

West Berkshire Local Plan
Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Duty to Cooperate Statement

October 2015

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1. Introduction to the Duty to Cooperate

1.1 Section 110 of the Localism Act

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/110> (which amended the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/110/enacted>) places a legal duty on local planning authorities and other prescribed bodies to cooperate with each other when preparing development plan documents in order to address strategic planning issues relevant to their areas. This duty to co-operate:

- relates to development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas;
- requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues;
- requires that councils and other bodies ‘engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis’ to develop strategic policies; and
- requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan making.

1.2 The preparation of development plans are governed by the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made>. This sets out the list of prescribed bodies to which the duty also applies.

1.3 Relevant planning policy issues to be considered under the Duty to Cooperate are explained in the NPPF (paras 156 and 178 to 181) <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/policy>. Specifically, it states that “the Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities” (para 178). It highlights the importance of joint working to meet development requirements that cannot be wholly met within a single local planning area where it is practical to do so. “Cooperation should be a continuous process of engagement from initial thinking through to implementation, resulting in a final position where plans are in place to provide the land and infrastructure necessary to support current and projected future levels of development” (para 181). Authorities should also consider producing plans or policies prepared as part of a joint committee, a memorandum of understanding or a jointly prepared strategy which is presented as evidence of an agreed position.

1.4 Paragraph 156 of the NPPF sets out the strategic issues where co-operation might be appropriate and this includes:

- The homes and jobs needed in the area;
- The provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- The provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);

- The provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.

1.5 The Duty to Cooperate is tested at examination whenever an Authority prepares or reviews a DPD as part of its Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/duty-to-cooperate> makes clear that in demonstrating compliance with the duty an Authority needs to submit robust evidence of the efforts they have made to cooperate on strategic cross boundary issues. A plan will be found unsound if the Duty has not been complied with. There are two elements to this test:

- The legal requirement under Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Duty cannot be retrofitted)
- The NPPF soundness assessment of how effective the cooperation has been

1.6 Cooperation needs to have resulted in a positively prepared plan with an effective outcome. The Council will also need to show how it has considered joint plan-making arrangements, what decisions were reached and why.

2. Our Strategic Context

2.1 West Berkshire (see Appendix 1a) is a unitary authority of 704 square kilometres), which is located in the south east of England. Forming half of the former county of Berkshire, the District covers towns such as Newbury and Thatcham and the urban areas of Tilehurst, Purley on Thames and Calcot in the east of the District, close to Reading. At the same time, about 90% of the District is rural in character. The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally important and legally protected landscape, designated for the quality of its scenic beauty and covers 74% of the District. The District benefits from a high degree of strategic accessibility afforded by the M4 motorway and A34 and in addition, the proximity of Heathrow airport provides enhanced national and international connectivity. These locational factors, combined with high quality urban and rural areas, contribute towards making the area a popular place to live and work.

2.2 Outside of the main urban areas about 44% of the total population are located in the rural area, dispersed across a large number of towns, villages and smaller settlements each of which has its own identity, as well as its own specific needs and concerns. This rural dimension is very important in shaping the character of West Berkshire, its communities, economy and environment. It also creates synergies with our neighbouring authorities to the north, south and west with cross border working taking place with authorities in Oxfordshire, Hampshire and

Wiltshire through the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Council of Partners (see Appendix 1b).

- 2.3 Economic influences are particularly significant at a strategic level. West Berkshire is part of the Thames Valley Berkshire sub region which is recognised as the most dynamic and competitive sub-regional economy in the UK. This economic domination means that the most significant economic influences lie to the east, notably Reading, with economic linkages to the north, south and west of the District much less strong. Our strategic partnership working reflects this situation and we are a key player in the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership (TVB LEP). In partnership with the TVB LEP and the other unitary authorities across Berkshire, current joint working is focused on the production of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the analysis of our Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA). Together, these studies will provide the evidence needed to form the basis for future joint working on the distribution of homes and jobs across the Housing Market Areas.
- 2.4 West Berkshire is strategically well connected in transport terms. At the centre of the District is an important road interchange where the east-west M4 motorway intersects with the north-south A34. There are also road connections to larger centres such as Reading, Oxford, Swindon, Basingstoke and London. In addition, mainline railway services to London and the south west of England run through the south of the District.
- 2.5 Geography plays an important role in shaping cross border movements. Some of the western and northern parts of West Berkshire look towards Swindon and Oxford. Some of the southern communities gravitate towards Basingstoke, highlighting the complex nature of cross border arrangements that inevitably have to exist. A cross-border working group exists between West Berkshire Council, Hampshire County Council, and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on areas of common concern – including the exploration of sustainable solutions to the growth of traffic on the A339.
- 2.6 The Council works in partnership on various transport related joint activities given some of the eastern communities of West Berkshire have a boundary co-terminus with the urban area of Reading. This work is particularly related to the need to deliver sustainable transport solutions to reduce and manage the growth of congestion around the A4 and the M4 and surrounding transport corridors.
- 2.7 The settlements in the Eastern Area – Purley on Thames, Tilehurst, Calcot and Theale have a close functional relationship with Reading. Whilst many residents in this area use facilities and services in Reading, there is a significant movement the other way in terms of school children, with West Berkshire schools educating a significant number of Reading pupils.
- 2.8 Kennet Valley Meadows in Calcot are an important part of West Berkshire and Reading's green infrastructure, so joint working is important to conserve and enhance the management of this area, particularly as this forms part of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area. As a member of the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership the Council works at the landscape scale in order to make positive changes for biodiversity.

- 2.9 Additional cross border working takes place with Basingstoke and Deane, Wokingham, and Reading relating to the monitoring of housing completions within the consultation zones of AWE in Aldermaston and AWE in Burghfield.
- 2.10 Assessing the future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site provision within the District also benefits from joint working arrangements. A shared methodology has been used amongst all Berkshire authorities to inform the quantity and types of site allocated in this Plan.
- 2.11 There are no Special Protection Areas (SPA) within West Berkshire, although there is a very small part of the District around Beech Hill within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. Development in this area will need to be regulated in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework. Since the level of development expected to come forward in this area of the District is extremely low, the Council will explore opportunities for cross boundary working with Wokingham Borough Council in this regard.
- 2.12 The strategic context of West Berkshire means that there continues to be pressure on house prices, the need for affordable housing, the job market, transport and the environment. The area is therefore seen as one that will continue to accommodate growth within sensitive environmental and policy constraints.

3. Preparation of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

- 3.1 The Core Strategy aims to build upon the existing settlement pattern across West Berkshire and direct most development to Newbury, Thatcham and the settlements in the east of the District close to Reading. The existing urban areas are regarded as the most suitable locations for future development by virtue of their existing access to services and facilities, thereby providing the opportunity to reduce out-commuting and the need to travel. The primary role of the Housing Site Allocations DPD is to support the delivery of housing as set out in the Council's adopted Core Strategy by allocating non-strategic housing sites across the District in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy. This means that the sites to be allocated are in the areas that the Core Strategy sets out, based on evidence, as suitable for some level of future growth and that the proposals will conform to the policy details set out in the Core Strategy. Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are also proposed for allocation and the Housing Site Allocations DPD also includes updated residential parking standards and a set of policies to guide housing in the countryside.
- 3.2 A SHMA is being prepared alongside the Housing Site Allocations DPD to assess our longer term (including looking beyond 2026) objectively assessed housing needs. Our approach is for the housing allocations within the Housing Site Allocations DPD to be seen as allocating the first part of the objectively assessed housing needs in the short to medium term. Following the adoption of the Housing Site Allocations DPD we will then start to prepare a new Local Plan. This will allocate the rest of our objectively assessed need and look longer term, as well as dealing with other policy issues.

- 3.3 An audit trail of the key decisions and processes we have undertaken as part of the preparation of the DPD and the SHMA are outlined in Appendix 2a and 2b respectively.

4. Identifying our strategic planning issues

- 4.1 Since our approach is effectively just providing detail to the strategic approach already agreed within our adopted Core Strategy, we are tailoring our approach to the Duty to Cooperate as part of the Housing Site Allocations DPD accordingly.
- 4.2 In May 2014 the Council produced a paper which set out how we would deal with strategic planning issues as part of the preparation of the West Berkshire Local Plan (see Appendix 3 for details). In order to take forward the Duty to Cooperate in a holistic way we identified what we saw as the key strategic issues for West Berkshire both for the Local Plan as a whole and more specifically, the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (HSA DPD). We sought agreement on a finalised list of strategic issues for the HSA DPD and asked how bodies would prefer to be involved in dealing with them so that we could then establish appropriate governance and support arrangements for taking them forward. We consulted 61 organisations and the feedback we received is outlined in our Preferred Options Consultation Statement which can be viewed at <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0>.
- 4.3 The outcome of this process was to agree the following strategic issues for the HSA DPD -

Tackling climate change

- Ensuring that the levels of growth in the District are delivered in a sustainable way.

