of this Plan.

How it will be carried out

7.10 By the local planning authorities, through local plans and development control. Major employment development is defined in paragraph 4.03 of the Plan. Local plans will identify the boundaries of the centres of the Major Towns and other existing employment areas and give additional guidance on their accessibility and the scale and type of development, which would be appropriate there. Policy T4 provides a basis for evaluating the transport impacts of major development and ensuring: (a) that these are acceptable, and (b) that they have been taken into account in the form of the development. Applications for major employment development should be accompanied by a transport assessment, which considers the accessibility of the area.

Policy E2: Acceptability of Employment Development

Subject to Policy E1, major employment development will only be acceptable if it:

- (i) includes mitigation commensurate with its impact on the demand for housing, labour and skills; and**
- (ii) achieves the objectives of high quality urban areas contained in Policy DP5; and**
- (iii) complies with Policy T4 on travel impacts.**

Reason for the Policy

7.11 In the recent past, employment development has been undertaken with a relatively limited examination of its wider impact. In particular in Berkshire, there has been a faster rate of growth in the number of jobs than in the labour supply. The latter has been limited by the rate of housing development, which has been restrained for environmental reasons. This has resulted in housing pressures and

high house prices beyond the means of many. In addition the rate of investment in improved transport, especially public transport, has lagged behind. The Unitary Authorities wish to promote a more holistic approach to employment development throughout the new Structure Plan period. RPG9 calls on local authorities in the Western Policy Area to work with the private sector to secure improvements in transport and housing (Policy RE8). For transport, this could take the form of contributions to public transport investment schemes outlined in LTPs. As regards housing pressures, it could involve including substantial elements of housing (including elements of affordable housing) associated with employment schemes to increase the overall housing supply. Housing pressures arising from employment development would also be reduced if ways could be found of increasing opportunities for the existing workforce to take employment. For example, childcare provision may help parents to undertake paid work more easily, and training facilities can help people gain skills, which are now needed in the marketplace. In pursuit of this more holistic approach, the Unitary Authorities will expect major employment proposals to include an employment impact statement, which shows the number and type of jobs likely to be generated, how they expect to source their labour and what the wider impacts of so doing will be taking account of any mitigation included under Policy E2. Guidance will be issued on the preparation of such statements (as part of guidance on the Employment Chapter as a whole) in addition to regular monitoring of the balance between jobs and labour supply.

7.12 These housing and transport initiatives reflect some of the objectives of Policy DP5 on improving the quality of urban areas, namely provision of greater variety of land uses, introduction of housing, and improvement of access. Employment development can also further other objectives of Policy DP5. Many of the existing employment areas in the Structure Plan area, whether in town centres or in industrial estates, contain run-down buildings which are unsightly, poorly related to their surroundings or not suited to current and future needs. Often there is a lack of attractive urban open space. New developments should contribute to the improvement of the built fabric by the replacement of outworn or unsightly buildings or the refurbishment of older ones, which are worth preserving. The regeneration of these areas should also make full use of the potential for introducing or upgrading attractive hard and soft public open space and trees.

How it will be carried out

7.13 By the local planning authorities in collaboration with developers and occupiers of employment premises. Grants of planning permission may be made in association with agreements with developers to make contributions towards, for example, public transport, training and childcare facilities (see RPG9 Policy RE2) and the provision of affordable housing and public open space. Local plans will give further guidance on the application of this policy to specific locations. Registered social landlords may also be involved in the provision of any housing involved.

Policy E3 : Diversity of Employment

1. The local planning authorities will seek to ensure the provision of adequate supplies of space for small- and medium-sized enterprises.

2. The local planning authorities will seek to ensure the provision of a variety of flexible and appropriate accommodation for a range of economic activities, which support the local economy and maintain economic diversity.

Reason for the Policy

7.14 Today's high-profile companies were once start-ups. With the increasing pace of technological change, it is increasingly necessary for there to be opportunities for people with new ideas to be able to put them into practice. Therefore premises for small and medium size enterprises are vital. The provision of such premises should include incubator and flexible 'grow-on' space that can support the development of small and growing knowledge based businesses.

7.15 Commercial land in Berkshire is in great demand and therefore expensive. This means that certain activities are increasingly forced out to cheaper areas. Such activities include vehicle repair, road maintenance, builders' yards and depots for a variety of service activities. These services are vital to the running of the local economy and there need to be opportunities for them to locate near to their markets. In addition, the cost of land can jeopardise the continuation of manufacturing and warehousing activity, which contribute to the variety of jobs available locally and to the overall national output. Their ability to continue to perform these functions should be ensured.

How it will be carried out

7.16 Local plans will identify areas where the provision of accommodation for these kinds of enterprises and land uses will be provided, or may include policies, which limit their loss as appropriate. This would not rule out the possibility of redevelopment and renewal, but would restrict their use for other types of activity, which are being adequately catered for elsewhere.

Business Clusters

7.17 A 'business cluster' has been defined as 'a geographic concentration of interconnected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries and associated institutions, in particular that compete but also cooperate'³⁸. RPG9 encourages the growth of clusters throughout the South East, where this is economically beneficial and environmentally acceptable, and within the Thames Valley sub-region particular emphasis is given to the need for joint working to enable such clusters to develop in a sustainable way.

7.18 Typically then, clusters comprise companies that are not just grouped in the same location but work together to their mutual benefit as well as compete. However, clusters are highly individualistic and there is no definitive view of what constitutes a

³⁸ Research Report; "Planning for Clusters Department for the Environment", Regions and Transport, HMSO 2000

cluster (the degree of geographic concentration and interconnectedness) or the factors that lead to their development. While past research has examined the extent of cluster development in a variety of sectors in Berkshire, particularly information/communication technology (ICT), the Economic Strategy for the Thames Valley notes that although the area has ‘an impressive array of businesses in key sectors, especially ICT...the level of functional connectivity is however minimal and the competitive benefits are associated much more with agglomeration than clustering’³⁹. An objective of both SEEDA and Thames Valley Economic Partnership (TVEP) is to explore the scope for accelerating genuine cluster development in key sectors with a particular emphasis on the growing network of ‘Enterprise Hubs’ that provide business accommodation and technology transfer links with research institutions. The Unitary Authorities will work with their partners to establish whether existing and potential business clusters are present.

7.19 Although the extent of genuine clusters in Berkshire is unclear, the availability of accommodation for new and expanding businesses, not necessarily involving major employment development (e.g. incubator units), is likely to be an important factor in their development. However, as noted in RPG 9, cluster development should be assisted in a way that is sustainable. Where business logic generates clustering in Berkshire, Policies E1 to E3 are able to facilitate such development. They identify sustainable locations and criteria for major employment development that could accommodate corporate headquarters premises for cluster companies and seek to ensure adequate provision of incubator and ‘grow-on’ space for small and medium size enterprises.

7.20 National and regional guidance identify universities and other higher education institutions as having an important role in encouraging knowledge-based industries. The University of Reading fulfils the important strategic roles of being both Berkshire’s major higher education institution and a promoter of research and development in collaboration with the commercial sector. Reading Borough and Wokingham District Council should work in partnership with the University to facilitate the expansion and diversification of both functions where appropriate. Where this requires the provision of accommodation outside the main Campus for industries and services with a special need to be closely associated with the University, this should be established through the local plan process. In determining the location of such development, regard should be given to the overall objectives of the Plan, including those set out in Policies E1 to E3, together with the detailed impacts on the locality proposed.

Policy E4 : Future Uses for Employment Land

1. In reviewing employment land the Councils will seek to ensure that the amount and character of employment land and premises is appropriate, taking into account the following matters:

- (i) the need of communities for other land uses, especially housing; and**
- (ii) the size of the future resident workforce; and**
- (iii) the need to ensure a diverse economy, and, in particular, the need for sufficient land/premises for industrial, storage and distribution activities.**

³⁹ An Economic Strategy for the Thames Valley, Thames Valley Economic Partnership 2003

2. Applications for permission or for renewal of permission, for redevelopment or change of use of land in business, industrial, storage or distribution use will not be granted without a review of the continued justification for the development proposed, having regard to the criteria in clause (1) above and the considerations in Policies E1, E2 and DP5.

Reason for Policy

7.21 As described in paragraph 7.02 of this chapter, the increase in jobs (in the immediate future at least) is likely to outpace the growth of the workforce. This is based on the current stock of employment commitments and the scope for the re-use and intensification of existing employment sites within urban areas, particularly in the town centres. Encouraging opportunities for the redevelopment or change of use of employment sites and premises to residential and other community uses should help to reduce the imbalance between jobs and labour and support the estimates in the BUPS of a continued supply of housing completions on former employment sites. It should also help meet the needs of communities for other uses such as schools and healthcare facilities. In addition, existing permissions or allocations for employment use may not be in the most sustainable locations, especially in terms of accessibility by public transport, and may fail to meet the objectives of Policy E1, Policy E2 and Policy DP5. In these cases the site may be more suitable for an alternative use, such as housing, either on its own or as part of a mix of uses.

7.22 It is important to ensure that any such changes of use do not jeopardise the future diversity or strength of the local economy. Lower value, lower density employment space is in short supply and provides accommodation for a range of activities that play an important role in supporting the local economy and help to maintain a range of local employment opportunities, as reflected in Policy E3. The Unitary Authorities need to be satisfied that the loss of this type of space would not have an adverse impact on these matters.

How it will be carried out

7.23 The Unitary Authorities will review the supply of land and premises for employment use as part of the preparation of local plans. Where it can be achieved without detriment to the future diversity of the economy, the Unitary Authorities will identify sites for change of use from employment uses to residential or community uses. Potential sites for change of use to residential will also occur where they have not been anticipated ('windfalls'). Local plans will contain policies which will ensure that change of use can only occur if it would not jeopardise the future diversity of the local economy, and in particular the need for premises for industrial, distribution and storage activities. Guidance will be prepared on the implementation of this policy (as part of guidance on the Employment Chapter as a whole) and it will deal with the way in which the matters in Clause 1 of Policy E4 should be taken into account. Proposals for redevelopment will have to comply with other policies in the plan including, where appropriate, Policy DP1, Policy DP6, Policy E1, Policy E2 and Policies H1 to H4.

CHAPTER 8

SHOPPING AND LEISURE

Context

8.01 Berkshire's rapid development and affluence have resulted in considerable growth in retail and leisure expenditure in recent years. In addition to expansion in the town centres, a substantial increase in the range of goods sold through retail warehouses has been seen during this period, for the most part located beyond easy access from the town centres and heavily dependent upon car-borne trade. In some cases, these outlets are in direct competition with town centre retailers.

8.02 Government policy (for example, in PPG 6⁴⁰, paragraph 1.1) puts considerable emphasis upon maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres, concentrating retail and leisure development in areas where the consumer can benefit from the competition between retailers and where customers have easy access by a choice of means of transport. To this end, the Structure Plan starts from a presumption that major retail and leisure development should in future go into the main town centres. Exceptions to this will need to demonstrate that the proposed development meets the criteria set out in Policies S2 and S3. For the purposes of this Plan, sport, recreation and tourism uses should fall within the definition of 'leisure', since there are significant overlaps in the uses.

Policy S1: Major Retail and Leisure Development in Town Centres

1. Major retail and key town centre leisure development will take place in the centres of the Major Towns. The scale and nature of retail and leisure development will be consistent with the role of the centre, as set out in Schedule 1 (below). Where Schedule 1 or other work related to the Structure Plan has identified a need for major new retail or leisure development, local plans should adopt the sequential approach (set out in policies S2 and S3) in identifying suitable sites to accommodate this need.

2. Development proposals will need to demonstrate that they will not, either by themselves or cumulatively with other developments and permitted schemes:

- (i) adversely affect the vitality and viability of other town centres; and/or**
- (ii) result in unacceptable increases in the numbers of car-borne shopping or leisure trips or in their average length.**

Where appropriate, developments will be expected to contribute towards improved access and choice of transport to the centre, in accordance with Policies DP4 and T4.

3. This Policy, and Policy S3, will apply to those leisure and related uses classified as key town centre uses, as defined in paragraph 8.05.

⁴⁰ PPG 6

Schedule 1: Role of the main town centres within Berkshire

Reading: Function and Scale: Reading is the major regional centre for the wider Thames Valley and a top UK commercial and retail destination hosting a range of higher order comparison retailers. The shopping centre is in a very sustainable location due to good public transport links and has recently been significantly expanded and modernised by the completion of the Oracle Shopping Centre.

Future strategy: Although Reading provides a range of shopping choices, there is scope to accommodate additional major international stores and high order retailers, as well as the expansion of the specialist and independent retail sectors. Future development should complement the existing provision and include activities that reflect the trend towards leisure retailing, such as cafes, restaurants, galleries, arts and leisure opportunities, and will be supported by further pedestrianisation and environmental improvement. The area around the station and others characterised by lower density development around the fringe of the core provide significant scope for higher density mixed-use development with excellent and sustainable design quality, in line with the principles of urban renaissance, and will help support the centre in the future.

Bracknell: Function and scale: The town centre currently serves predominantly the residential population of Bracknell town and immediately adjoining areas, such as Sandhurst and Crowthorne, along with a substantial population working in the town centre and its industrial areas. It currently provides mainly for their convenience shopping needs, with a relatively poor choice of comparison, convenience and specialist shopping.

Future strategy: It is not currently serving its catchment population well, due to the need for regeneration, and has failed to keep pace with other centres in the area in this respect. Opportunities exist for significant redevelopment for comparison, convenience and specialist shopping, as well as incorporating a greater variety of town centre activities, to improve the service to its existing catchment and to benefit from any improvements in communications: (a) between the town centre and its immediate residential and employment catchments and (b) with other parts of the Blackwater Valley.

Maidenhead: Function and scale: Maidenhead provides an important centre for both convenience and comparison shopping for the urban area and its surrounding catchment. Following relatively little recent significant retail development in the town centre, there is identified scope for growth in order to serve the needs of its catchment population.

Future strategy: The town centre is undergoing a period of regeneration and revitalisation, and there will be a need to consolidate and expand its retail and leisure function over the Structure Plan period.

Newbury: Function and scale: Newbury serves the convenience and many of the comparison shopping needs of the Newbury and Thatcham built-up area along with its large rural hinterland. Newbury has recently been enhanced by pedestrianisation. There are threats to its higher-order retail functions from Reading and other major centres outside the County.

Future strategy: There is scope for retail and leisure growth in Newbury town centre as part of mixed-use developments of a type that will serve to sustain and enhance the diversity of employment within the town. Such development

will maintain and capitalise upon the market town character of the centre, expanding floorspace in order to enhance and build upon the quality and variety of the shopping and leisure facilities already available in the town centre.

Slough: Function and scale: *Slough is a sub-regional shopping centre with a relatively well-defined catchment, including a substantial local workforce. It faces competition mainly from centres in the western part of London. It offers the major high street retailers, rather than specialist outlets.*

Future strategy: *The main purpose of development in Slough town centre will be to consolidate and improve the service to its existing catchment population, rather than expanding it significantly.*

Windsor: Function and scale: *The centre has a wide attraction for comparison shopping, especially in the area of higher-value outlets, in addition to serving the convenience and comparison shopping needs of its local catchment population. The town's tourism role also has a significant impact upon its retail function.*

Future strategy: *Any development will be aimed at strengthening and enhancing Windsor's existing attraction as a shopping destination, rather than a substantial expansion of its retail catchment area. In particular, development, which improves the ability of the centre to meet the shopping needs of local people, as well as those of the tourist trade, will be welcomed.*

Wokingham: Function and scale: *Wokingham is mainly a convenience shopping centre, with a limited provision of comparison/specialist floorspace.*

Future strategy: *The aims for the future are: to maintain and capitalise upon the market town character of the centre, expanding floorspace in line with the need to improve service to the immediate catchment population of the growing town; to maintain vitality and to reduce the leakage of local custom to adjoining centres. Service improvements should focus on enhancing quality and variety in all types of in-town shopping, leisure and entertainment uses and increasing the proportion of comparison goods shopping. Mixed-use schemes should include high-density housing to support the use of the town centre.*

Other, smaller centres: *Centres not identified above will be classified as district or local centres. They will have lower priority than the centres of the Major Towns listed above in the sequential process, set out in Policies S2 and S3. The Councils will support the strengthening of the role and function of these smaller centres, including villages, which is to create and maintain sustainable communities by providing easily accessible shops, services and facilities and providing a focus for local people, and this will be set out in more detail in the relevant local plans.*

Reason for the Policy

8.03 To identify the appropriate nature and scale of development within the major retail areas in Berkshire, in order to create a more sustainable pattern of shopping or leisure trips and to focus development on those town centres where there is a need for regeneration. Traditionally, the relationship between shopping centres has been

expressed in structure plans in terms of a simple hierarchy, but this was not felt to give a sufficiently good understanding of the nature of their role and the relationships between the centres of the Major Towns in Berkshire. The Schedule above is intended to give a more detailed picture of the network of higher order centres. In doing so, it recognises the polycentric nature of Berkshire, which does not conform readily to a simple hierarchy. Local plans will address the roles and hierarchy of lower order centres. Development within district and local centres will normally be small-scale and related to the needs of the immediate catchment population.

How it will be carried out

8.04 Through local plans, development control and associated local authority activity, such as town centre management. Local plans will establish the boundaries of town centres. Extensions to town centres will be identified through the local plan process. They will meet the criteria set out in PPG6, Annex A, as being “a location within reasonable walking distance of the centre and providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the store, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes”. Consideration of whether a retail or leisure function can be accommodated within or at the edge of a centre may take into account the space or development opportunities currently available, or likely to be available in the future in those locations, and whether the development could take a different form to that proposed. Consideration will also be given to the impact the development would have on the character of the area and on traffic congestion.

8.05 Major retail development is defined as that which has a net increase in retail and ancillary floorspace of 2,500 sq. m. or more (the threshold set in PPG6), although consideration will be given to the relationship between the size of the scheme and the size of the centre within which it is being located. The same threshold applies to leisure development. Those leisure uses that are classified as key town centre uses will include cinemas, theatres, restaurants, hotels, conference facilities, bowling alleys, ice rinks, bingo halls and ‘footloose’ (meaning not fundamentally connected to a specific location) tourism development. Other key town centre uses will be identified in local plans, and can also include built sport and recreational facilities.

8.06 For the purpose of assessing cumulative retail impact, outstanding planning permissions and completions within the last five years will be taken into account. The cumulative impact of leisure development will be assessed with reference to the individual circumstances of each case, given the more complex relationships between leisure uses. The need for additional retail or leisure floorspace will be kept under review by the planning authorities and more detailed guidance published as appropriate.

Policy S2 : Retail Development outside Major Town Centres

Development for major retail uses will only be permitted outside the centres of the Major Towns in exceptional cases:

- (i) where need is demonstrated for additional major retail development; and**
- (ii) where developers can demonstrate that their site selection has followed the sequential approach, with preference being given firstly to sites in the centre of Major Towns, secondly to sites on the edge of the centre of the Major Towns and to district centres and finally to out-of-centre sites; and**

- (iii) where it would not, on its own or cumulatively with other developments and permitted schemes, undermine the vitality or viability of any Major Town or district or local centre; and
- (iv) where it is accessible by means of transport other than the private car; and
- (v) where the changes in travel patterns over the catchment area would be in accordance with the Transport Strategy in Policy T1 and the development of the Strategic Transport Network; and
- (vi) where there would be no significant adverse environmental impacts, and the scale and nature of the scheme is appropriate to the role of the centre or area into which it is proposed to be located.

Reason for the Policy

8.07 It is recognised that there may be exceptional cases where major retail development cannot be accommodated in town centres. At the same time, the Plan aims to avoid the growth of forms and locations of development which undermine established town centres and which are excessively dependent upon access by car.

How it will be carried out

8.08 Through local plans and development control. Developers seeking exceptions to Policy S1 will be expected to accompany any application with evidence to address the matters covered in Policy S2. Local planning authorities may attach appropriate conditions to any consent or seek such other safeguards as are necessary to ensure that such developments comply with the policy.

Policy S3 : Leisure Development outside Major Town Centres

1. Development for major leisure and related uses classified as key town centre uses will only be permitted outside the centres of the Major Towns in exceptional cases where:

- (i) need is demonstrated for additional major leisure development; and
- (ii) developers can demonstrate that their site selection has followed a sequential approach, with preference being given firstly to sites in the centre of Major Towns, secondly to sites on the edge of the centre of Major Towns and to district centres, and finally to other sites which are or will, as part of the development, be made highly accessible by public transport and means of transport other than the private car; and
- (iii) it would not, on its own or cumulatively with other developments or permitted schemes, undermine the vitality and viability of any Major Town or district or local centre, particularly relating to the evening economy of those centres; and
- (iv) any changes in travel patterns over the catchment area would be in accordance with the Transport Strategy in Policy T1 and the development of the Strategic Transport Network ; and
- (v) there would be no significant adverse environmental impacts; and
- (vi) there would be no significant adverse impacts upon the amenity of nearby residents, and the scale and nature of the scheme is appropriate to the role of the centre or area into which it is proposed to be located.

Reason for the Policy

8.09 Leisure has proven to be an extremely dynamic sector of the economy, and exceptional cases where major leisure development would be acceptable outside town centres may arise. However, the argument often cited that certain types of bulk shopping trips cannot be adequately served by public transport alone does not apply to leisure development. Therefore, leisure development needs to be highly accessible by public transport. Leisure development may also cause a greater disturbance to nearby residents than retail development.

How it will be carried out

8.10 Through local plans and development control. Developers seeking exceptions to Policy S1 will be expected to accompany any application with evidence to address the matters covered in Policy S3. Where the amenity of nearby residents is under threat, appropriate conditions will be applied to address these concerns.

Policy S4 : Other Sport, Recreation, Tourism and Leisure Uses

1. Proposals for non-key town centre sport, recreation, tourism and leisure uses should be in a location appropriate to their use, and of a scale and form appropriate to their location's current and future:

- (i) accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking; and,**
- (ii) level of other infrastructure, services and employment.**

2. Subject to the above considerations, proposals should be located according to a sequential approach, as follows:

- (i) locations within settlements with good public transport accessibility;**
- (ii) other locations within settlements;**
- (iii) urban fringe areas with good public transport accessibility;**
- (iv) other urban fringe locations, and other rural locations with good accessibility by public transport; and**
- (v) other rural locations**

Proposals for forms of sport, recreation, tourism and leisure uses in a rural location must be in accordance with other policies in this Plan regarding development in the countryside.

3. In determining proposals likely to encourage people to visit the countryside for formal or informal recreation, the Councils will consider the potential effects of increased visitor numbers on landscape, wildlife and habitats, and the cultural heritage of the site and its surroundings.

Reason for the Policy

8.11 Policy S1 and Policy S3 deal with key town centre uses, but there are some sport, recreation, tourism and leisure uses that do not fall into this category, which are still vital to the quality of life of Berkshire's residents and the quality of experience of Berkshire's visitors. These uses require a more flexible version of the sequential approach, with consideration first being given to the most appropriate location for the type of use proposed. For instance, for some of these uses, a rural location is essential, particularly for the more informal forms. The Vision for this Plan (paragraph 3.26) recognises the need to promote the countryside for such uses. Where this is the case, locations on the urban fringe are the most easily accessible, and this

should be the first stage in the sequential approach to be considered. However, there is always a danger that an increasing amount of visitors will be detrimental to the very feature that is attracting people, and therefore any proposals in these locations must be considered against Policy EN1 (Landscape), Policy EN2 (Soil Quality and Agricultural Land), Policy EN3 (Biodiversity) and Policy EN4 (Historic Environment). Where appropriate, proposals should also be judged against Policy DP3 (Green Belt) and Policy DP7 (Gaps and Green Wedges).

How it will be carried out

8.12 Through local plans and development control. In particular, the Unitary Authorities will prioritise cross-boundary working to manage the pressures stemming from the high levels of tourism activity in Berkshire, as set out in the specific guidance for the Thames Valley in SEERA's Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance – Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation⁴¹.

Town Centres

8.13 PPG6 requires structure plans to provide a clear strategy for town centres overall, and not just for their retail functions. A number of policies in the Plan address this, and proposals for town centre development should refer to:

- Policy DP1 and Policy DP2: Setting out general principles for the location of major development.
- Policy DP4: Ensuring that development is accompanied by the infrastructure, services and amenities needed to ensure the proper planning of the area.
- Policy DP5: Setting out the principles of urban renaissance.
- Policy E1 and Policy E2: Addressing the location and form of major employment development and its contribution to urban renaissance.
- Policy T1, Policy T4 and Policy T5: Dealing with the car parking and other transport implications of development.

8.14 The Unitary Authorities will give further guidance on the strategies for their town centres in their local plans and other policy documents as appropriate.

⁴¹ Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation Regional Spatial Planning Strategy for Tourism (Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance - Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation), SEERA 2003

CHAPTER 9

TRANSPORT

Context

9.01 Berkshire has experienced rapid growth in population, housing and employment since the 1950's. In addition, people seek to travel much further each day in pursuit of their regular activities, and these trends are especially marked in the South East outside London. In Berkshire, the existence of a number of medium size towns in close proximity to each other and to London, a large but relatively dispersed population and higher than average incomes all contribute to this state of affairs. Other local factors are the attractive residential environments for many of the workforce, the high cost of moving house and the prevalence of short-term contracts (for example, in the Information Technology industry). All of these mean that people are likely to remain in one place while their travel destinations vary, leading to longer distance and more complicated patterns of commuting. Consequently, movement around and into and out of the County is becoming increasingly difficult, especially at peak times, and the environmental impact of transport is growing.

9.02 In addition to the internally generated demand for travel, Berkshire's transport problems are compounded by the fact that people from Wales and the South West have to travel through the County to reach Greater London, mainland Europe or places further afield by long-haul air (via Heathrow or Gatwick). As regards freight, goods moving from the Midlands and the North to the deep-sea container port at Southampton use the road and rail routes through the Plan area. The area is also on the freight route from the South West and South Wales to the Channel. These inter-regional relationships are illustrated in figure 9.1.