Housing Growth

- Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District.
- Preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to objectively assess the full housing needs within the housing market area.
- Monitoring housing completions and population levels within the consultation zones of AWE in Aldermaston and AWE in Burghfield.

Housing Needs

- The approach to meeting needs for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
- Providing the right type of accommodation for the changing demographic structure of the population including the challenges presented by an aging population and smaller household size.

Infrastructure requirements

- Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments in order to ensure the District meets its growth targets.
- Ensuring development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network.

Heritage

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- The potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows to provide an enhanced open space and biodiversity resource.
- Regulating development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework.
- To continue to use Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) to make positive changes for biodiversity at a landscape scale.

4.4 It is acknowledged that some of these issues are very broad and all encompassing, whereas others are narrower and more focused in their nature. In taking them all forward under the Duty it soon became clear that some were more critical for the preparation of the DPD than others and therefore required more attention, such as the preparation of a SHMA. Work on some of the more site specific issues, such as the potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows in conjunction with Reading Borough Council and regulating development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework in conjunction with Wokingham Borough Council will require more focus at a later date.

4.5 At the same time, when the strategic issues were drawn up it was acknowledged that they may evolve as work progressed and that further cross boundary working could also be identified. The provision of education for instance, has now been added to our list. Our approach to strategic planning is being prioritised and undertaken on the following basis as part of the Housing Site Allocations DPD.

5. Our strategic planning priorities for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

5.1 Our overarching strategic priority is to -

Ensure that the levels of growth in the District are delivered in a sustainable way

We will do this by –

1. Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District by

- a) Preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to objectively assess the full housing needs within the housing market area.
- b) Monitoring housing completions and population levels within the consultation zones of AWE in Aldermaston and AWE in Burghfield.
- c) Taking a strategic approach to meeting the needs for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation.

2. Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments by

- a) Ensuring development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network.
- b) Implementing strategic traffic management measures to minimise the impact of new development on the existing network
- c) Ensuring the management of cross boundary movement of school pupils is considered as part of development proposals

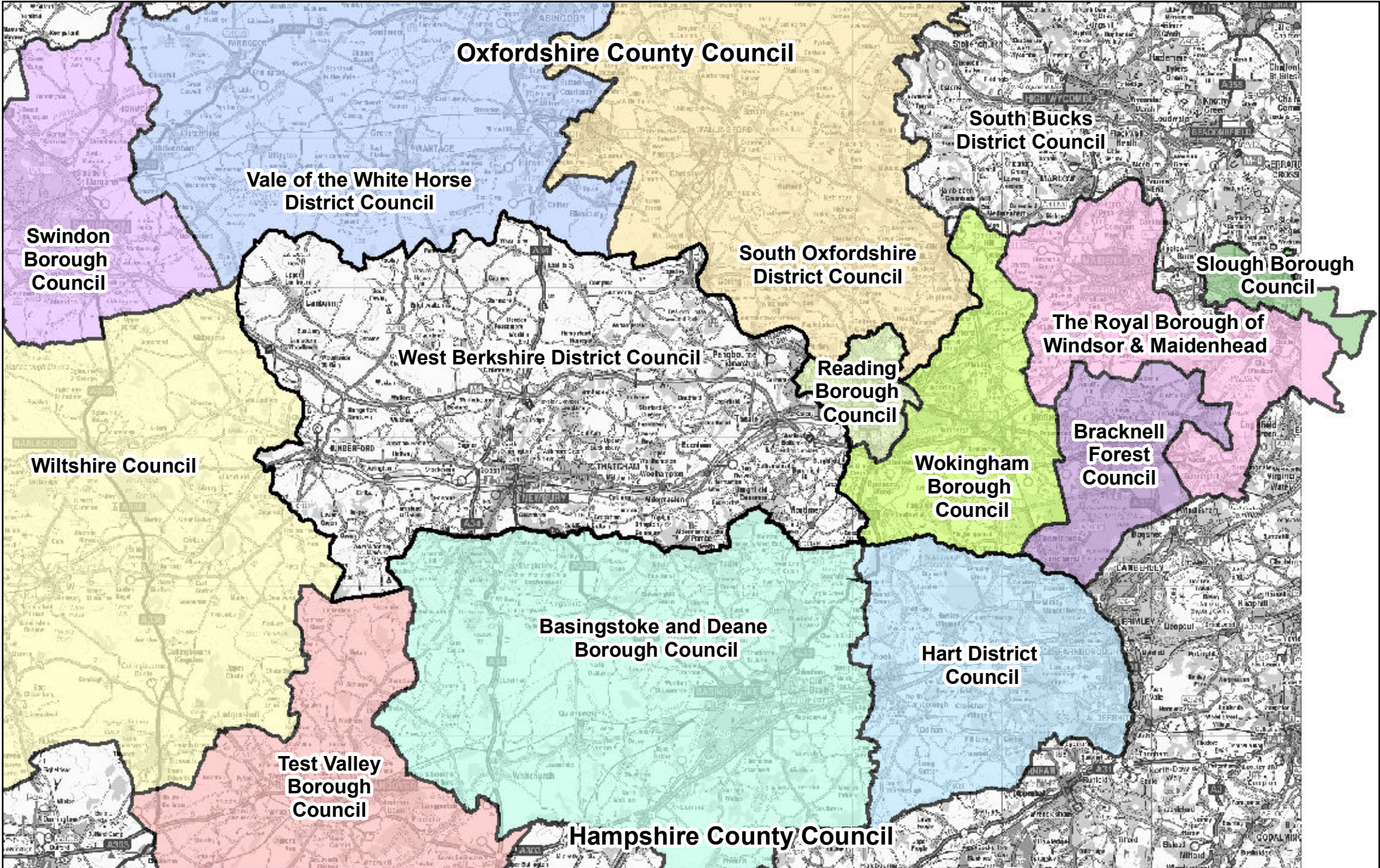
3. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of the local distinctive character and identity of the District by

- a) Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB
- b) Continuing to use Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) to make positive changes for biodiversity at a landscape scale.
- c) Regulating development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework.
- d) Considering the potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows to provide an enhanced open space and biodiversity resource.

5.2 Our strategic approach to each of these priorities is outlined in greater detail in Appendix 4. The governance and particular working arrangements for each are outlined, the outcomes of cooperation clearly highlighted and ongoing cooperation set out.

Appendix 1a: Map of strategic planning area

Strategic Planning Area Local Authority Partners



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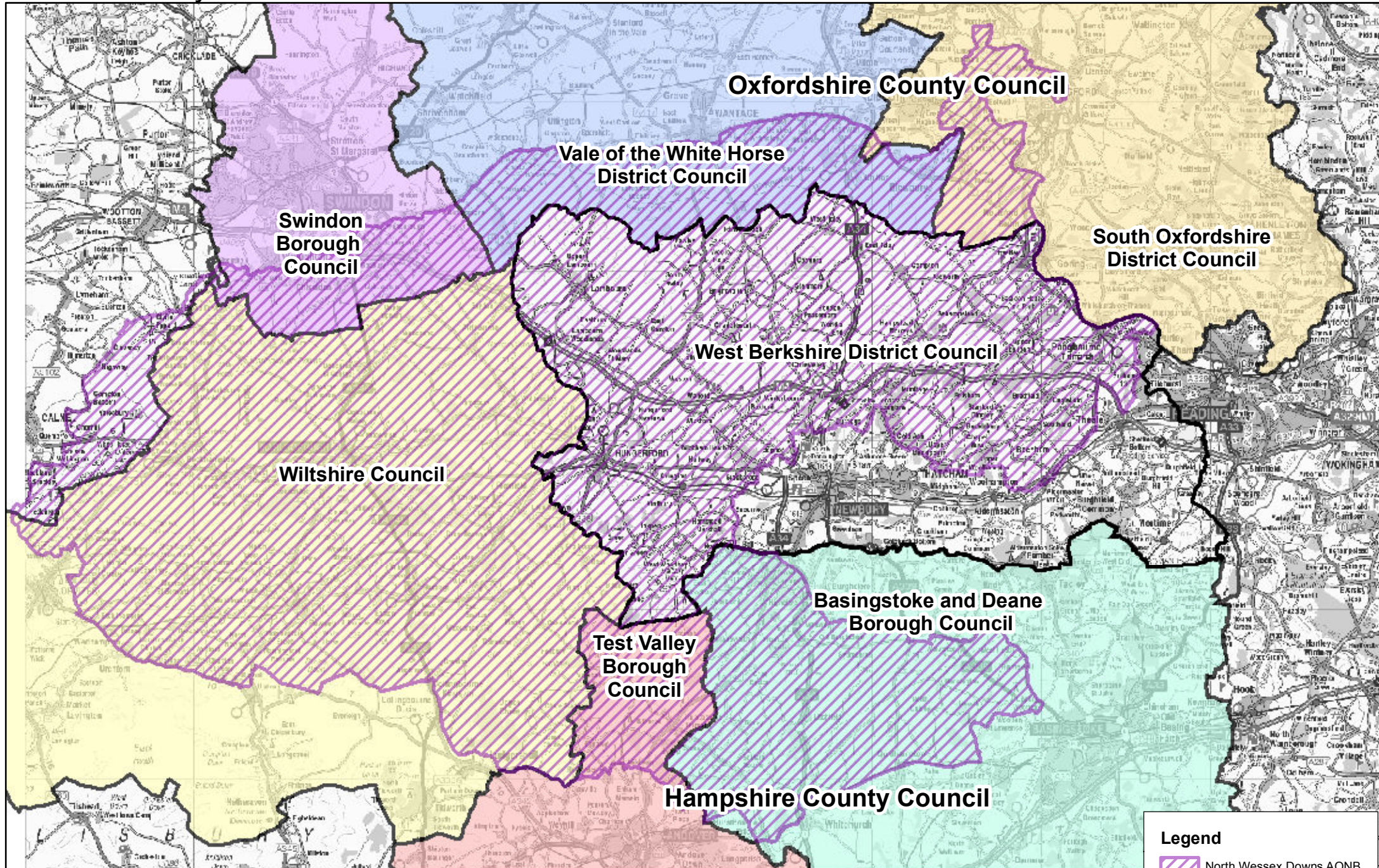
Appendix 1b: Map of Strategic Planning Partners for the North Wessex Downs AONB