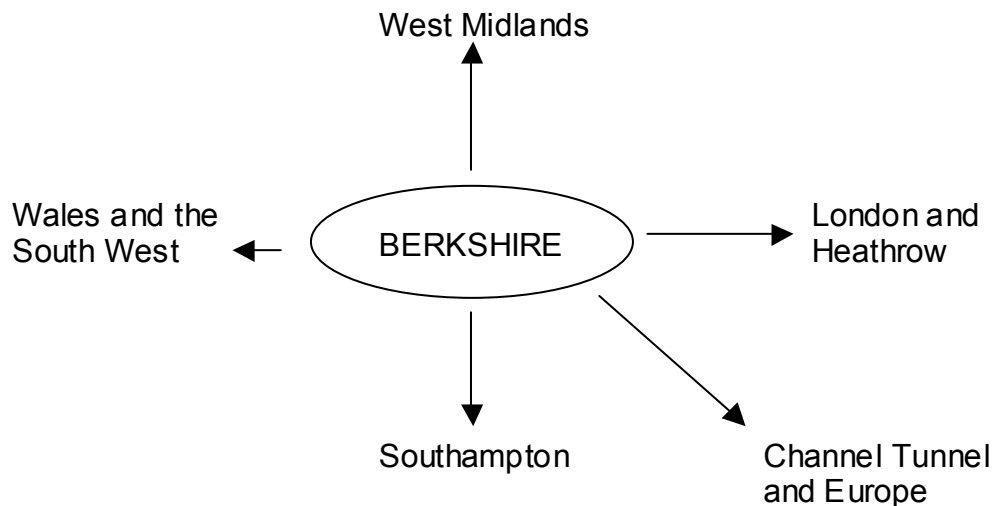
9.03 The development of solutions to transport issues is further complicated by the large number of agencies responsible for transport. While the Government sets overall transport policy, it delegates delivery of this at a national level to the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) and the Highways Agency. In turn, the SRA sets policies, which are implemented by Network Rail and the private train operating companies. The Government is seeking to improve regional co-ordination of transport through the regional planning bodies (in this area, SEERA). Locally, the Unitary Authorities are required to prepare LTPs, which in turn require them to work with bus companies and the rail industry to improve passenger transport (for example, through Quality Bus Partnerships). This Structure Plan will set the spatial strategy within which the next generation of LTPs will be prepared. The Government expects planning authorities to plan land use in such a way as to support transport objectives. For this reason, this chapter also contains a number of land use policies which attempt to ensure that land use planning decisions taken by the six Unitary Authorities are compatible with the strategic context for land use and transport set by this Plan.

9.04 In 2000, the Government issued a '*Ten-Year Plan*⁴² for transport. This promised a substantial increase in transport investment nationally. It was to deliver "an integrated response to the problems of congestion and pollution that detract from our quality of life and our future economic well-being; a significant increase in public

⁴² Transport 2010: The 10 Year Plan, Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions HMSO 2000

and private investment through a further development of public and private partnerships, and the targeting of increased resources across rail, road and public transport to deliver real improvements which make transport more effective and attractive for everyone”.

Figure 9.1 Berkshire’s Pivotal Position in the Communications of the South East



9.05 SEERA produced a Draft ‘*Regional Transport Strategy*’ which was subject to public examination in July 2003. Following the publication of a set of Proposed Changes in March 2004, the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) published the final Regional Transport Strategy in July 2004. This replaces Chapter 9 (Transport) of RPG9. It sets out a vision of a high quality transport system to act as a catalyst for continued economic growth and to provide, for an improved quality of life for all in a sustainable and socially inclusive manner (para. 9.7). The target is a regional transport system, which progressively reaches the standards of the best in North West Europe. Some of the key elements of that strategy – such as the network of hubs, spokes and gateways – have been applied to, and developed in, this Plan.

Policy T1 : Transport Strategy

1. Within Berkshire, there will be a strategy to concentrate on the improvement of transport nodes and the multi-modal spokes that link them, in order to assist the concentration of development in the Major Towns, to assist the objective of urban regeneration and to ensure that the best use is made of modes of travel other than the car.

2. The Councils will use their planning powers to:

- (i) reduce the need to travel, especially by car;**
- (ii) promote alternative modes of travel to the car;**
- (iii) increase the safety of travel;**
- (iv) provide improved access to jobs, leisure opportunities and services for all members of the community;**
- (v) secure the reliable movement of goods, in a manner compatible with the principles of sustainable development.**

Reason for the Policy

9.06 The spatial strategy of this Structure Plan is to focus major development on the seven Major Towns of Berkshire, thereby assisting in their regeneration and contributing to a sustainable approach to the use of land and resources (see paragraphs 4.01 to 4.07). The transport strategy of this Plan is to improve the links between the Major Towns, especially the quality of public transport, so as to help reinforce their role as multiple, interlinked centres, which perform complementary functions.

9.07 The Unitary Authorities' planning powers should be used to reduce the need to travel, promote alternative means of travel, increase safety and access so as to ensure that the operation of the planning system is consistent with the guidance given for the preparation of local transport plans.

How it will be carried out

9.08 By investment by central Government through the SRA and the Highways Agency and through LTPs. Particular emphasis should be given to proposals, which improve public transport. Also through other policies in this Structure Plan, especially Policy DP1, Policy DP2, Policy DP4, Policy DP5, Policy H3, Policy H6, Policy E1 and Policy S1, and, through local plans and development control.

Policy T2 : Strategic Transport Network

The strategic transport network comprises regionally significant corridors of movement and other major corridors of movement. These are identified on the key diagram and described in more detail below. The strategic transport network will be used as a framework for the preparation of local plans and local transport plans and as an aid to setting priorities for investment.

Reason for the policy

9.09 To set priorities for transport investment in the sub-region and provide clear guidance for LTPs.

9.10 There are two main types of movement of strategic interest within Berkshire: movement, which is of regional significance (which includes movements between other regions and abroad) and movement between the Major Towns identified in the spatial strategy (Policy DP1) as the focus for major development. Movement of regional significance comprises:

- **east-west movement** through the area;
- **orbital movement** around London;
- **north-south movement** through the area; and,
- **access to the major gateways** serving the area, in particular Heathrow and Gatwick Airports.

9.11 Movements of regional significance and other major corridors of movement are represented on the key diagram as lines (or spokes) linking the Major Towns in Berkshire with each other, and with key locations in adjoining areas. These corridors of movement do not necessarily represent specific roads or railway lines, but may encompass a number of routes. For example, the east-west lines linking London,

Slough, Maidenhead and Reading cover both the M4 and A4, and the main Great Western railway line. The different types of movement are looked at below.

9.12 East-west movement: this encompasses both inter-regional journeys linking the South West and Wales with London and Europe, and movement between Berkshire and London. The ambition of neighbouring regions for economic growth will itself result in additional traffic on Berkshire's transport networks. Improvements to this east-west corridor are therefore important, not only to Berkshire, but also at an inter-regional level. They could be achieved through the following measures:

- the upgrading of Reading Station, to ease the bottleneck in that part of the rail network;
- increases in capacity and other improvements to the Great Western main line;
- a rail link between east and west London such as one of the "Crossrail" options, depending on how its links with Berkshire are designed;
- enhanced coach services on the M4 corridor which are properly integrated with each other and with other modes of transport.

9.13 Orbital movement around London: only a very small part of the M25 lies within Berkshire itself, but the impact of orbital movements around London on the area is substantial. One of the main ways in which it is felt, is by traffic switching between the M40, the M4 and the M3, in orbital movements designed to avoid congestion on the busy western sector of the M25. Measures to address the needs of orbital movement could include:

- improved orbital public transport around London;
- enhancement of the wider orbital routes (such as the rail corridors linking Reading to Oxford and Guildford);
- highway measures to deal with the environmental impacts of orbital traffic or to make more efficient use of existing road space on orbital routes. (It is not, however, part of the strategy to promote rat-running by motorists on routes which are unsuitable for use by large volumes of long distance traffic);
- wider measures, such as the promotion of rail freight for long distance journeys, may also have some impact on the level of orbital movement, though no direct land use implications from these for the Berkshire area are anticipated.

9.14 North-south movement: there are several aspects to this. To the west of the County, the forthcoming multi-modal study will look at long-distance traffic using the A34 corridor and the corresponding rail route via Reading. Without prejudging the outcome of that study, the main barriers to movement along these corridors within Berkshire would appear to be:

- the junction of the A34 and M4 Junction 13, for which improvements are under construction; and
- the indirect nature of the north-south rail links, which run via Reading Station and the Basingstoke line. The main obstacles here are the lack of capacity in the Reading Station area and the potential for mixed fast and slow traffic south of Reading to delay faster passenger services.

9.15 In central Berkshire, one of the main issues for north-south movement is the lack of adequate capacity on the River Thames crossings in and around Reading. Another is the barrier to north-south movement formed by Junction 11 on the M4. Proposals are being brought forward to redesign this junction.

9.16 To the east, there is the problem with north-south traffic switching between the M40, the M4 and the M3, to avoid congestion on the M25, as referred to above. This affects a number of roads at the eastern end of Berkshire.

9.17 **Access to major gateways:** the South East region contains many of the country's gateways – the ports, airports (and the Channel Tunnel) that serve as points of access for international trade and travel. The ones most directly affecting the Berkshire area are the airports at Heathrow and Gatwick. (International rail links via London are also important, but access to these from Berkshire is covered by the section on east-west movement above). A number of measures for improving access to the airports are in various stages of development and are listed below.

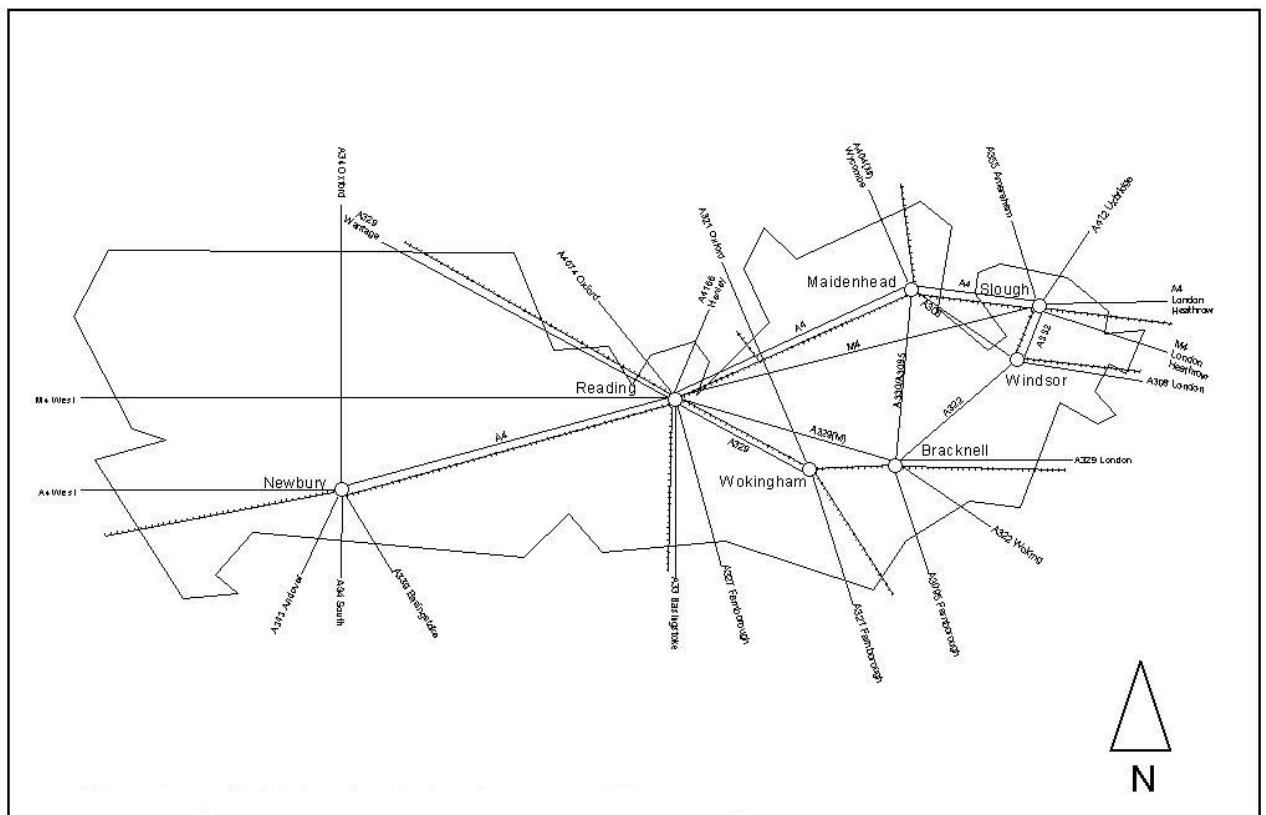
- Improved access to Heathrow could be provided by the Airtrack scheme linking the Waterloo-Reading line with the airport; and by improved services on the Great Western main line linked to an interchange at Hayes, or a western connection from Heathrow to the Great Western main line.
- Improved road access to Heathrow from the M25 is to be provided as part of the Terminal Five proposals.
- Rail access between Reading and Gatwick would be aided by the upgrading of the railway line between Reading and Guildford, referred to above, whilst improvements to the road links are being considered as part of the Orbit Multi-Modal Study⁴³.