Strategic Planning Area - North Wessex Downs AONB


Local Authority Partners

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Legend

 North Wessex Downs AONB

Appendix 2a: Audit trail of key decisions and processes for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
27 September 2013	Planning Policy Task Group	To inform Members of the implications for strategic planning of the new Duty to Cooperate.	Officers identify the key strategic issues for West Berkshire, establish the most appropriate governance and support arrangements for taking this work forward and report back to a future meeting of the Task Group.	Minutes: available on request
13 December 2013	Planning Policy Task Group	To consider the draft list of key strategic issues for West Berkshire that will need to be addressed through the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD under the Duty to Cooperate.	Members discussed the draft list of key strategic issues and agreed a finalised list is sent to neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies for comment.	Minutes: available on request
19 December 2013	Executive	To inform Members that under the Localism Act 2011 (Regulation 110 Duty to Cooperate) the unitary authorities in Berkshire have produced two Memorandums of Understanding to guide work on Strategic Planning and on Minerals and Waste Planning.	Resolved that the Council enter into the Memorandums of Understanding in relation to Strategic Planning and Minerals and Waste Planning.	Minutes: http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=117&MId=2468&Ver=4 (Item 53).
28 March 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	To highlight the issues associated with the preparation of the Site Allocations and Delivery (SAD) DPD and to advise Task Group of the proposed way forward. Members were asked to discuss the proposed approach.	Resolved that a HSA DPD be progressed instead of a SAD DPD.	Minutes: available on request

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
30 April – 11 June 2014	Regulation 18 consultation	Consultation on the notice of intention to prepare a HSA DPD.	Comments included in the Statement of Consultation prepared for the preferred options consultation on the HSA DPD.	Statement of consultation (includes summary of representations and WBC responses): http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0 (Appendix C).
28 May – 25 June 2014	Consultation with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies (60 organisations consulted)	To seek agreement on a finalised list of strategic issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD and to ascertain how consultees would prefer to be involved in dealing with them so that the Council can then establish appropriate guidance and support arrangements for taking them forward.	22 responses were received, and one response was received under the Regulation 18 consultation. The comments received and the Council responses formed part of Consultation Statement prepared at the preferred options stage. They are also included with the Consultation Statement that accompanies the draft submission version of the HSA DPD.	Preferred Options Consultation Statement: http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0 .
29 May 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	To consider the site selection (Newbury/Thatcham/Cold Ash and East Kennet Valley spatial areas]	Task Group made recommendations on sites.	Minutes: available on request
6 June 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	To consider the site selection (EUA and AONB spatial areas]	Task Group made recommendations on sites.	Minutes: available on request
27 June 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	To consider the preferred options version of the DPD	Members recommended the preferred options be presented to full Council	Minutes: available on request
7 July 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	Meeting set up to discuss the initial draft findings of the updated Gypsy and Traveller	Members voted on which sites should be included within the preferred options DPD.	Minutes: available on request

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
		Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA), and for Members to discuss and agree which sites are to be taken forward as preferred options for consultation.		
4 July – 25 July 2014	Consultation on the updated Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report	The change in approach from a Site Allocations and Delivery (SAD) DPD to a HSA DPD resulted in an update of the SA/SEA Scoping Report.	Minor amendments made to the SA/SEA Scoping Report	Consultation comments and Council's response: http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38054&p=0
21 July – 8 August 2014	Consultation on the HRA screening report preferred options HSA DPD	Comments sought on the HRA for the preferred options HSA DPD to ascertain if further investigation, or Appropriate Assessment, is required under the Habitat Directive	Agreement from Natural England that no further investigation, or Appropriate Assessment, is required under the Habitat Directive	http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38313&p=0
22 July 2014	Meeting of Council	To consider the preferred options version of the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document.	<u>Motion:</u> That the Council: 1. approves for public consultation the preferred options version of the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD 2. delegates authority to the Head of Planning and Countryside to agree any minor typographical and presentational changes to the preferred options version of the DPD and supporting documentation before publication. The Motion was put to the meeting and duly	Minutes: http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=116&MId=2786&Ver=4 (Item 38)

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
			resolved.	
25 July – 12 September 2014	Consultation on the HSA DPD preferred options	Views sought on the soundness of the HSA DPD preferred options		http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30382
25 July 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	To consider the draft revised Statement of Community Involvement	Resolved that Members of the Task Group approve the draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement and recommends that it is adopted by the Council.	Minutes: available on request
		Policies to guide housing in the Countryside (verbal report)	Members of the Task Group agreed the new countryside policies.	
18 September 2014	Meeting of Council	To consider the Development in the Countryside policies which form part of the preferred options West Berkshire Site Allocations DPD	Motion that Council approves the Housing in the Countryside policies that form part of the preferred options version of the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD for a 6 week period of public consultation.	Minutes: http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CategoryId=116&MId=2787&Ver=4 (Item 54)
		To consider the Summary of Consultation Report and agree the proposed changes to the draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement	Motion that Council (1) agrees the responses to the representations on the draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement; and (2) adopts the revised Statement of Community Involvement”.	Minutes: http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CategoryId=116&MId=2787&Ver=4 (item 55)
19 September – 31 October 2014	Consultation on the policies for housing in the countryside	Views on the soundness of the policies sought.		http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30475
29 September – 27 October 2014	Consultation on the addendum to the HRA	Comments sought on the HRA addendum for the preferred options HSA DPD to ascertain if further	Natural England concurred with the conclusions of the HRA addendum.	http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38891&p=0

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
	screening report	investigation, or Appropriate Assessment, is required under the Habitat Directive		
31 October 2014	Planning Policy Task Group	Verbal update on HSA DPD consultation.	Resolved that a statement about the processing of all comments on the HSA DPD be published on the Council's website to keep the public informed and with accompanying press release.	
November 2014	Update to the 'Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)' page on the Council's website	To keep the public informed about the processing of comments on the DPD. This update followed the resolution made at the Planning Policy Task Group on 31 October 2014		http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28781
17 July 2015	Duty to Cooperate meeting with Reading Borough Council (RBC)	To discuss matters relevant to RBC in the preparation of the HSA DPD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure capacity concerns relating in particular to highways, bus services, and education. RBC would like to see some recognition in the site policies regarding mitigating the impact on Education. • WBC recognise the pressure on infrastructure, especially in Reading. This will be dealt with through an updated IDP. Reading may want some financial contributions/improvements to bus services and improvements to cycle links to be included. • Need to talk to Clinical commissioning groups. This is something that could be done jointly. WBC need this to take place in the autumn once the draft submission DPD has been agreed. 	Minutes available on request

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Berkshire Council (WBC) to send copy of Eastern Area Transport Assessment to RBC. 	
28 April 2015	Duty To Cooperate meeting with Natural England (NE)	To discuss environmental factors to inform the preparation of the HSA DPD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC to take forward and respond to the comments made at this meeting rather than the NE letter dated 15 September 2014 • WBC to ask the EA and Thames Water to update, as necessary, the information they supplied for the Core Strategy HRA regarding abstraction/discharge licenses. WBC to then ensure that the HSA DPD reflects this updated information. • Living Landscape Project – WBC to reflect NEs suggestion of a strategic led approach in the pre submission DPD • Approach to sites in the AONB – WBC to continue to take forward site specific policies in accordance with policy ADPP5 • Good design at the project stage will cover off most of its other comments raised in the original letter. It was agreed that the policies for individual sites will need to be bespoke and add value. WBC to reflect this approach in pre-submission DPD. • WBC to continue to take forward site specific policies in accordance with policy CS18. • WBC to update NE representations to reflect the outcomes of this meeting. 	Minutes available on request
28 April 2015	Duty To Cooperate meeting with Basingstoke	To discuss matters of relevance to BDBC as part of the preparation of the HSA DPD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDBC invited to Duty to Cooperate meeting on the Berkshire SHMA taking place on 19 May 2015. • WBC agreed that it continues to be 	Minutes available on request

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
	and Deane Borough Council (BDBC)		<p>comfortable with BDBC's approach to the AWE issue and reinforced the need to continue to work together on AWE issues, particularly as plans are reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDBC and WBC agreed that the impact of development on the strategic and local highway network continues to be a cross boundary issue that needs to be given due consideration on relevant applications. • Agreed that Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is not a significant cross boundary issue and WBC have no transit sites. 	
14 May 2015	Duty To Cooperate meeting with the Environment Agency (EA)	To discuss the environmental factors within the remit of the EA so as to inform the preparation of the HSA DPD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA were invited to the Duty to Cooperate meeting on the Berkshire SHMA, but declined as discussions on the methodology are not in their remit. • WBC to update the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to include up to date surface water/groundwater needs. • EA to check whether new abstraction or discharge licenses are likely to be required. • WBC to work with neighbouring authorities as part of the Local Plan process and to consider the need for a Water Cycle Study. • WBC to consider the scope of sequential tests for sites which are within Flood Zones 2/3. 	Minutes available on request
21 July 2015	Planning Advisory Group and Ward Members	To consider the site selection (EUA and East Kennet Valley spatial areas]	Members made recommendations on sites.	Minutes: available on request

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
	workshop			
28 July 2015	Planning Advisory Group and Ward Members workshop	To consider the site selection (Newbury/Thatcham/Cold Ash and AONB spatial areas]	Members made recommendations on sites.	Minutes: available on request
19 August 2015	Duty to Cooperate meeting with AONB Planning Advisor	To discuss issues raised in preferred options consultation	Following concerns raised about the consideration given to the potential impact of development in the Eastern Urban Area on the AONB and its setting, landscape assessments have now been undertaken for all sites within the setting of the AONB. The Council's landscape consultant has also responded to the detailed points raised by the AONB's landscape consultant on individual sites in Hungerford, Lambourn and Pangbourne. It was agreed WBC should continue to take forward site specific policies in the AONB and its setting in accordance with policy ADPP5. The AONB would reconsider the comments it made at the preferred options stage when the Council published the Proposed Submission DPD.	
18 September 2015	Planning Advisory Group	Consideration of the draft proposed submission version of HSA DPD.		Minutes: available on request
2 October 2015	Planning Advisory Group	Consideration of the draft proposed submission version of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (HSA DPD) that was updated following the meeting of Planning Advisory Group on 18		Minutes: available on request

Date	Event	Purpose of event	Outcomes/recommendations	Link to relevant documents
		September 2015		
5 November 2015	Meeting of full Council	To consider the proposed submission version of the DPD	Members agreed to publish and submit the Housing Site Allocations DPD	Minutes: available on request

Appendix 2b: Audit trail of key decisions and processes for the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

Date	Event
24 July 2013	Berkshire-wide Development Plans Group consisting of planning policy team leaders/managers meet to discuss the specification for the SHMA (at this point Reading Borough Council were the lead authority).
11 October 2013	Draft specification for the Berkshire SHMA circulated to all Berkshire authorities by Reading BC.
29 November 2013	Report on the SHMA to Planning Policy Task Group.
18 December 2013	Revised SHMA specification circulated (at this point West Berkshire Council took over as the lead authority).
26 February 2014	Brief re-circulated following comments.
28 March 2014	Brief discussed by Berkshire Heads of Planning.
28 March 2014	Report on the SHMA to Planning Policy Task Group.
25 April 2014.	Planning Policy Task Group include the SHMA on the work programme to be discussed at each monthly meeting
15 May 2014	SHMA brief and governance discussed at Berkshire Heads of Planning.
10 July 2014	SHMA brief and governance discussed at Berkshire Chief Executives.
23 July 2014	SHMA brief and governance discussed at Berkshire Leaders.
14 August 2014	Joint meeting of Development Plans Group and Berkshire Heads of Planning to discuss governance and finalise the SHMA brief.
22 September 2014	Meeting of Berkshire Leaders – all except Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead confirm full involvement in Berkshire SHMA and agree governance proposals.
October 2014	Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership agrees to be a partner in the Berkshire SHMA.
November 2014	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead agrees to be a partner in the Berkshire SHMA – the study now consists of all 6 Berkshire authorities plus the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP.
17 November 2014	SHMA tender documents published on the West Berkshire Council portal. Deadline for tenders set as 15 December 2014.
18 December 2014	Development Plans Group meets to discuss the tenders.
9 January 2015	Contract awarded to GL Hearn. Brief commits to findings on OAN in

	May 2015.
26 January 2015	Inception meeting between consultants and the SHMA Steering Group (representatives of each authority in Berkshire and the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP).
27 February 2015	Sub national housing projections (2012 based) released.
1 April 2015	Holborn fire – GL Hearn office evacuated.
19 May 2015	Duty to Cooperate and Stakeholder events to discuss SHMA methodology and draft outcomes on Housing Market Areas. Start of 2 week consultation to gather feedback.
29 May 2015	Sub national population projections (2012 based) released.
2 June 2015	End of consultation on SHMA methodology and Housing Market Areas
July 2015	Draft outcomes of SHMA presented to Berkshire Chief Executives (9 July) and Berkshire Leaders (23 July).
28 July 2015	SHMA Steering Group and Berkshire Heads of Planning meet to discuss the SHMA outcomes, finalisation of the SHMA and next steps including involving stakeholders.
15 September 2015	Member Reference Group (MRG) inception meeting to discuss draft terms of reference, outcomes of the SHMA, stakeholder event and next steps
12 October 2015	MRG meets to discuss SHMA outcomes, approach to the Stakeholder event, joint press release and next steps.
20 October 2015	Duty to Cooperate and Stakeholder events to present the outcomes of the SHMA. Joint press release issued. SHMA figures become public.

Appendix 3: Preparation of the Housing Site Allocations DPD – identifying our strategic issues

West Berkshire Local Plan and the Duty to Cooperate Preparation of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document May 2014

Purpose of this paper

The purpose of this paper is to set out how West Berkshire Council will deal with strategic planning issues as part of the preparation of the West Berkshire Local Plan. In order to take forward the Duty to Cooperate in a holistic way we have identified what we see as the key strategic issues for West Berkshire both for the Local Plan as a whole and more specifically, the next Development Plan Document (DPD) we are preparing as part of Local Plan, the Housing Site Allocations DPD (HSA DPD). We are now seeking your agreement on a finalised list of strategic issues for the HSA DPD and asking you how you would prefer to be involved in dealing with them so that we can then establish appropriate governance and support arrangements for taking them forward.

1. Background

- 1.1 Section 110 of the Localism Act places a legal duty on local planning authorities and other prescribed bodies to cooperate with each other when preparing development plan documents in order to address strategic planning issues relevant to their areas. This duty to co-operate:
- relates to development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas;
 - requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues;
 - requires that councils and other bodies ‘engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis’ to develop strategic policies; and
 - requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan making.
- 1.2 Relevant planning policy issues to be considered under the Duty to Cooperate are explained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paras 156 and 178 to 181) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) (paras 001-022). Specifically, it states that “the Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities” (para 178). It highlights the importance of joint working to meet development requirements that cannot be wholly met within a single local planning area where it is practical to do so. “Cooperation should be a continuous process of engagement from initial thinking through to implementation, resulting in a final position where plans are in place to provide the land and infrastructure necessary to support current and projected future levels of development” (para 181). Authorities should also consider producing plans or policies prepared as part of a joint committee, a memorandum of understanding or a jointly prepared strategy which is presented as evidence of an agreed position.

- 1.3 Failure to satisfy the Duty will mean that plans cannot be adopted as a Planning Inspector cannot make main modifications to remedy this through the examination process.
- 1.4 Paragraph 156 of the NPPF sets out the strategic issues where co-operation might be appropriate and this includes:
- The homes and jobs needed in the area;
 - The provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;
 - The provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - The provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and
 - Climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.