9.18 **Movement between the Major Towns:** the spatial strategy of this Plan is to focus major development on the Major Towns (Policy DP1). These towns form a polycentric urban region in which many people use different places for different purposes. People may live in one, work in another and maybe visit a third for leisure purposes. It is important however that this kind of movement is increasingly sustainable. The transport strategy in Policy T1 emphasises ensuring that the best use is made of modes other than the car. This will require improvements in the quality of public transport between the Major Towns.

9.19 The Draft RTS identifies Reading and Slough as hubs, or focal points for economic activity and transport investment. The main transport links between them, and with other hubs, are referred to as spokes. However, this regional classification does not reflect the complexity of urban development within the Berkshire area since the Structure Plan identifies seven Major Towns. Berkshire thus has two regionally significant and five more locally important centres. Routes into them are shown on figure 9.2 and LTPs will identify appropriate measures to improve access along these routes as necessary. In some cases, these may involve land use proposals outside the administrative area of the Authority concerned. A particular example is park and ride, and a separate policy (T6) is included in the Plan to address this.

⁴³ "ORBIT – Transport Solutions Around London" Commissioning Report, GOSE 2002

Figure 9.2: Showing the main transport links between the Major Towns in Berkshire and their surrounding area.



How it will be carried out

9.20 By investment by central Government through the SRA and the Highways Agency, and investment by the Unitary Authorities through LTPs. The Unitary Authorities wish to see particular priority being given to those schemes, which assist the spatial strategy of this Plan, namely those, which assist movement between the Major Towns by public transport. For this reason, a particular priority is the upgrade of Reading Station, which not only acts as a public transport hub for the County, but is also associated with major mixed use development which would implement those policies in the Plan which seek to focus major development in the Major Towns and improve the quality of urban areas. Improved access between the Major Towns may also be delivered as a by-product of some other scheme of wider significance. For example, depending on how it is implemented, the Airtrack scheme could lead to improvements in rail services between Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell. Improvements to the Great Western main line would have spin-off benefits for travel between Reading, Maidenhead and Slough.

9.21 The Unitary Authorities will monitor progress on these schemes, and others, which may arise to deliver the same objectives. This will produce a report, which will indicate the latest view on the likelihood of the implementation of schemes and possible timescales.

Policy T3 : Facilitating the Development of the Strategic Transport Network

- 1. The Councils will safeguard existing facilities, which contribute to the operation or development of the strategic transport network.**
- 2. The Councils will safeguard land where required for the development of the strategic transport network, including the following proposals:**
 - 1). A34 Chieveley/M4 Junction 13 improvement;**
 - 2). Reading Station redevelopment;**
 - 3). Great Western main line upgrade;**
 - 4). Airtrack;**
 - 5). Western connection to Heathrow Airport;**
 - 6). Crossrail;**
 - 7). Southampton-West Midlands rail upgrade;**
 - 8). M25 Junction 12-15 widening;**
 - 9). M4 Junction 11 improvement;**
 - 10). Thames Valley Park Station;**
 - 11). Green Park Station;**
 - 12). Thames Valley Mass Transit;**
 - 13). additional capacity for crossing the River Thames in the Reading area.**

Reason for the Policy

9.22 The necessary investment for the development of the strategic transport network will take place over a long period. In some cases, the schemes required have already been identified in the RTS or through the preparation of this Structure Plan by the Unitary Authorities, and it is important that the land required for these schemes is not developed for some other purpose in the meantime. In addition, through the period of this Structure Plan, further schemes, which enhance the network, may be proposed. This policy would enable land to be reserved for such schemes, provided they have reached a sufficiently firm stage in design and funding so as to avoid unnecessary blighting of properties. It is also important that existing transport facilities which currently contribute to the operation of the network, and which could potentially play a greater role in future, are not prejudiced when development takes place.

How it will be carried out

Through development control and local plans.

Policy T4 : Travel Impacts

All development will take appropriate measures to offset any adverse effects it has for the transport network. Development, which generates a significant number of trips should include the promotion of sustainable alternative modes of travel to the private car, and should take other steps, if required, to minimise the pressure on the transport network.

Reason for the Policy

9.23 It is the policy of the Unitary Authorities to locate new development where the need to travel will be minimised and where the maximum numbers can choose

sustainable means of travel, such as walking, cycling and public transport. Where the development involves substantial numbers of trips, these sustainable means will usually require improvement (or even establishment). This is important in ensuring that sustainable choices are made.

How it will be carried out

9.24 All developments will be assessed for their impact upon the transport network. It will be a condition of planning permission that appropriate measures are in place to secure any remedial transport measures required. With major development (see paragraph 4.06), and where necessary with other development, the Unitary Authorities will require a transport assessment of the scheme. This will measure the impacts both of the development proposal and of any remedial measures proposed by the developer to address those impacts. Once a satisfactory package of remedial measures has been negotiated, the Unitary Authorities may seek contributions from developers (Section 106 agreements) to secure their delivery. These will include a wider use of undertakings from developers and occupiers, as appropriate, to provide green travel plans. This will be done within Government guidelines, for example those in Circular 1/97⁴⁴. This policy does not go into detail about the measures to be employed, since these may vary from scheme to scheme, and innovative solutions will be encouraged. Travel plans should include robust measures to ensure that the proposals in them are implemented, monitored and reviewed as necessary.

⁴⁴ Circular 1/97 Planning Obligations 1997

Policy T5 : Car Parking

1. Car parking will be planned so as to bring about a decrease in the rate of growth of car travel and, particularly in urban areas, achieve a decrease in the proportion of trips undertaken by car. The Councils will set maximum parking standards which:

- (i) avoid the diversion of development from one area to another, by ensuring compatibility of policy between the Berkshire Authorities and adjoining areas, including Greater London;**
- (ii) avoid creating incentives to peripheral development;**
- (iii) reflect the accessibility of the location by means other than the private car, including any known future changes in accessibility.**

2. Local plans will set maximum parking standards for broad classes of development, which seek to achieve the aims of this policy while taking account of the criteria above. Maximum standards for major developments within Use Class B1 will be set within the range of one space per 35 sq.m to 100 sq.m. Local plans will show the basis for, and justification for, those standards and will keep them under review.

Reason for the Policy

9.25 The availability of car parking at either end of a journey is a powerful influence on the choice of mode of travel. It is also an incentive to visit a particular destination, and influences a firm's choice of which buildings to occupy. In any strategy for limiting the rate of growth of car use, it is essential that the availability of car parking is controlled. It is also important to seek co-ordination of parking availability between areas. The towns in the Berkshire area and its surroundings are close together, and the east of the County is influenced by proximity to London. If parking provision is generous in one area and limited in another, this could cause diversion of business and discourage the introduction of more careful parking standards aimed at reducing the growth in car traffic.

9.26 While it is generally desirable to limit the provision of car parking, the practicality of doing so will depend on how easy it is, or will be, to provide alternatives to car travel. In preparing parking standards and in managing car parks, the local planning authorities will have regard to the accessibility of areas by public transport. The Unitary Authorities have commissioned a study on the relative accessibility of Berkshire towns which may help Authorities set their parking standards relative to those in other parts of Berkshire, in pursuit of the objective of avoiding the diversion of development from one area to another.

9.27 In using accessibility information, it is important however, not to create situations where the parking standards in peripheral locations are much more generous than those in central locations, to the point where development is attracted to peripheral sites. These sites already have the advantage of less congestion in their vicinity. There has already been an outward tendency in commercial development over the last twenty years, which has created travel patterns, which cannot easily be converted to public transport. The locational policies of this Plan seek to discourage peripheral development. It is important that the parking standards support this approach.

How it will be carried out

9.28 By the setting of parking standards in local plans and their implementation through the control of development, by joint working between Authorities in providing and managing public car parks and in controlling on-street parking and, by giving priority to short-stay over long-stay parking. It should be noted that the Unitary Authorities do not control private non-residential (PNR) parking such as that attached to existing office blocks, nor public car parks owned by private companies (including railway companies), although where new proposals for the use of such land are being considered, the principles of this policy and local strategies which are based on it, should inform the discussion of future levels of car parking on the land.

9.29 The former RPG9 Transport Strategy⁴⁵, (Policy T3 sub-paragraph *a (ii)*) specifies a range for the maximum parking standard for B1 land use of between 1:30 sq.m and 1:100 sq.m. This policy applies to developments of more than 2,500 sq.m (net) floorspace, in line with PPG 13⁴⁶ (Annex D). As the supporting text to the policy makes clear (in sub-paragraph *b(i)*), in areas adjoining outer London, or with strong spatial or economic links with London, Authorities are normally expected to adopt a standard at, or close to, that which applies in the outer London Boroughs. In addition, Authorities should consider applying more stringent standards than 1:100 sq.m in areas with similar characteristics and levels of accessibility to those in outer London, or where the spatial distribution of development has the potential to encourage and support a viable public transport system. Nothing in this policy should therefore be interpreted as preventing an Authority from introducing a more rigorous standard than 1:100 sq.m where, in the view of that Authority, the characteristics or location of any part of its area warrants it. The range set out is intended to reflect the differing circumstances across the region as a whole, with the highest levels of provision being intended for those parts of the region which are the least accessible, or where the need for economic regeneration is greatest. Berkshire is not normally identified as having severe problems in either of these respects, measured against regional standards. If there are parts of Berkshire which qualify as being some of the most inaccessible parts of the South East and which thus warrant the most generous parking standards indicated above, these are normally likely to be inappropriate locations for major B1 development. Local plans will show the justification for the point(s) within the range of 1:35 sq.m to 1:100 sq.m (or above) that Authorities adopt as their maximum standard.

9.30 Authorities may wish to specify different parking standards for different parts of their areas. These will need to reflect the different levels of accessibility that may exist and the potential, which exists for more rigorous parking standards to work as part of an integrated transport approach to the relief of congestion. Local plans will also need to set standards for small scale B1 developments, reflecting local circumstances (for example, for any minor schemes which may be appropriate in more rural areas). The long term aim is to reduce further the level of parking provision for new development, as facilities for alternative modes of transport are improved. Local planning authorities should therefore keep their B1 parking standards under review and should introduce more rigorous standards as soon as circumstances warrant it.

⁴⁵ as set out in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) for the South East, Government Office for the South East Government Office for East of England and Government Office for London, TSO 2001

⁴⁶ PPG 13 Transport 2002

Policy T6 : Park and Ride

1. Park and ride, including extensions to existing park and ride sites, will be supported where it forms part of an integrated transport strategy for the area concerned. Schemes will be assessed against the following principles:

- (i) the chosen site should be the most sustainable option and all reasonable steps should have been taken to minimise its environmental impact and (in the case of sites within the Green Belt) demonstrate that no suitable non-Green Belt alternative exists;**
- (ii) the scheme should incorporate appropriate measures to provide a standard of public transport service between the site and the town centre that will be attractive to those currently making car journeys to the centre;**
- (iii) town centre car parking should be managed so as to secure a reduction in traffic and congestion;**
- (iv) the scheme should not compromise the efficient operation of the primary route network.**

2. The determining Authority will ensure that adequate planning controls are applied, to ensure that the site reverts to uses appropriate to its location in the event that its use for park and ride ceases.

Reason for the Policy

9.31 This policy is designed to assist in the identification of park and ride sites, whether they are serving the needs of a town in one local authority area whilst being located within another, or are providing for more strategic inter-urban movement. This policy establishes support in principle for the provision of park and ride, whilst providing safeguards against schemes which are environmentally damaging or which have been conceived in a piecemeal manner. It also ensures that the use of the land for park and ride does not create a precedent for the development of that land, in the event that the park and ride use is discontinued.

How it will be carried out

9.32 Schemes should be set out in the LTPs of the Authority(ies) concerned. They should not normally be accompanied by other development proposals unrelated to the operation of the park and ride. PPG2⁴⁷ (as revised by Annex E of PPG13) makes it clear that park and ride may be an appropriate use in the green belt, provided certain safeguards are applied. In the event that such a scheme is proposed in the MGB within Berkshire, the applicant will be expected to pay particular attention to ensuring that the scheme does not seriously compromise the purposes of including land in the MGB. The Unitary Authorities will ensure through local plans and development control, that all park and ride sites are safe and attractive to use.

⁴⁷ PPG2 Green Belts 1995

CHAPTER 10

MINERALS

Context

10.01 Minerals are an important national resource, and their exploitation is an essential contribution to the nation's prosperity and quality of life. However, they are a finite resource, and their extraction can create conflicts with objectives designed to protect the environment and people's living conditions. Planning policies aim to reconcile these conflicts. National guidance on minerals is contained in a series of 'Minerals Planning Guidance Notes' or 'MPGs', and these must be taken into account in the Structure Plan. Regional guidance is contained in RPG9.