2. Strategic planning in West Berkshire

- 2.1 At the heart of the Duty is effective partnership working to achieve outcomes. This principle is not new to good planning practice and is one that the Council has been committed to for some time. We have a history of working with other bodies to address planning issues of common concern. For example:
- joint commissioning of evidence to inform individual local plans on key issues (e.g. a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)).
 - ‘aligned’ plans across several local planning areas that include complementary policies on key issues (e.g. AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield)
 - a single plan across several local planning areas, overseen by each authority separately or by a joint committee (e.g. North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan).
 - Non statutory delivery plans underpinning common policies in separate plans (e.g. the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA))
- 2.2 However, up to recently this kind of joint working was done mainly to deliver policy objectives set out in the Berkshire Structure Plan or the South East Plan. We now need to ensure we agree the scope of such arrangements locally in order to meet local circumstances.
- 2.3 The other local planning authorities and public bodies that we will need to cooperate with will depend on the strategic matters being planned for and the

most appropriate functional area to gather evidence and develop planning policies, e.g. housing market and travel to work areas rather than traditional county boundaries. We are aware that we may well need to work in different groupings for different strategic matters.

3. Identifying the strategic issues that need to be addressed as part of the West Berkshire Local Plan

- 3.1 In order to take forward the Duty to Cooperate in a holistic way we need to identify the strategic issues that actually need to be addressed as part of the West Berkshire Local Plan. We need to be clear about what these are in order to ensure that cooperation flows directly from them. We also need to ensure that the scale and type of co-operation we undertake is both necessary and proportionate to the issues being addressed.
- 3.2 The Council prepared its first DPD, the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), as part of the West Berkshire Local Plan before the Duty to Cooperate was enacted. The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012 and provides an overall framework for more detailed policies and site specific proposals to be contained in other documents of the Local Plan. As a starting point in taking this work forward, it is considered prudent to build on our existing evidence base and so the key cross border strategic issues which have been identified within Core Strategy are outlined below. These have been supplemented by other issues that have come out of more recent work on the Newbury Vision and the Economic Development Strategy. These challenges and opportunities have been considered within the context of the nine strategic objectives also identified in the Core Strategy. The objectives represent the key delivery outcomes that the Core Strategy should achieve and it is critical to the success of the West Berkshire Local Plan that these objectives are realised.

Tackling climate change

- Ensuring that the levels of growth in the District are delivered in a sustainable way.

Housing Growth

- Preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to objectively assess the full housing needs within the housing market area.
- Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District.
- Monitoring housing completions and population levels within the consultation zones of AWE in Aldermaston and AWE in Burghfield.
- The future of Kennet Valley Park.

Housing Needs

- The approach to meeting needs for gypsy and traveller accommodation.
- Affordability of houses across the District, impacting on labour supply and drawing young people away from West Berkshire.
- Providing the right type of accommodation for the changing demographic structure of the population including the challenges presented by an aging population and smaller household size.

Economy

- The District's position in the Thames Valley sub regional economy.
- Identifying the District's business needs over the Plan period and ensuring a robust approach to meeting those needs.
- Attracting inward investment through the co-location of businesses within the Thames Valley economic sub-region due to the District's comparatively cheaper rents and the ability to attract business focused on small and medium sized enterprises.
- The economic challenge of competing with neighbouring economic growth areas in attracting inward investment/businesses and retaining the District's skilled workforce.
- The strong links that the eastern parts of West Berkshire, notably Calcot, Theale and Pangbourne, have with Reading because the east of the District forms part of the Functional Economic Area (FEA) for Reading and Central Berkshire.
- Continued promotion of the rural economy
- The role of AWE as a potential economic driver for world class science and the potential future linkages with Harwell and Science Vale to the north of the District.

Infrastructure requirements

- Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments in order to ensure the District meets its growth targets.
- Facilitating the delivery and retention of increased skills and knowledge within the District.
- The lack of higher education provision in the District which means that students have to migrate out for higher education opportunities.

- The significant in-migration of Reading pupils to West Berkshire schools, particularly those of secondary school age.
- Ensuring development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network.

Green infrastructure

- The role of the Kennet and Avon Canal and other waterways, including the River Thames, as a focus for recreation and leisure, for tourism and economic development.
- The role of The Ridgeway and the North Wessex Downs AONB as a focus for recreation and leisure, for tourism and economic development.

Transport

- The strategic road network with the M4 and A34 providing links in all directions north, south, east and west.
- The rail network which provides strategic links to Reading, London and the south west and in particular, electrification, timetabling and capacity and access issues.
- The need to deliver sustainable transport solutions to reduce and manage the growth of congestion around the A4 and the M4 (Junction 12) and surrounding transport corridors near Reading.
- Improving sustainable transport links to Reading through joint working, particularly bus, cycle and pedestrian routes along the A4 corridor, improvements to Theale Station and the proposed new station at Green Park.
- The exploration of sustainable solutions to the growth of traffic on the A339.
- Travel to work areas - Commuting data highlights the fact that 14% of West Berkshire's resident working population work within the Borough of Reading - by far the most significant single flow of outward commuting.
- The movement of freight in all directions but particularly along the A339 between Newbury and Basingstoke.
- The significant activity and growth at Science Vale UK in Oxfordshire and the lack of sustainable transport solutions for travel between West Berkshire and this area.
- Decline of bus services as a result of reduced budgets to be used for subsidies and the impact of this on cross boundary travel.

Retail (and leisure)

- Improving the tourism offer across the District and promoting the largely cultural tourist base and attractions.
- The impact of IKEA which has planning permission in the east of the District.

Heritage

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- The potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows to provide an enhanced open space and biodiversity resource.
- Regulating development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework.
- To continue to use Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) to make positive changes for biodiversity at a landscape scale.

3.3 It is important to note that the above list does not detail every single cross boundary issue facing West Berkshire. The list identifies those issues which are considered strategic and which are particularly relevant to the Local Plan. As work progresses therefore, it may be that further issues are identified and these will be added as appropriate.

4. Current position in the preparation of the West Berkshire Local Plan

4.1 The Council adopted its Core Strategy in July 2012. This sets out a housing number for the District of 'at least' 10,500 dwellings from 2006-2026. The number was allocated via the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (the South East Plan). The regional tier of Government has since been abolished.

4.2 The Core Strategy sets out an overall spatial strategy to accommodate this level of housing across the District and in addition it allocates 2 large strategic sites in Newbury (Newbury Racecourse and Sandleford Park). Non-strategic housing allocations for Newbury and the rest of the District were left to be allocated through a Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (SAD DPD) in accordance with the spatial strategy of the Core Strategy.

4.3 In order to find the Core Strategy sound, the Inspector committed the Council to a review of needs and demands for housing through a SHMA, to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Council was committed to this review for several reasons:

- The revocation of the Regional Strategy which allocated the housing number for the District, and the timing of this.

- The emergence of the NPPF (March 2012) as the sole higher tier guidance for the preparation of Local Plans, and the key principle within this document to "boost significantly the supply of housing". The NPPF commits the local planning authority to "use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing..." (para 47) unless "...any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits..." (para 14).
 - The Inspector's conclusion that the Core Strategy did not fulfil the NPPF requirement of meeting objectively assessed needs in full.
 - Other evidence sources presented at the Core Strategy Examination that indicate that the level of housing need and demand may be higher than the South East Plan figure of 10,500.
- 4.4 The SHMA should be completed within 3 years of the adoption of the Core Strategy (July 2012) and is currently scheduled to conclude towards the end of the year (2014).

5. Next steps in the preparation of the West Berkshire Local Plan

5.1 There are a few key issues which need to be addressed:

- The SHMA needs to be undertaken in partnership with neighbouring authorities in the housing market area. The outcome of the SHMA is likely to be a higher housing number for the District than the current figure of 'at least' 10,500 set out in the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026). This has a number of implications in terms of how this number is distributed across West Berkshire, and the most appropriate way of taking this forward through the plan led process. The SHMA will also look longer term – to 2036.
- The timing of this work due to the need to maintain a healthy 5 year supply of housing land.
- The timing of the review of some of the development management policies which are used in the determination of planning applications, particularly housing in the countryside. Most of these policies have been 'saved' since the adoption of the West Berkshire District Local Plan (1991-2006) and although they have been assessed as being consistent with the NPPF and therefore are given 'due weight', the Council is particularly keen that they are updated quickly in order to provide as an up to date policy framework as possible.
- The timing and content of future planning policy document/s. The Core Strategy is a strategic document and does not contain the detail that is needed to complete the planning framework for the District.