10.02 In Berkshire, the main minerals produced are sand and gravel for the construction industry. Minerals used in construction are referred to as 'aggregates'. The sand and gravel dug in the County includes both sharp sand and gravel (mainly used to make concrete) and soft sand (used to make mortar, plaster and asphalt). The use of recycled or secondary aggregates - for example, re-using demolition or power station wastes in construction - helps to keep down the need to extract 'primary' aggregates from the ground. Non-aggregate minerals dug in Berkshire are chalk and clay, but the amounts involved are far smaller than for sand and gravel.

10.03 The policies of this chapter establish the key principles for minerals planning in Berkshire. These principles are developed in greater detail in the 'Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire⁴⁸' (RMLP), which was adopted in 1995 and revised by the Unitary Authorities jointly in 2001. The RMLP, like current Government guidance on aggregates, covers the period up to the end of 2006. Updated national guidance on levels of aggregates provision to 2016 was published in 2003. Following this, SEERA published the draft Regional Minerals Strategy⁴⁹ as part of the series of reviews to RPG9. The document, which will ultimately set the annual level of extraction in Berkshire, is expected to be finalised in 2004/early 2005. Once this document has been published, a review of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan will then take place, to provide detailed coverage for the period to 2016. Subject to any changes resulting from new national or regional guidance, the general policies in this chapter provide the appropriate strategic framework for both the existing and reviewed RMLP.

Policy M1 : Future Aggregates Supply

Provision will be made for the supply of aggregate minerals, including both primary and secondary/recycled materials. The scale of provision to be made for production of primary aggregates will have regard to prevailing national and regional guidance on sustainable development and on aggregates provision, and to the need to safeguard important environmental interests and people's living conditions.

⁴⁸ Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire Incorporating Alterations, The Berkshire Unitary Authorities Joint Strategic Planning Unit 2001

⁴⁹ Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Regional Minerals Strategy SEERA March 2004

Reason for the Policy

10.04 Minerals do not occur evenly across the country, and so it is not possible, or expected, that individual county areas should be self-sufficient in meeting their own needs. Future aggregates supply is expected to consist of material from both primary and secondary/recycled sources (including recycled construction materials). For primary aggregates, the policy reflects national and regional guidance whereby each county area is expected to make provision for a specified level of production in order to contribute to meeting local, regional and national needs. However, mineral extraction can have significant impacts on the environment and people's living conditions, and it is important that future levels of aggregates provision in Berkshire respect the nature and scale of these constraints.

How it will be carried out

10.05 The Government sets regional levels of aggregates provision in MPG. The regional figure for the South East region is 'apportioned' among the counties of the region by SEERA. The apportionment level is used when considering the scale of site-specific allocations to be made in the RMLP. It is also used to assess the need for further minerals permissions.

10.06 Berkshire's current apportionment level of 2.3 million tonnes/year is confirmed in the RMLP. Following the publication of the revised regional levels of aggregates provision in 2003, SEERA has begun the process of apportioning the figure for the South East between the different counties and sub-regions. The proposed apportionment figure for Berkshire has been reduced to 1.5 million tonnes/year. Once these sub-regional figures have been formally agreed, the new minerals local plan will take them into account.

10.07 Current national advice, which runs to 2006 only, is that mineral planning authorities should seek to maintain a stock of permissions (known as a 'landbank') equivalent to at least seven years' worth of production at the apportionment level. The RMLP contains a policy endorsing this as the collective approach of the Berkshire Unitary Authorities to 2006. The principle and duration of landbanks are under review by Government as part of the roll forward of national aggregates advice to 2016. The new minerals local plan will take future guidance on landbanks into account.

10.08 Policies relating to the provision of secondary and recycled aggregates will be included in either the minerals local plan or the waste local plan.

Policy M2 : Areas for Future Working

'Preferred Areas' will be identified in the Minerals Local Plan where (subject to various detailed considerations) the extraction of sharp sand and gravel will normally be allowed. Extraction of sharp sand and gravel will not normally be allowed elsewhere. Policies regarding the extraction of other minerals will be set out in the Minerals Local Plan.

Reason for the Policy

10.09 It is desirable to provide as much certainty as possible about where mineral extraction may take place in the future, and where it will not. This can most effectively

be achieved by identifying areas where extraction will be acceptable in principle, and resisting extraction elsewhere. The principle of identifying 'Preferred Areas' for sharp sand and gravel accords with national guidance in MPG1⁵⁰. However, it is not practicable to identify Preferred Areas for the other minerals dug in Berkshire (soft sand, chalk and clay), because the levels of extraction are small, and the locations of potential commercial deposits are not known with the same degree of certainty as those for sharp sand and gravel.

How it will be carried out

10.10 Through the policies in the minerals local plan.

Policy M3 : Aggregates from Other Sources

Subject to the need to safeguard important environmental interests and people's living conditions:-

- (i) the contribution to aggregates supply made by secondary and recycled aggregates will be maximised; and**
- (ii) the development of new rail terminals for importing additional aggregates and undertaking modal transfer of other similar bulky products including waste will be supported, and potential sites will be identified and safeguarded.**

Reason for the policy

10.11 Increased emphasis in national and regional guidance on the potential of secondary and recycled materials reflects the sustainability objective of minimising the use of finite primary resources. Support for new rail terminals also accords with national and regional policies, whereby aggregates from other regions are expected to make a significant contribution to meeting the needs of the South East. Guidance also promotes an increased use of rail transport and the safeguarding of rail terminals for other bulky goods.

How it will be carried out

10.12 Through policies in the minerals and waste local plans. The number of places where further rail terminals could be accommodated satisfactorily is likely to be limited. Therefore, where possible and where their uses are compatible, facilities serving minerals and other bulky goods functions will be encouraged to locate on one site.

Policy M4 : Safeguarding Mineral Resources

Measures will be taken to conserve mineral resources where possible, and to prevent their sterilisation by other forms of development.

Reason for the Policy

10.13 Minerals are a valuable but finite resource. National policies for sustainable minerals planning set out in MPG1 and MPG6⁵¹ include the objectives of conserving

⁵⁰ MPG1 General Considerations and the Development Plan System 1998
⁵¹ MPG6 Guidelines for the Aggregate Provision in England 1994

minerals as far as possible (while ensuring an adequate supply to meet needs), and preventing the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources.

How it will be carried out

10.14 Through policies in the minerals local plan and through development control.

Policy M5 : Environmental Impacts and Restoration

The environmental impact of mineral extraction and related operations will be minimised. Mineral workings will be restored at the earliest practicable date and to the highest practicable standards, having regard to the intended after-use of the site. Where appropriate, opportunities will be taken to secure environmental or other public benefits through site restoration.

Reason for the Policy

10.15 Mineral extraction can potentially impact on a wide range of environmental concerns, including landscape, ecology, archaeology, high quality farmland, the water environment and flooding, living conditions, and other nearby land uses. Minimising these impacts in each individual case is one of the national objectives for sustainable minerals planning, as set out in MPG1 and MPG6. Another of these objectives is to encourage sensitive working, restoration and after-care practices so as to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment. The same principles are also contained in RPG9.

How it will be carried out

10.16 Through policies in the minerals local plan and through development control.

10.17 Most applications for mineral extraction (including all proposals for extraction from sites of 25ha or more) are now subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). EIA requires the mineral operator to identify the environmental effects of his proposal and to indicate the steps that are proposed to mitigate them. These details are then assessed by the planning authority as part of its appraisal of the application.

CHAPTER 11

WASTE

Context

11.01 'Waste' doesn't just mean household waste, but also construction and demolition waste, industrial and commercial waste, and 'special' or hazardous waste. The Unitary Authorities have specific responsibilities for household waste in their roles as waste collection authorities and planning authorities, the latter involving land use planning associated with the management of all types of waste.

11.02 The ever increasing amount of waste being created, and the decreasing availability and acceptability of traditional methods of waste disposal (landfill), have led to a need to find new solutions. The Government, through its national strategy, 'Waste Strategy 2000'⁵², gives priority to waste reduction and re-use as the means of making the greatest contribution to achieving sustainable waste management, and to maximising the recovery of value from waste through recycling, composting and energy recovery. To meet the requirements of the European Union Landfill Directive⁵³, it also sets challenging national targets for reducing landfill and increasing the recovery of value from waste. A Regional Technical Advisory Body (SERTAB) has been set up to advise SEERA on options and strategies for dealing with the waste that needs to be managed within the Region.

11.03 As waste collection and disposal authorities, the Unitary Authorities are required to prepare waste management strategies for municipal waste. These strategies will establish the strategic framework for the future management of municipal waste, and set out the Unitary Authorities' policies and proposals for the various collection, treatment and disposal options, taking account of the national strategy and local circumstances. For example, Bracknell Forest, Wokingham District and Reading Borough Councils' strategies include the Central Berkshire Waste Project. This aims to create an integrated approach to minimising waste, increasing recycling and composting and reducing reliance on landfill. It also seeks to find an environmentally friendly means of waste disposal across the three Authorities' areas. It is being funded through the Private Finance Initiative.

11.04 If the aims of the Unitary Authorities' waste management strategies are to be achieved, suitable planning policies need to be in place. National guidance for planning for waste is included in 'Waste Strategy 2000' and in PPG10⁵⁴, while regional principles echoing the national guidance are contained in Policy INF3 of RPG9 and the emerging draft South East - Regional Waste Management Strategy⁵⁵ (SERWMS).

11.05 Planning authorities must prepare waste local plans to give detailed expression to strategic waste policies and to provide the context for development

⁵² Waste Strategy 2000 for England and Wales, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2000

⁵³ Council Directive 1999/31/EC (Landfill Directive) 1999

⁵⁴ PPG10 Planning and Waste Management 1999

⁵⁵ "No Time to Waste" Proposed Alterations to Regional Planning Guidance, South East – Regional Waste Management Strategy, SEERA March 2004

control. Berkshire's Waste Local Plan⁵⁶ (BWLP), adopted jointly by the Unitary Authorities in 1998, covers the period to the end of 2006. In many ways, its approach anticipated that of 'Waste Strategy 2000', particularly in the importance that it places on moving to more sustainable methods of waste treatment. The general policies in this chapter provide the appropriate strategic framework for both the existing and the new waste local plan.

Policy W1 : Providing for the Management and Treatment of Waste

Provision will be made for the management and treatment of waste, having regard to:

- (i) the objective of minimising the quantities of waste requiring treatment;**
- (ii) the objective of choosing the Best Practicable Environmental Option for each waste stream, taking account of the principle of the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle, and national and regional objectives regarding self-sufficiency in waste management/treatment;**
- (iii) national and regional targets for waste recycling and composting, and for reducing the volumes of waste going to landfill;**
- (iv) any requirement deriving from regional guidance for Berkshire to make additional provision to meet wider regional needs; and,**
- (v) the objective of safeguarding important environmental interests and people's living conditions.**

Reason for the Policy

11.06 This policy sets out the over-arching principles that will guide planning for waste management in Berkshire. Items (i) to (iii) reflect national principles contained in 'Waste Strategy 2000' and repeated in RPG9; item (iv) reflects a willingness in principle for Berkshire to make an appropriate contribution to meeting regional waste management needs if it is clearly demonstrated that significant capacity exists over and above Berkshire's own needs, and, item (v) reflects the fact that waste management operations can have significant effects on the environment and people's living conditions, and that account must be taken of these constraints in making planning decisions.

How it will be carried out

11.07 The policy will be carried out through the new waste local plan, through development control decisions, and through the Unitary Authorities' roles as waste recycling, collection and disposal authorities. The policy makes clear that the issues, which it lists, are matters to which regard will be paid in making provision in the new waste local plan and at the development control stage. Some detailed aspects of these principles are not yet decided for the whole period of this Structure Plan, consequently the policy does not provide an absolute commitment to following these principles on all occasions regardless of all other considerations. In any case, it may be that in some instances different principles would point to different solutions. Such conflicts will be reconciled in the more detailed content of the new waste local plan, or in making decisions on individual planning applications.

⁵⁶ Waste Local Plan for Berkshire, The Berkshire Unitary Authorities Joint Strategic Planning Unit December 1998

11.08 Item (ii) of the policy addresses the key principles of good decision making for waste, derived from 'Waste Strategy 2000'. The objective is to choose the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) for each waste stream, with the BPEO being defined as the option that provides the most benefits or the least damage to the environment as a whole, at acceptable cost, in both the long and the short term. Advice on determining the BPEO in each case is contained in 'Waste Strategy 2000', which identifies the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle, and the issue of self-sufficiency as the three key considerations in the process.

11.09 National targets for recycling and composting (item (iii) of the policy) are contained in 'Waste Strategy 2000'. Some of these targets are also incorporated into RPG9 and the draft SERWMS. In taking them into account in future waste planning in Berkshire, regard will be paid to any higher targets that may have been set by individual Unitary Authorities.

11.10 Policy W4 below highlights a particularly important way in which planning controls can help encourage waste minimisation and recycling.

Policy W2 : Locations for New Facilities

'Preferred Areas' for future waste management facilities will be identified in the Waste Local Plan.

Reason for the Policy

11.11 PPG10 advises that waste local plans should, where practicable, identify new or extended sites sufficient to make adequate future provision for waste management facilities. It also advises that where new or replacement facilities are needed, preferred locations should be identified, as the identification of specific sites for development is the best way that the planning system can make provision for future waste management facilities. A 'Preferred Areas' approach provides the greatest certainty that the Unitary Authorities' waste management strategies can be delivered in land use terms; allows the selection of the 'least unacceptable' sites in planning terms; allows the planning authorities to have the greatest control over the scale, location and impacts of development; and facilitates the operation of development control.

How it will be carried out

11.12 The new waste local plan will consider the number, type, and most suitable locations for future waste management facilities in the light of the Unitary Authorities' waste management strategies. It will then identify a series of Preferred Areas where permission for appropriate waste management activities will normally be granted so long as various environmental and other considerations, as set out in the local plan, are satisfactorily addressed. Collectively, the identified sites will be sufficient to deliver the range and quantity of waste management facilities, which the Unitary Authorities' strategies require.

Policy W3 : Environmental Impacts and Restoration

The environmental impact of waste treatment operations will be minimised. The restoration of temporary waste treatment or disposal sites will be undertaken at the earliest practicable date and to the highest practicable standards, having regard to the intended after-use of the site. Where appropriate, opportunities will be taken to secure environmental or other public benefits in association with the operation and restoration of waste management sites.

Reason for the Policy

11.13 Through the BWLP and development control.

How it will be carried out

11.14 The BWLP gives detailed guidance⁵⁷ on how the objectives of this policy will be achieved at the development control stage. It gives details of the general considerations that will be taken into account in the assessment of all applications, and also gives more specific guidance on the environmental issues that must be addressed when a planning application is being prepared. In the case of landfill sites, it also indicates the appropriate form of restoration and after-use for the site (sites that are also identified for mineral extraction in the RMLP, are cross-referenced to the equivalent provisions of that Plan). A further policy⁵⁸ in the BWLP seeks the provision of appropriate environmental and other public benefits in association with proposals for waste management development, where such benefits accord with national guidance. These benefits may include (but are not limited to) improvements to the environmental standards of existing operations, landscape enhancements, new opportunities for public access, and the creation of new or improved wildlife habitats.

11.15 Applications for larger waste treatment facilities now have to be subject to a full EIA. This requires the developer to identify the environmental effects of his proposal and indicate the steps that are proposed to mitigate them. These details are then assessed by the planning authority as part of its appraisal of the application.

Policy W4 : Providing for Waste in New Development

Development proposals should include provision for

- (i) the minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste;**
- (ii) minimising the pollution potential of unavoidable waste, and its safe disposal;**
- (iii) the use of recycled materials in construction where appropriate; and**
- (iv) facilities within individual or groups of properties or premises for the source separation and storage of different types of waste for collection.**

Detailed policies in support of these objectives will be included in local plans.

Reason for the Policy

11.16 The introduction of additional households or businesses into an area through the occupation of new buildings will cause extra waste arisings. The Unitary Authorities' waste management strategies require subsidy, as recycling and other aspects of waste management do not always cover their costs. It is reasonable for

⁵⁷ BWLP Policy WLP 27 and WLP30 to WLP32,

⁵⁸ BWLP Policy WLP 33

developers to play their part in making contributions to waste management strategies. In addition, the design and construction of new developments themselves can play a significant role in achieving the objectives of minimising waste creation and maximising recycling. Providing recycling facilities as part of new developments - both housing developments and other developments attracting a significant number of people - will make it easier and more convenient for people to recycle. At the same time, developers and construction firms can minimise the creation of waste by the way in which development schemes are designed and carried out. Using recycled materials in construction meets the dual objectives of reducing demands for primary aggregates and maximising the amount of inert (construction and demolition) waste that is recycled rather than thrown away.

How it will be carried out

11.17 The Unitary Authorities will seek contributions from developers towards the implementation of their waste strategies. In addition, local plans will include policies on the manner of design and construction of new developments with the aim of furthering their waste management strategies.

11.18 Two guidance documents have been produced to assist in the implementation of these policies: 'Waste minimisation, re-use and recycling - a code of guidance for the development industry'⁵⁹ and 'Designing for recycling - a good practice guide'⁶⁰. The practical advice in these documents remains relevant.

11.19 In the future, detailed policies on this subject are considered to be more appropriate for inclusion in the Unitary Authorities' local plans, because they are of direct application in general development control. Policy W4 is considered to provide an appropriate level of strategic guidance for such local plan policies. In the meantime, the issue is covered by Policies WLP9 and WLP10 of the BWLP.

⁵⁹ Waste minimisation, re-use and recycling - a code of guidance for the development industry 1996

⁶⁰ Designing for recycling - a good practice guide 1998

Chapter 12

Monitoring

12.01 Monitoring will be undertaken by the use of a selected number of key indicators and targets that measure specific policies. A report will be produced annually setting out progress on the indicators and targets. This will provide a consistent approach upon which to judge over time whether the Plan is achieving its objectives, and provide an early indication of where policies need to be strengthened, maintained, amended or removed as part of future reviews. However, the Structure Plan is a small part of a series of interrelated strategies operated by local and central Government. Monitoring a key indicator will show how an aspect of the environment has changed, but this may not be the result of the Structure Plan - it could arise from a variety of causes.

12.02 The following table sets out the policies in the Plan and relates them to the sustainable development objectives for the Structure Plan approved in 1999 (these are set out in Appendix 1). Indicators have been derived for the monitoring of the policies by reference to the purpose of the policy and the availability of data. Indicators have been split into two categories – output and contextual. Output indicators are those, which are strongly influenced by the land use planning system. Contextual indicators are those which provide information about the wider environment about which the Structure Plan contains policies, but which are mainly influenced by other factors.

12.03 Targets have been chosen for some of the indicators. Where the existing state of play with regard to an indicator is known, the target has been developed by reference to achievable changes in that indicator over time within the Structure Plan period (or parts of it). Some indicators do not yet have targets, as it will be necessary to complete the first round of monitoring of that indicator in order to establish the current state of play.

Policy Number	Policy	Output or Con-textual	Indicator	Related Objective	Target	Source of Data
DP1	Spatial Strategy		Summary policy. See component parts: DP2, H3, E1 and S1			
DP2	Major Development other than Employment, Housing, Retail or Leisure	Output	Proportion of "other" major development (>5,000 sq.m.) permitted in year in or adjoining Major Town Centres	10 12 13	Target for period 2001-11 to be produced after first year of monitoring	Planning Applications and Commitments System (PACS)
DP3	Green Belt	Output	Numbers of new dwellings completed in the Green Belt Amount of net B1 floorspace completed in the Green Belt	35	Target for period 2001-11 to be produced after first year of monitoring	PACS
DP4	Provision of Infrastructure, Services and Amenities		To be monitored by the Unitary Authorities			
DP5	Quality of Urban and Suburban Areas		Not possible to monitor this annually because it applies to whole areas			
DP6	Land outside Settlements	Output	Proportion of completed housing development which is outside 1991-2006 local plan settlement boundaries Proportion of completed employment floorspace which is outside 1991-2006 local plan settlement boundaries	7 35	10% for the period 2001-11 as a whole Target to be developed once monitoring results known: should be limited to minor redevelopment of employment sites	PACS PACS

Policy Number	Policy	Output or Con-textual	Indicator	Related Objective	Target	Source of Data
DP7	Gaps and Green Wedges		Gaps and wedges will be defined in local plans and then monitored			
DP8	Rural Communities	Contextual	Countryside Agency Key Services	5 9 10 11	No targets	Countryside Agency
DP9	Blackwater Valley		A work programme rather than a landuse policy that can be monitored			
EN1	Landscape		Not monitored. Not susceptible to quantification			
EN2	Soil Quality and Agricultural Land	Output	Development on Grade 1, 2 or 3a land	30	None with immediate effect	Unitary Authorities
EN3	Biodiversity	Contextual	Condition of SSSIs Quality and quantity of BAP habitats	23	95% of the area of SSSIs in 'favourable or unfavourable recovering' condition. Quality and quantity of BAP habitats improving/increasing	English Nature Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum
EN4	Historic Environment	Output	Number of Listed Buildings demolished	33	Zero, with immediate effect	Unitary Authorities
EN5	Air Pollution and Nuisance	Contextual	As in National Air Quality Strategy	25	As National Air Quality Strategy	Unitary Authorities
EN6	Prevention of Flooding	Contextual	Not monitored - qualitative			
EN7	Development and Water Resources	Contextual	River lengths complying with River Quality objectives	24	91% by 2005	Environment Agency

Policy Number	Policy	Output or Con-textual	Indicator	Related Objective	Target	Source of Data
EN8	Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation		To be monitored at regional level- no County breakdown of targets provided by SEERA			
H1	Overall Housing Provision		See Policy H2			
H2	Housing Distribution and Phasing	Output	Net additional dwelling completions in each Unitary Authority	20	Set out in Policy	PACS
H3	Location of Housing Development	Output	Proportion of housing completions which take place on previously developed land Proportion of housing completions on UPS <i>identified</i> sites within 400m and 800m of the edge of an UPS sustainable centre Proportion of housing completions on UPS <i>windfall</i> sites within 400m and 800m of the edge of an UPS sustainable centre	3 5 4 7 10 12 13 1 5 4 7 10 12 13 15	75% in period 2001-11 as a whole 60% within 400m 90% within 800m 50% within 400m 70% within 800m	PACS
H4	Managed Release of Sites		Work programme - not possible to monitor			
H5	Affordable Housing	Contextual	Contained in individual CouncilsUnitary Authorities' housing strategies	16	Contained in individual CouncilsUnitary Authorities' housing strategies	

Policy Number	Policy	Output or Con-textual	Indicator	Related Objective	Target	Source of Data
H6	Residential Density and Dwelling Mix	Output	Density of new housing permissions on different site sizes and in different area characters at 400m and 800m from the edge of UPS sustainable centres	4 7 10 12 13 15 18	As Scenario 2 in Table 4.1 in the <i>Berkshire Urban Potential Study 2000</i> from 2006	PACS
H7	Loss of Housing		Not monitored: subsumed in H2			
H8	Gypsy Sites	Contextual	Gypsy site provision in relation to surveyed need	16 20	As individual Councils/Unitary Authorities' targets	UAs
E1	Location of Employment Development	Output	Proportion of permitted major B1 development in any given year within the 7 mMajor tTown cCentres. Proportion of permitted major B1 development in any given year to be in accessible locations	4 7 12 13 15	Target to be devised after first year of monitoring/Individual targets for UAs to be included in local plans	PACS
E2	- Acceptability of Employment Development	-	- Local planning authority practice : not open to quantitative monitoring			
E3	Diversity of Employment		Matter for local plans			
E4	Future Uses for Employment Land		Work programme - not suitable for monitoring			
Policy Number	Policy	Output or Con-textual	Indicator	Related Objective	Target	Source of Data

S1	Major Retail and Leisure Development in Town Centres	Output	Proportion of permitted major retail development in any given year within the 7 major town centres	4 7 12 13 15	Target to be devised after first year of monitoring	Source :PACS
S2	Retail Development outside Major Town Centres		See S1			
S3	Leisure Development outside Major Town Centres		See S1			
S4	Other Sport, Recreation, Tourism and Leisure Uses		Not monitored - qualitative			
T1	Transport Strategy	Contextual	Indicators in local transport plans	3 4 12 14	Targets in local transport plans	
T2	Strategic Transport Network	Contextual	Progress with schemes referred to in ensuing paragraphs			
T3	Facilitating the development of the strategic transport network		Not monitored - safeguarding policy only			
T4	Travel Impacts		Local planning authority practice : not open to quantitative monitoring			
T5	Car Parking		Number of local plans adopting max. parking standards in accordance with Policy T5		All 6 by 2007	
T6	Park and Ride		Local planning authority practice : not open to quantitative monitoring			
Policy Number	Policy	Output or Con-textual	Indicator	Related Objective	Target	Source of Data
M1	Future Aggregates Supply	Output	Volume of outstanding planning permissions		7 years' supply	JSPU

M2	Areas for Future Working	Output	Permissions for aggregates working outside preferred areas		Zero with immediate effect	JSPU
M3	Aggregates from Other Sources		Not monitored as no data exists			
M4	Safeguarding Minerals Resources	Output	Development on safeguarded areas		None, with immediate effect	JSPU
M5	Environmental Impacts and Restoration		Local planning authority practice : not open to quantitative monitoring			
W1	Providing for the Management And Treatment of Waste	Contextual	Volume of municipal solid waste recycled and composted	31	45% by 2015 (draft Regional <i>Waste Strategy</i>)	JSPU or Unitary Authorities
W2	Locations for New Facilities	Output	Permissions for waste facilities outside preferred areas		Zero with immediate effect	JSPU
W3	Environmental Impacts and Restoration		Local planning authority practice : not open to quantitative monitoring			
W4	Providing for Waste in New Development		Local planning authority practice : not open to quantitative monitoring			