6. Preparation of a Housing Site Allocations DPD

- 6.1 We have had some discussions with the Planning Inspectorate about how to address these issues in a constructive way through the plan led system. In summary, the Inspectorate suggests that there is a case for some pragmatism. Therefore, rather than producing a SAD DPD, which would allocate sites for all types of land uses and set out the full range of more detailed development management policies at the same time, we are fast tracking the allocation of housing sites through the production of a specific Housing Site Allocations DPD.
- 6.2 This will allocate the remainder of the ‘at least’10,500 housing figure (including sites for gypsies and travellers) in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy. Windfalls and the long-term Sandford allocation will provide additional flexibility to these numbers. It will also include selected housing policies including those to guide development in the countryside. In this way we will be meeting the District’s housing needs for the short and medium term, at the earliest opportunity through the plan led system as advocated in the NPPF.
- 6.3 A SHMA is being prepared alongside the Housing Site Allocations DPD to assess our longer term (including looking beyond 2026) objectively assessed housing needs. Our approach is for the housing allocations within the Housing Site Allocations DPD to be seen as allocating the first part of the objectively assessed housing needs in the short to medium term. Following the adoption of the Housing Site Allocations DPD we will then start to prepare a new Local Plan. This will allocate the rest of our objectively assessed need and look longer term, as well as dealing with the other policy issues.
- 6.4 Our timeline for the preparation of the Housing Site Allocations DPD as set out in our revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) is:
- Consulting on scope of Sustainability Appraisal - Sept 2013 to Oct 2013
 - Public Participation in the preparation of the DPD - Sept 2013 to Dec 2014
 - Publication of Proposed Submission Documents - Dec2014
 - Submission to Secretary of State - April 2015
 - Start of Independent Examination - June 2015
 - Adoption - December 2015
- 6.5 Our approach to strategic planning issues as part of the Housing Site Allocations DPD**
- 6.6 The primary role of the Housing Site Allocations DPD is to support the delivery of housing as set out in the Council’s adopted Core Strategy. This is for the delivery of at least 10,500 dwellings up to 2026. The Core Strategy aims to build upon the existing settlement pattern across West Berkshire and direct most

development to Newbury, Thatcham and the settlements in the east of the District close to Reading. The existing urban areas are regarded as the most suitable locations for future development by virtue of their existing access to services and facilities, thereby providing the opportunity to reduce out-commuting and the need to travel. Since this approach is effectively just providing detail to the strategic approach already agreed within our adopted Core Strategy, we are tailoring our approach to the Duty to Cooperate as part of the Housing Site Allocations DPD accordingly. Using the key list of strategic issues we identified for the West Berkshire Local Plan (outlined above in para 3.2), we have drawn out those **strategic** matters that we consider of particular relevance to the Housing Site Allocations DPD –

Tackling climate change

- Ensuring that the levels of growth in the District are delivered in a sustainable way.

Housing Growth

- Preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to objectively assess the full housing needs within the housing market area.
- Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District.
- Monitoring housing completions and population levels within the consultation zones of AWE in Aldermaston and AWE in Burghfield.

Housing Needs

- The approach to meeting needs for gypsy and traveller accommodation.
- Providing the right type of accommodation for the changing demographic structure of the population including the challenges presented by an aging population and smaller household size.

Infrastructure requirements

- Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments in order to ensure the District meets its growth targets.
- Ensuring development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network.

Heritage

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB.

- The potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows to provide an enhanced open space and biodiversity resource.
- Regulating development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework.

7. Your feedback

- 7.1 We would welcome your feedback. If there are particular cross boundary issues that you consider need to be addressed as part of the West Berkshire Local Plan, or considered further prior to preparing the draft Housing Site Allocations DPD, then please let us know. Are the strategic issues we have identified comprehensive enough? Have we missed any strategic issues that you think we should include? Please let us know what you think.
- 7.2 We would also like you to tell us how you would prefer to be involved in the preparation of the Housing Site Allocations DPD to deal with any cross boundary issues. Depending on your response and as appropriate, we intend to follow up either with workshops or one to one meetings to discuss cross boundary issues and ensure that any relevant issues are properly considered at this early stage. At the same time though, if we do not hear from you we will assume that you are happy for us to continue our existing methods and use existing partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. We have, for instance, started having one to one discussions with certain organisations already, including the Highways Agency, Environment Agency and Thames Water.
- 7.3 When considering strategic issues, the more formal the arrangements we have with one another, the clearer the evidence will be to demonstrate that the requirements of the Duty have been met. We have, for instance, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the other Berkshire unitary authorities on strategic planning and another with them on minerals and waste. These act as a framework for more detailed cooperation as necessary.

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Appendix 4: Strategic Planning Priorities

1. Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District by: a) Preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to objectively assess the full housing needs within the housing market area

We have worked jointly with the five other Berkshire unitary authorities, together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in developing an understanding of our future housing needs. In January 2015 we commissioned consultants GL Hearn to prepare a SHMA for the relevant housing market areas. The purpose of the SHMA is to develop a robust understanding of housing market dynamics and to provide an assessment of the future needs for both market and affordable housing, together with the housing needs of different groups within the population.

West Berkshire will work with the other authorities within the defined housing market area (HMA) to test what level of development can be sustainably accommodated in the area, with the objective of meeting the objectively assessed need (OAN) as far as is consistent with national policies, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

A sound figure for the District's full objectively assessed need is now available which will in turn lead to a revised and longer term housing requirement for the District following effective cooperation on the spatial distribution with other local planning authorities across the Housing Market Area and beyond.

The Council is planning to meet any revised housing requirement in a 2-phased approach.

Phase 1: The Housing Site Allocations DPD will allocate the first proportion of the housing requirement that results from assessing the objectively assessed needs of the District in the short to medium term. The sites will be allocated on the basis of the residual of the Core Strategy's 'at least' 10,500 housing figure (with additional flexibility) in accordance with the spatial strategy of the adopted Core Strategy. This DPD will be followed by:

Phase 2: A new Local Plan for the District. This will allocate sites to fulfil the rest of the housing requirement that follows on from assessing the objectively assessed needs of the District and look to the medium and longer term. The Local Plan will also review the spatial strategy and include a full policy review.

Evidence base

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 (July 2012)
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>
Strategic Objectives 2 and 3. Policy CS1.

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Strategic Partners

<p>Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership Reading Borough Council Wokingham District Council Bracknell Forest Council Slough Borough Council Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead South Buckinghamshire District Council</p> <p>(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)</p>
Actions
<p>Action: Joint officer meeting of Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) and Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP), to discuss SHMA governance and finalise the draft SHMA brief.</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> All 6 Berkshire unitary authorities <i>Outcome:</i> All except RBWM confirm full involvement in the Berkshire SHMA. It was also agreed to invite the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to be a partner in the SHMA, which it accepted and became an equal partner in the study. <i>Date:</i> 14 August 2014</p>
<p>Action: Member meeting of Berkshire Leaders to discuss the SHMA brief and governance proposals.</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> All 6 Berkshire unitary authorities <i>Outcome:</i> All except Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead confirm full involvement in Berkshire SHMA and agree governance proposals. RBWM later November 2014) agree to be a partner. Governance further discussed and agreed in April 2015. <i>Date:</i> 22 September 2014, April 2015</p>
<p>Action: Officer meeting of the Berkshire Development Plans Group to discuss and formally evaluate the SHMA tenders.</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> All 6 Berkshire unitary authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire LEP <i>Outcome:</i> GL Hearn commissioned to carry out the Berkshire SHMA. <i>Date:</i> 18 December 2014.</p>
<p>Action: Officer Steering Group meetings to progress the SHMA.</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> All 6 Berkshire unitary authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire LEP. South Bucks attended on one occasion. <i>Outcome:</i> Drafts of the SHMA chapters progressed through discussion and cooperation. <i>Dates:</i> 17 March 2015, 15 May 2015, 18 June 2015, 28 July 2015, 10 September 2015</p>
<p>Action: Officer and Member engagement with South Buckinghamshire District Council once it was identified as part of the area covered by the Berkshire SHMA. South Bucks was invited to be part of the commissioning of the second part of the SHMA once the Housing Market Areas had been defined, but ultimately declined. It has also been invited to be part of the Member Reference Group to take the SHMA forward, but its involvement is currently to be confirmed.</p>

Partners: All 6 Berkshire unitary authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Outcome: At October 2015, South Bucks has indicated that it does not want to be actively involved in the Berkshire SHMA but is pursuing alternative options which are linked to it taking forward a joint local plan with Chiltern District Council. It has also declined to take part in the jointly commissioned work on the Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).

Action: Duty to Cooperate and stakeholder events to discuss SHMA methodology and draft outcomes on Housing Market Areas. Start of 2 week consultation (ended on 2 June 2015) to gather feedback.

Partners: For details of stakeholder and DtC partners invited please go to www.westberks.gov.uk/shma

Outcome: Comments received during and after the event taken into account and to be set out in a statement of consultation that will accompany the final SHMA and will be available on the Council's website.

Date: 28 July 2015

Action: Member Reference Group inception meeting to agree Terms of Reference and discuss the draft SHMA.