Glossary

Acronym	Term	Explanation
	Affordable Housing	Housing of an adequate standard, which is cheaper than that which is generally available in the local housing market (Local Housing Needs Assessment: A Guide to Good Practice (DETR July 2000). Local plan policies should define what the authority considers to be affordable in the local plan area in terms of the relationship between local income levels and house prices or rents for different types of households. (Paragraph 15 PPG3)
	Aggregates	Sand, gravel and crushed rock (known as primary aggregates) and other mineral waste such as colliery spoil, industry wastes and recycled materials (known as secondary aggregates). Aggregates are used in the construction industry to produce concrete, mortar, asphalt, etc.
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area	Area designated (under the Environment Act) by local authorities following local assessment of air quality where individual pollutants are forecast to exceed standards defined in the National Air Quality Strategy.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Areas of land designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, where the primary purpose is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, which includes protecting flora, fauna, geology and landscape features. The Countryside Agency is responsible for formally designated AONBs and advising on policies for their protection. Much of western Berkshire is within the North Wessex Downs AONB.
BNCF	Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum	The Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum is an information forum involving all six Unitary Authorities within Berkshire, as well as statutory agencies and conservation and voluntary organisations. It provides opportunities to exchange information and ideas, and for statutory agencies to comment and advise on conservation work. The BNCF has also produced framework documents on BAPs and HAPs to assist in local conservation.
BUPS	Berkshire Urban Potential Study	Comprehensive strategic assessment of the potential of the urban areas of Berkshire to accommodate additional housing development on previously-developed land and in buildings, under a range of assumptions.
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan	Studies undertaken normally at county or district level that assess the biological diversity ('biodiversity') of plants and animals in a particular area and then set out strategies for their future.
BLCA	Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment	A study undertaken to broaden the understanding of Berkshire's landscape and thereby assist in formulation of policy and future management initiatives.
BPEO	Best Practicable Environmental Option	The outcome of a systematic and consultative decisions making procedure which emphasises the protection and conservation of the environment across land, air and water. The BPEO procedure establishes, for a given set of objectives, the option that provides the most benefits or the least damage to the environment as a whole, at acceptable cost, in the long term as well as in the short term.

	Bus Priority Corridors	A strategy for a specified corridor that integrates individual bus priority measures into a managed route.
	Business Cluster	Defined in RPG9 as a geographic concentration of interconnected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries and associated research and other institutions.
	Circular	Documents issued by the Government setting out policy which has legal connotations.
CHP	Combined Heat and Power	Schemes which harness excess heat from electricity generation and re-use it for the district heating of homes and businesses and/or for re-use in power generation.
	Commitment	An amount of development that has been approved or agreed in principle for a particular use (for example, housing or employment).
	Community Strategy	See Introduction and Fig 2.2.
	Comparison Shopping	Shopping for goods that are required on a less frequent basis than convenience goods (clothes etc), and are often purchased after a comparison of prices and available alternatives, and which are usually sold from outlets with a catchment greater than a purely local level.
	Completions	A planning permission that has been implemented. In housing terms, this is usually expressed as number of dwellings.
	Conservation Areas	“Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” (Town and Country Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990 – Section 69). Conservation Areas are designated by the Local Planning Authorities.
	Convenience Shopping	Shopping for goods that are, and that are for the majority of households, required on a regular basis (food and drink), usually sold either from supermarkets in a central or out-of-centre location, or from smaller outlets with a more local catchment.
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	DEFRA brings together environmental responsibilities from the former Ministry of Fisheries and Food (MAFF) and the former Department of the Environment for the Regions.
	Development	“The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land”. (Section 55, Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
	Development Briefs	Documents produced by the Local Planning Authorities setting out planning principles for the future development of a certain site or sites. Briefs are usually adopted formally by the Local Planning Authority and may be taken into account as a material consideration.
	Diversification	The move into non-agricultural activities to support the viability of existing agricultural businesses, such as farm shops or bed and breakfast.

	Durable Goods	Goods that generally require infrequent replacement such as electrical items, luxury items, household goods etc.
	Economically Active	Residents aged 16 or over in or available for work.
	Edge of Centre	For shopping purposes, a location within easy walking distance of the primary shopping area, often providing parking facilities that serve the centre as well as the store, thus enabling one trip to serve several purposes. For other uses, such as offices or leisure, edge of centre may be more extensive, based on how far people would be prepared to walk.
	Employment Development	Development for office, industrial and warehousing including research and development.
	Enterprise Hubs	Enterprise Hubs offer aspiring high technology or knowledge based start-up businesses, specialist business and technical guidance linked to dedicated resources. The concept is recognised in the RES as being an important means of acknowledging and supporting the entrepreneurial niche market of the South East.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	A process of assessing the environmental implications of a proposal. This is a statutory requirement where proposed development is listed in Schedule 1 or 2 to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 and is likely to have significant effects on the environment.
	Explanatory Memorandum	The Explanatory Memorandum is the text (as opposed to the policies) which sets the context of the policies and means of implementation.
	Fauna and Flora	Animals and plants.
	Functional Floodplains	The unobstructed or active parts of floodplains where water regularly flows in times of flooding.
	Gap	Open land that separates distinct settlements.
	Global Warming	The gradual increase in temperature of the earth's climate caused by emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and CFC's. Greenhouse gases form an insulating layer around the earth's atmosphere that traps the sun's heat. Greenhouse gases are principally produced from the burning of fossil fuels (such as coal, oil and gas).
GOSE	Government Office for the South East	The Government Office for the South East represents central Government in the South East, particularly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; the Departments for Education and Skills; Trade and Industry; Transport; Culture, Media and Sport; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; the Home Office. GOSE works to influence contract and develop government programmes and initiatives at a regional and local level, by working in partnership with relevant organisations to meet local needs.
	Green Travel Plan	A suite of measures designed to encourage staff or users of a development to use more sustainable modes of travel.
	Green Wedge	An area of open space penetrating, partly enclosed by, or separating built up areas.

	Greenfield Site	Land which has not been previously developed, either inside or outside the urban areas, including former mineral workings which have been the subject of an agreed restoration plan.
	'Grow-on' Space	Similar workspace to incubator schemes (see 'incubator space') in terms of flexibility, but of a size that allows business start-ups to grow out of incubator units.
HAP	Habitat Action Plan	A study, which assesses a particular natural habitat and sets out strategies and management options for its protection and enhancement.
	Hotspots	Defined in RPG9 as parts of the South East where the growing economy has led to localized areas of problems including significant traffic congestion, high employment growth and significant labour shortages.
	Housing Needs Assessment	A detailed study of the local housing market which enables local authorities and other agencies to understand the need and demand for housing, in particular to assist in identifying the level of exclusion to the housing market
	Incubator Space	Incubator schemes are designed to help business start-ups survive and grow by providing small workplace units on flexible (easy-in, easy-out) terms, combined with access to business support and finance.
ICT	Information / Communication Technology	Technology required for information processing. In particular the use of electronic computers and computer software to convert, store, process, transmit and retrieve information.
	Integrated Transport Strategy	A strategy designed to provide integration between land use and transportation planning to allow transport provision and the demand for travel to be planned in a complementary and consistent way. Such a strategy also aims to ensure a balance between the use of different modes of transport e.g. bus and rail, and to encourage easy transfer between modes. In the Structure Plan context, its objective is to increase choice of mode and hence reduce reliance on the private car.
	Key Workers	This describes a group of employees who are essential to the functioning of the local economy, but who may not earn enough to compete for housing locally on the open market. Definitions of who is a key worker may vary, but it includes professions such as police officers, teachers and nurses. See Chapter 6 Housing.
	Landbank	A stock of land intended for a particular purpose.
	Landfill	The disposal of waste material by tipping into voids in the ground.
	Landscape Character Assessment	A study carried out at county or district level that identifies areas of landscape that display a distinct pattern or combination of elements. The studies then assess the quality and condition of these areas and set out strategies and management guidelines that correspond to their needs.
	Listed Buildings	Buildings of special architectural or historical interest, listed or approved for listing by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Permission is required before works that might affect their character or appearance can be undertaken.

LDD	Local Development Documents	On commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Development Documents will comprise both statutory development plan documents and non statutory Supplementary Planning Documents. LDDs are likely to include core policies, area action plans, proposal map, site specific policies and a Statement of Community Involvement.
LDF	Local Development Framework	On commencement of the Planning Purchase Act 2004, local planning authorities will be required to prepare Local Development Frameworks. A Local Development Framework will consist of a folder containing a number of documents setting out a local authority's policies for meeting the economic, environmental and social aims of its area.
LNR	Local Nature Reserve	Areas designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 as being of particular importance to nature conservation, and where public understanding of nature conservation issues is encouraged. There are thirty-five such LNR's in Berkshire.
	Local Plans	The lower tier of the statutory development plan, setting out detailed policies and proposals for a local authority's, or for a particular subject Local Plans will eventually be replaced by Local Development Frameworks, as part of the new system set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
LTP	Local Transport Plans	A statutory document produced by transport authorities, setting out the programming and funding of transport measures. The Plan is used to bid for funds from the Government.
	Management Plan	A plan guiding overall management of an area administered by local authority. A management plan usually includes objectives, goals, standards and guidelines, management actions, and monitoring plans.
MGB	Metropolitan Green Belt	Predominantly open land around urban areas around London which has the strategic role of checking the unrestricted sprawl of the town and safeguarding the surrounding countryside from encroachment. Whilst not its main functions, it also assists in urban regeneration and providing areas where outdoor recreational activities can take place and wildlife habitats can be maintained.
MLP	Minerals Local Plan	Sets out the land use planning policy framework against which minerals related planning applications are assessed.
	Multi Modal Study	A study of transport problems in an area or along a corridor which recommends solutions which encompass all transport "modes" i.e. walking, cycling, bus, tram, car and train.
NNR	National Nature Reserve	An area containing nationally significant wildlife or geological features, usually managed by English Nature. NNR's are also designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's). The small part of Chobham Common that lies within Berkshire is designated as a National Nature Reserve.
	Net Floorspace	Net floorspace is calculated as the difference between gains [and] or losses of gross floorspace in development.
	Out of Centre	A location that is clearly separate from a town, district or local centre, but not necessarily outside the urban area.

	Parish and Town Plans	Comprehensive strategies prepared by local communities setting out a vision for how the community should develop in the future, identifying actions needed to tackle areas of concern and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved.
	Park and Ride	A scheme which aims to reduce traffic congestion by enabling motorists to leave their vehicles at edge of town car parks and travel into town centres by public transport.
	Photovoltaic	Photovoltaic materials generate electricity directly from light (www.solarcentury.com).
	Plan, Monitor, Manage	The Government's current method of providing and delivering housing. Housing need is kept under regular review and additional releases of housing land are only made as and when evidence of need for it emerges.
	Planning Obligations	See Section 106 Agreements.
PPG / MPG	Planning Policy Guidance / Mineral Policy Guidance Notes	Guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, setting out the Governments policy on planning issues such as housing, employment and shopping
	Polycentric	A network of town centres that complement, rather than compete with each other.
	Predict and Provide	A method of providing housing that involves forecasting housing need many years in advance and providing for it from the outset.
	Preferred Area Approach	Areas where, subject to the consideration of various matters, there will be a general presumption in favour of gravel extraction and/or waste management developments.
	Previously-Developed Land	Often referred to as 'brownfield' land.
PFI	Private Finance Initiative	Government initiative to fund public buildings/services, where a body makes an annual payment to the private company who provides the building and associated services.
	Proximity Principle	Principle that waste should generally be disposed of as near to its place of production as possible.
	Public Open Space	Land provided in urban or rural areas as amenity space for public recreation.
	Quality Bus Partnerships	An agreement between local authorities and bus operators to enhance bus services within a specified area.
	Ramsar Sites	Areas of wetland, deemed internationally important for conservation purposes, defined by the Ramsar Convention (1971). They are designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. There is part of one designated RAMSAR site in Berkshire. This consists of two of a series of reservoirs known collectively as the South West London Waterbodies Ramsar.
RES	Regional Economic Strategy	A document prepared by the Regional Development Agency (SEEDA in the South East), which amongst other things, aims to promote the sustainable economic development of the region.