Partners: Members from all 6 Berkshire unitary authorities, supported by officers:

Cllr Chris Turrell, Bracknell Forest
Cllr Tony Page, Reading
Cllr John Kaiser, Wokingham
Cllr James Swindlehurst, Slough
Cllr Derek Wilson, Windsor and Maidenhead
Cllr Alan Law, West Berkshire

Outcomes: Agreement to publishing the SHMA through a stakeholder event to be held in October 2015 and to produce a shared press release. Agreement to invite South Buckinghamshire District Council and the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to future meetings. Discussion of the draft Terms of Reference.

Date: 15 September 2015

Action: Member Reference Group meeting to agree press release, future strategic working and the next steps for the SHMA.

Partners: All 6 Berkshire unitary authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire LEP.

Outcomes: May split into HMA sub-grouping to take forward capacity work. Amended Terms of Reference agreed. Joint press release on SHMA discussed and agreed. Timing of release agreed.

Date: 12 October 2015

Action: Duty to Cooperate and Stakeholder event to present and discuss SHMA outcomes

Partners: For details of stakeholder and DtC partners invited please go to www.westberks.gov.uk/shma

Outcome: The outcomes of the SHMA become public. DtC partners and stakeholders have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the outcomes of the SHMA.

Date: 20 October 2015.

Outcomes from strategic working

The result of the cooperation has been the joint commissioning of a SHMA including the 6 Berkshire authorities and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This was commissioned and completed in draft form as set out in the Core Strategy. The SHMA has resulted in 2 Housing Market Areas being defined. West Berkshire is in a western HMA which also includes Bracknell Forest, Wokingham and Reading.

Working on the SHMA has led to constructive working relationships being developed across the Berkshire area and with the TVB LEP. It has led to discussions and joint working arrangements being put in place to manage the SHMA and its outcomes moving forward, with agreement at what happens at an officer and Member level. A Member Reference Group has been set up to move the outcomes of the SHMA forward into capacity work across the HMAs and beyond.

The SHMA has led to additional work, including work to identify our Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) being commissioned or proposed between the 6 unitary authorities and the TVB LEP.

Ongoing cooperation

Governance arrangements have been agreed for both the completion and publication of the SHMA and for the ongoing work arising from this on the distribution of the housing numbers across the Housing Market Areas and beyond.

Firstly Development Plans Group will manage and sign off the technical work on the SHMA, engaging with Berkshire Heads of Planning if there is an issue that requires their input. The technical issues will then be reported to meetings of the Berkshire Chief Executives and the Berkshire Leaders as necessary for information.

The ongoing work on capacity and distribution will be managed by a Member Reference Group consisting of a Member from each of the 6 Berkshire authorities. This may split into 2 separate parts (one for each HMA defined by the Berkshire SHMA) if necessary.

1. Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District by:

b) Monitoring housing completions and population levels within the consultation zones of AWE in Aldermaston and AWE in Burghfield

Given the potential cumulative effects of any population increase surrounding the licensed nuclear installations of AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield, it is necessary to monitor committed and future development proposals in partnership with neighbouring councils and the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).

Evidence base

Circular 04/00 ‘Planning Controls for Hazardous Substances’, (Sections A17 and A18) provides general advice about the need for consultation about proposed developments in the vicinity of licensed nuclear installations. This is a requirement of longstanding Government policy regarding local demographics which would limit the radiological consequences to the public in the unlikely event of an accident involving the spread of radioactive materials beyond the nuclear site boundary.

West Berkshire Core Strategy policy CS8 <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782> is a measure of prudence over and above the stringent regulatory requirements imposed on nuclear operators to prevent such accidents.

Given the potential cumulative effects of any population increase surrounding the installations, it is necessary to monitor committed and future development proposals in partnership with neighbouring Councils and the ONR.

Strategic Partners

Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Reading Borough Council
Wokingham Borough Council

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)

Actions

Action: In accordance with policy CS8 the Council monitors committed and future development proposals through the officer level off site planning group for AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield

Partners: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, and Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: Monitoring reports are published in the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and

also sent to the ONR. This enables the ONR to give up to date advice to individual Councils regarding subsequent development applications.
Please go to <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28785> for further details on the Council's AMRs
Date: ongoing

Action: The Council has drafted a standardised consultation procedure for planning applications to be followed by all local authorities. It is currently being trialed.

Partners: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, and Wokingham Borough Council.

Outcome: Process to be reviewed by the off site planning group in 2016

Date: ongoing

Action: Officer meeting with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council discussed current position and approach to AWE at Tadley and also recent relevant planning decisions etc.

Partners: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Outcome: Officers agreed that the Council continues to be comfortable with BDBC's approach to the AWE issue and reinforced the need to continue to work together on AWE issues, particularly as plans are reviewed.

Date: 28 April 2015

Outcomes from strategic working

The ONR has now agreed levels of growth in West Berkshire, Wokingham, Reading and Basingstoke and Deane until 2026.

Further consultation with the ONR will need to take place once the Council has identified its objectively assessed housing need for the area over the period up to 2036

Ongoing cooperation

New development within the land use planning consultation zones is being monitored on an annual basis and monitoring results passed to the ONR. This enables the ONR to give up to date advice to individual Councils regarding subsequent development applications.

<p>1. Ensuring a robust approach to meeting the future housing needs of the District by: c) Taking a strategic approach to meeting the needs for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation</p>
<p>As a local planning authority, the Council has to make an assessment of need for traveller sites within its District for planning purposes. In addition, it has to work collaboratively and develop a fair and effective strategy to meet need through the identification of sites/land.</p> <p>By working in partnership with other authorities across Berkshire, the Council will be able to ensure there are sufficient sites to meet the accommodation needs of the travelling community over the plan period, providing suitable sites in appropriate locations.</p>
<p>Evidence base</p>
<p>West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012) http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782 Strategic Objective 3 and policies ADPP1 and CS7</p> <p>Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2</p>
<p>Strategic Partners</p>
<p>Bracknell Forest Council Reading Borough Council Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Slough Borough Council Wokingham Borough Council</p> <p>(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)</p>
<p>Actions</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Regular officer meetings – to update on current status regarding Gypsy and Traveller planning across Berkshire.</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council</p> <p><i>Outcome:</i> Updates provided by officers with regard to progress/status on Gypsy and Traveller planning within each local authority</p> <p><i>Date:</i> Ongoing Quarterly / Six monthly meetings</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Officer meeting to explore possibility of conducting a Berkshire wide (excluding Slough</p>

Borough Council) Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).

Partners: Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: Confirmation of full participation in the work by Wokingham Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and West Berkshire Council. Bracknell Forest Council unable to commit to the work at this stage, but acknowledges the benefits of joining the wider study. Reading Borough Council unable to commit but is likely to be involved in the methodology.

It was agreed to prepare a joint methodology for the participating Berkshire authorities, followed by individual GTAA's for each authority area. It was later confirmed that Bracknell Forest Council would fully participate in the work and Reading Borough Council would participate in the preparation of a joint methodology only. Slough Borough Council declined to take part.

Date: 20 March 2014

Action: West Berkshire Portfolio Holder Member agreement for the Council to participate in Berkshire wide GTAA work

Partners: Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: Portfolio Holder agreement to participate in joint GTAA. Confirmation of agreement and participation then sent via email to Wokingham Borough Council.

Date: 28 March 2014

Action: Officer meeting with consultants (ORS) to discuss technical detail of the joint methodology and resolve any outstanding issues in order to finalise methodology.

Partners: Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: Outstanding issues discussed and it was agreed that once all matters have been finalised within the document the joint methodology would be published. This was followed up by ORS who distributed the final joint methodology via email to all participating Berkshire authorities (31 March 2015). Once methodology was finalised it was agreed each local authority would publish their individual GTAA once complete – all working on different timescales.

Date: 03 March 2015

Action: Wokingham Borough Council held a DtC meeting to discuss progress on its GTAA and overall policy position.

Partners: Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: It was agreed that the Berkshire authorities would stay in contact and share outcomes of GTAA's once finalised/published. West Berkshire Council could not attend this meeting but sent an update via email (16 March 2015) regarding its policy position and progress on the West Berkshire GTAA.

Date: 19 March 2015

Action: Correspondence with Wiltshire Council regarding outcomes of its GTAA with particular reference to transit sites and emergency stopping places.

Partners: Wiltshire Council

Outcome: Update on Wiltshire GTAA and overall policy position. Confirmation given that the West Berkshire Council GTAA does not show a need for additional transit pitches over the period to 2029.

Date: August and September 2015

Action: Officer meeting with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council – West Berkshire Council updated on the GTAA which has recently been completed – for WBC only but using a shared Berkshire methodology. Draft outcomes used in HSA DPD.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council updated on the new GTAA which has been commissioned to cover the period up to 2029 and discussed approach taken in its Submission Local Plan

Partners: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Outcome: Officers agreed that that this is not a significant cross boundary issue.

Date: 28 April 2015

Outcomes from strategic working

The outcome of the strategic cooperation has been the production of a joint GTAA methodology for Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council. This ensures consistency in approach to the preparation of GTAAs across Berkshire, providing greater confidence in the conclusions. It was agreed that each local authority would progress their GTAA individually and publish once complete.