RTS	Regional Transport Strategy	The element of Regional Planning Guidance, which covers transport. It is prepared by SEERA and approved by the Government.
	Renewable Energy	Renewable energy is the term used to cover those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment (PPG22, 1993 version).
	Reserve Sites	Sites that may be brought forward for housing should monitoring of the housing land supply demonstrate a need.
	Retail Warehouses	Large, single-level stores, often (but not exclusively) specialising in the sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods) and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers and often in out of centre locations.
	Section 106 Agreement	Planning obligation on a party with an interest in land in order to achieve the implementation of relevant planning policies as authorized by section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
	Sequential Approach	A method of considering and ranking the suitability of sites for development, used for example to seek to increase the vitality of urban areas and minimize the uptake of greenfield land, or minimize flood risk from new development.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest	Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Areas of national nature conservation or wildlife importance protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. SSSIs are identified by English Nature.
	Social Exclusion	The lack of equal choice, opportunity or availability to participate fully in society often as a consequence of (primarily unintentionally) limiting rules or regulations that exclude an individual or group on an inappropriate or irrelevant basis, such as their beliefs, disability or race.
	South East (region)	For the purposes of this Plan, this is the Government region called the South East which covers the geographical counties of Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, East and West Sussex, Surrey and Kent.
	Wider South East	This is the South East region (see above) plus the geographical counties of Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and Greater London. It is the area covered by Regional Planning Guidance RPG9 (March 2001).
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency	The Regional Development Agency for the South East came into operation on 1st April 1999 and was established by the Government through the Regional Development Agency Act 1998. It aims to take the strategic lead in promoting the sustainable economic development of the region and has powers to co-ordinate and promote regeneration, and encourage inward investment.
SEERA		A body composed of representatives from Unitary Authorities and other organizations within the South East (see below). It is charged with the preparation of future regional planning guidance, among other functions.

SERTAB	South East Region Technical Advisory Body	A group established to advise SEERA on options and strategies for dealing with waste management.
SERWMS	South East Regional Waste Management Strategy	
SAC	Special Area for Conservation	An SSSI additionally designated a Special Area of Conservation under the European Community's Habitats Directive 1992 (92/43/EEC), in order to maintain or restore priority natural habitats and wild species. Together with SPAs, SACs comprise the European Union's 'Natura 2000' network of habitats of pan-European nature conservation importance
SPA	Special Protection Area	An SSSI additionally designated a Special Protection Area under the European Community's Directive (79/409/EEC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds 1979. It provides protection for the eggs, nests and habitats of birds.
	Specialist Shopping	Shopping for goods that are connected with one specific area of activity.
	Strategic Gaps	Identified areas of open land that separate distinct settlements. These are identified in order to steer development away from areas where there is a threat of coalescence.
SRA	Strategic Rail Authority	The Strategic Rail Authority was formed on 1 February 2001, following the passage of the Transport Act 2000. Its key role is to promote and develop the rail network and encourage integration. Its responsibilities include providing overall strategic direction for Britain's railways, and it covers the three sectors of Passenger, Freight and Infrastructure.
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance	Additional guidance produced to supplement a Development Plan, which is non-statutory but which can be a material consideration in determining planning applications.
	Sustainable Development	"Ensuring that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Our Common Future ['The Brundtland Report'], World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987. Oxford University Press, Oxford). or alternatively: "Improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting eco systems". (Caring for the Earth, the 1991 report of the World Conservation Union, UN Environment Programme, and the World Wide Fund for Nature). The UK Government qualifies this with four main aims (see Foreword).
	Sustainable Drainage Solutions	Sustainable drainage solutions use techniques to control surface water run-off as close to its origin as possible, before it enters a watercourse. These will remain true to natural drainage processes (PPG25).
TVEP	Thames Valley Economic Partnership	TVEP operate the Thames Valley Network and assist overseas companies to set up operations in the Thames Valley. Help to provide investors with useful links with local government and commercial organisations.
TVERC	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre can offer a range of services to people who need to collect, manage and make use of environmental data.

Transport Assessment	A report submitted with a planning application that assesses the transport and environmental impact of large development proposals on the surrounding area.
Transport Development Areas	A concept promoted by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in 2000 which involves the encouragement of well-designed, higher-density development (including a variety of uses) at places of high public transport accessibility in urban areas. [http://www.rics.org/downloads/contents.pdf].
Urban Extension	An area of land located adjacent to the existing settlement boundary, usually on Greenfield land. May be chosen as the most sustainable option for larger scale housing or other development (c.f. out of town development) as part of the sequential approach due to its proximity to existing services and infrastructure.
Urban Fringe	Countryside located on the immediate periphery of urban areas.
Urban Renaissance	The process of encouraging the redevelopment and renewal of the built environment within urban areas to provide a high quality environment and reduce the pressures for the decentralisation of people and activity from conurbations.
Use Classes Order	Categories of land uses as set out by the Secretary of State for the Environment in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and explained in Circular 13/87 (1987). An activity may change to another activity in the same use class without requiring planning permission, whereas any change of use from one use category to another (for example from A1 retail to B1 office/light industrial use) may require local authority planning consent.
Waste Hierarchy	A hierarchy of approaches to waste management, with 'reduction' the most preferred approach, followed by 're-use'; 'recycling, composting or energy recovery from waste'; and finally 'disposal'.
Western Policy Area	RPG 9 paragraph 4.20 states 'The Western Policy Area is an area to the west and south of London, ranging broadly from the M1 and Watford in the north, Reading in the west and Gatwick to the south. It covers parts of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and Surrey together with areas around Heathrow and Gatwick airports.'
Wider South East	See under "S" after South East (region).
Wildlife Heritage Sites	Areas of particular nature conservation value (designated and approved by the former Berkshire County Council and the six Unitary Authorities) that do not qualify for Site of Special Scientific Interest status. Such sites enjoy priority status for conservation management grants and their value is taken into account in planning decisions. There are over 900 Wildlife Heritage Sites in Berkshire (ongoing monitoring by TVERC).
Windfall Site	A site which becomes available for housing development which was not previously identified.

Acronyms

AGLV	Area of Great Landscape Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BPEO	Best Practicable Environmental Option
DTLR	Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLA	Greater London Authority
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
LEAP	Local Environment Agency Plan
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MGB	Metropolitan Green Belt
MLP	Minerals Local Plan
NNR	National Nature Reserve
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance Note
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance
RPG9	Regional Planning Guidance for the South East
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly or in the South East as 'Regional Assembly'
SERPLAN	The London and South East Regional Planning Conference (ceased to exist from 1 April 2001)
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Appendix 1.

Sustainability Objectives of the Berkshire Structure Plan 2001-2016:

1. Maintenance of Stable Levels of Growth

1. Encourage and accommodate the maintenance of a suitable, steady, and stable rate of economic growth and meet local employment needs.
2. Find a balance in the distribution of jobs and workforce. (This refers to both an overall balance and the spatial distribution. There is a need to take into account whether the development is being directed to the parts of Berkshire where there is most need or where it most sustainable for any other reasons).
3. Provide good accessibility for the movement of freight by alternative means than road.
4. Provide good access to public transport for the County's workers.
5. Support, maintain and encourage appropriate diversification in the rural economy.
6. Encourage and accommodate expansion of selected economic sectors and clusters.
7. Make efficient use of existing and new infrastructure resources.

2. Social Progress and Equity

8. Reduce disparities in income.
9. Reduce disparities in access to jobs (This refers to the reduction in skills mismatches that may prevent people working, not the ability to get to the workplace).
10. Reduce disparities in access to services.
11. Ensure good accessibility to jobs, facilities and services in rural areas, based on local needs.
12. Improve the viability of public transport and other services in urban areas.
13. Exploit more fully locations which have high public transport accessibility.
14. Limit parking, which encourages people to use other means of travel.
15. Reduce the need to travel (refers to peoples ability to work by either not travelling at all (home working or teleworking) or at least not having to use vehicular transport, i.e. work/ services can be reached on foot).
16. Provide a range of housing types including affordable housing, based on the needs of the area.
17. Provide mixed-use areas.
18. Raise the average residential density.
19. Provide sustainable development sites in rural settlements and market towns.
20. Provide decent housing for every household requiring a home.

3. Effective Protection and Improvement of the Environment

21. Maintain and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the landscape.
22. Improve level and quality of accessible countryside close to built up areas.
23. Maintain and increase biodiversity for its intrinsic value.
24. Maintain and improve quality of river and groundwater.
25. Improve air quality.
26. Protect and develop recreational facilities
27. Increase the level of pedestrian friendly environment.
28. Make towns and cities more attractive places to live and enhance the character and vitality of town and neighbourhood centres.
29. Improve buildings in terms of energy use and design.
30. Sustainable use agricultural land, protecting the best and most versatile.
31. Promote the top of the waste hierarchy.
32. Promote and increase in tree cover.
33. Maintain and enhance and, where appropriate, make accessible the historic environment.
34. Encourage the use of sustainable land management techniques.

4. Prudent Use of Natural Resources

35. Reduce consumption of undeveloped land, particularly the open countryside.
36. Reduce consumption of minerals from primary sources.
37. Ensure that water is efficiently used, whilst reducing environmental impact and resource depletion.
38. Increase the proportion of energy produced from renewable resources.
39. Promote the prudent use of energy from finite sources.

Appendix 2.

Ramsar Site, Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Berkshire

PLEASE NOTE: The information below is as at July 2004, and is subject to change

Sources: Berkshire Unitary Authorities (www.berks-jsu.gov.uk), English Nature (www.english-nature.org.uk), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (www.jncc.gov.uk). Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (www.magic.gov.uk), RSPB (www.rspb.org.uk), Wetlands International (www.wetlands.org)

1. Ramsar Sites

South West London Waterbodies is the only Ramsar site in Berkshire

2. (candidate) Special Areas of Conservation SACs and (proposed) Special Protection Areas SPAs

Natura 2000 is the European Union-wide network of nature conservation sites being established under the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and under the EC Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC). Sites established under the Habitats Directive are known as Special Areas of Conservation. Sites established under the Wild Birds Directive are known as Special Protection Areas. Before formal adoption they are referred to as proposed Special Areas of Conservation and candidate Special Areas of Conservation.

The objective of the Directives is to safeguard European biodiversity through designating and protecting key sites. The Directives requires member governments to identify sites and take steps to protect them ensuring that they have what is called favourable conservation status.

Site name (EU Reference Number)	Berkshire Authority	Component SSSIs in Berkshire
SPA (Special Protection Area) and Ramsar		
South West London Water Bodies (7 UK 148)	RBWM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wraysbury and Hythe End Gravel Pits • Wraysbury No.1 Gravel Pit
pSPAs (Proposed Special Protection Area)		
Thames Basin Heath (UK 9012141)	Bracknell Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths • Sandhurst to Owlsmoor Bogs and Heaths
cSACs (Candidate Special Area of Conservation)		
Chilterns Beechwoods (UK0012724)	RBWM (also Bucks, Herts and Oxon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bisham Woods
Kennet and Lambourn Floodplains (UK0030044)	West Berkshire (also Wiltshire)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennet and Lambourn Floodplains • Thatcham Reed Beds SSSI • Boxford Water Meadow SSSI
Kennet Valley Alderwoods (UK0030175)	West Berkshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennet Valley Alderwoods
River Lambourn (UK0030257)	West Berkshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Lambourn
Windsor Forest and Great Park (UK0012586)	RBWM and Bracknell Forest (also Surrey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windsor Forest & Great Park

3. Component SSSIs

Site boundaries for SSSIs, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites may well overlap: while an SAC, SPA or Ramsar site may contain more than one SSSI the boundaries of these component SSSIs may extend beyond those of the SPA /SAC/ Ramsar. This is because sites are designated under different legislation and for different reasons so the qualifying criteria, e.g. the presence of a certain species or habitat, may have different geographical areas.

SSSIs in Berkshire as at July 2004:

Aldermaston Gravel Pits	Inkpen Common
Ashridge Wood	Inkpen Crocus Fields
Avery's Pightle	Irish Hill Copse
Bisham Woods	Kennet And Lambourn Floodplain
Blackwater Valley	Kennet Valley Alderwoods
Bowdown And Chamberhouse Woods	King's Copse
Boxford Chalk Pit	Lardon Chase
Boxford Water Meadows	Lodge Wood & Sandford Mill
Bray Meadows	Longmoor Bog
Bray Pennyroyal Field	Old Copse, Beenham
Briff Lane Meadows	Parkfarm Down
Brimpton Pit	Pincent's Kiln
Broadmoor To Bagshot Woods And Heaths	Redhill Wood
Cannoncourt Farm Pit	River Kennet
Catmore And Winterly Copses	River Lambourn
Chawridge Bourne	Sandhurst To Owlsmoor Bogs And Heaths
Chilton Foliat Meadows	Seven Barrows
Cleeve Hill	Snelsmore Common
Cock Marsh	Stanford End Mill And River Loddon
Cold Ash Quarry	Streatley Warren
Combe Wood And Linkenholt Hanging	Sulham And Tidmarsh Woods And Meadows
Coombe Wood, Frilsham	Swinley Park And Brick Pits
Croker's Hole	Thatcham Reed Beds
Decoy Pit , Pools & Woods	Wasing Wood Ponds
Easton Farm Meadow	Wellington College Bog
Enborne Copse	West Woodhay Down
Englemere Pond	West's Meadow, Aldermaston
Fognam Chalk Quarry	Westfield Farm Chalk Bank
Freeman's Marsh	White Shute
Great Thrift Wood	Windsor Forest And Great Park
Greenham And Crookham Commons	Winterbourne Chalk Pit
Hamstead Marshall Pit	Woolhampton Reed Bed
Heath Lake	Wraysbury & Hythe End Gravel Pits
Hog's Hole	Wraysbury No 1 Gravel Pit
Holies Down	Wykery Copse
Inkpen And Walbury Hills	

Key Diagram