The West Berkshire GTAA identified a need for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the period to 2029, along with a need for additional Travelling Showpeople plots. The conclusions of the study have been used to identify sites/land across the District to accommodate additional pitches/plots. These sites were identified through an exercise known as a Call for Sites. The sites were assessed through the plan-led process and the most suitable sites taken forward within the Housing Site Allocation DPD. Each allocated site within the DPD has an associated policy to ensure the delivery of appropriate development on site. West Berkshire Council has set out the provision to meet all of its own identified need through the plan-led process.

The Council has not been asked to assist in meeting needs from neighbouring authorities.

Ongoing cooperation

The Council will continue to work with neighbouring authorities, including the other Berkshire authorities, at both an officer and member level to ensure the delivery of sufficient traveller sites to meet the needs of the travelling community. At a strategic scale this will be achieved and monitored through the delivery of sites within the West Berkshire Local Plan.

Officer meetings with other Berkshire authorities will continue to ensure ongoing engagement and knowledge sharing with regard to planning for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

2. Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments by

a) Ensuring development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network

The Council needs to work with Thames Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England to ensure that the allocated housing sites can be delivered without adversely impacting on the wider water supply and waste water network.

Evidence base

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012)
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>
Strategic Objective 5 and policy CS5

Infrastructure Delivery Plan
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29223>

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29343>

West Berkshire Core Strategy DPD Habitats Regulations Assessment
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36470&p=0>

West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD Habitats Regulations Assessment
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28515>

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Strategic Partners

Thames Water
Environment Agency
Natural England

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)

Actions

Action: Regulation 18 consultation on the scope and content of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Environment Agency, Thames Water

Outcome: The Environment Agency confirmed it was currently reviewing the initial shortlisted sites for housing and would welcome any further opportunities to work with the Council to ensure that matters within its remit are considered during the plan making process. Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Informal officer correspondence and discussions on potential shortlisting of housing sites

Partners: Environment Agency, Thames Water

Outcome: We worked with the Environment Agency and Thames Water to provide comments on potential housing sites in advance of any formal public consultation and it was noted we would continue to use one to one discussions in the preparation of the DPD as appropriate. Comments in relation to specific sites would also be invited and taken into account as part of our preferred options consultation on the Housing Site Allocations DPD.

Date: April to June 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Environment Agency

Outcome: The Environment Agency confirmed it was satisfied with the strategic matters that were deemed relevant to the HSA DPD, in particular the inclusion of the matter relating to development proposals having no adverse impact on the water and wastewater network. It also acknowledged that we have started one to one discussions regarding the preparation of the plan.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Thames Water

Outcome: Thames Water was pleased that the following strategic issues had been identified:

- Ensuring that the levels of growth in the District are delivered in a sustainable way. Climate change is a vitally important issue to the water industry. Not only is climate change expected to have an impact on the availability of raw water for treatment but also the demand from customers for potable (drinking) water.
- Ensuring development proposals do not adversely impact the water and wastewater network.

It was clear that new development should be co-ordinated with the water supply and sewerage infrastructure it demanded and should take into account the capacity of existing infrastructure. Thames Water made clear it would prefer to be involved by specific meetings, if necessary, to cover water and wastewater/sewerage infrastructure issues.

Once the housing allocations have been confirmed, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated in partnership with service providers. This will address the specific infrastructure requirements arising from the housing sites.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Preferred options consultation

Partners: Environment Agency (EA)

Outcome: The EA noted that the initial shortlisted sites had been cut and additional sites they did not initially review were now included. It confirmed it had reviewed all the residential sites and Gypsy and Traveller sites put forward, and the environmental risks and opportunities for enhancements for each had been noted.

Date: 5th September 2014

Action: Officer meeting with Natural England to discuss response to preferred options consultation

Partners: Natural England (NE)

Outcome: Natural England expressed concern about potential abstraction and discharge issues for the River Kennet SSSI and River Lambourn SSSI/SAC. It was content if these issues had already been addressed in the Core Strategy HRA, but if not the HSA HRA would need to clear on them both. The Council agreed to ask the Environment Agency and Thames Water to update, as necessary, the information they supplied for the Core Strategy HRA regarding abstraction and discharge licenses. The Council would then ensure that the HSA DPD HRA reflected this updated information.

Date: 28 April 2015

Action: Officer meeting with Thames Water

Partners: Thames Water

Outcome: WBC to discuss the potential of a future Water Cycle Study (WCS) with the Environment Agency. It was also agreed that the policy for each individual housing site would ask that an integrated strategy for water and wastewater was prepared to support a planning application and that this should cover flood risk, water quality and conservation. The strategy would need to be clear how a solution would be delivered to any concerns identified as the development came forward. This could then be applied to all sites, regardless of whether concerns had been raised by Thames Water to date.

Thames Water would confirm if sites affecting the River Kennet SSSI and River Lambourn SSSI/SAC could be delivered within existing abstraction and discharge licenses or if it would need to apply for new licenses.

Date: 12th May 2015

Action: Officer meeting with Environment Agency (EA)

Partners: Environment Agency

Outcome: Water Cycle Study (WCS) - In the past the EA only encouraged these in growth areas, but they are being asked for more often now as a result of growth in other areas. It is likely that WBC would be involved in a cross boundary partnership should a study be required as part of the Local Plan process. Scoping can be done to identify specific areas where it would be relevant. This can form part of the SFRA. It is useful to include Thames Water in the process. The EA advised that up to date surface water/groundwater information needs to be included in the SFRA following the 2013/14 flooding. The SFRA also needs to set out the definition of the functional floodplain. The Council agreed to update the SFRA.

The EA would rather see whole sites allocated, with the areas in FZ2/3 kept for GI and the developable areas being kept to FZ1. This would require a sequential test to be carried out. This would provide the evidence to back up the allocation of sites. Keeping the developable area to FZ1 only needs to be referred to in the policy for each site. Development within FZ1 does not

need a sequential test. The Council agreed to consider the scope of sequential tests for sites which are within FZ2/3.

Where connection to a main sewer is not feasible, sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople need serious consideration of drainage methods as there is potential for contamination of water courses and impacts on SAC/SSSIs.

EA have no in principle objections to development in Source Protection Zones (SPZs).

Date: 14th May 2015

Action: e-mail from Thames Water updating minutes of 12th May meeting

Partners: Thames Water

Outcome: Confirmation that sites affecting the River Kennet SSSI and River Lambourn SSSI/SAC can be delivered within existing abstraction and discharge licenses.

Date: June 2015

Action: e-mail correspondence with Environment Agency (EA)

Partners: Environment Agency

Outcome: Updated technical comments received on specific sites in response to further information requested.

Date: 21st September 2015

Outcomes from strategic working

Confirmation that sites affecting the River Kennet SSSI and River Lambourn SSSI/SAC can be delivered within existing abstraction and discharge licenses in accordance with the Core Strategy HRA..

The DPD includes a bullet point in the general site policy which states '*An integrated water supply and drainage strategy will be provided in advance of development to ensure the provision of adequate and appropriate infrastructure for both water supply and waste water. Development will be occupied in accordance with this strategy.*'

Updating of the SFRA

Ongoing cooperation

Once the housing allocations have been confirmed, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated in partnership with service providers. This will address the specific infrastructure requirements arising from the housing sites.

2. Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments by

b) Implementing strategic traffic management measures to minimise the impact of new development on the existing network

The implementation of traffic management measures to minimise the impact of new development on the existing network has been identified as a strategic issue.

Evidence base

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012)
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>
Strategic Objectives 5 and 8 and policies CS5 and CS13

Infrastructure Delivery Plan
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29223>

Transport Assessments
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29342>

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Strategic Partners

Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF)
Berkshire Local Transport Body
Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency)
Reading Borough Council
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Hampshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Network Rail

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)

Actions

Action: Regulation 18 consultation on the scope and content of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Network Rail

Outcome: Network Rail requested a policy was included in the DPD which required developers

to fund rail improvements necessitated by commercial development. The Council made clear the DPD would be prepared within the framework of the adopted Core Strategy DPD and would therefore not include a policy on developer contributions. Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy has regard to infrastructure requirements and delivery and states that the Council will work with infrastructure providers and stakeholders to identify requirements for infrastructure provision and services for new development and will seek to co-ordinate infrastructure delivery, whilst protecting local amenities and environmental quality. Network Rail, as a key infrastructure provider, would be consulted regarding further infrastructure requirements resulting from shortlisted site allocations..

It should be noted that from 1 April 2015, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force and has replaced the contributions collected under Section 106 with the exception of affordable housing. The generic types of infrastructure that may be funded with CIL receipts is set out in the [Reg 123 List](#) which accompanies the Council's [CIL Charging Schedule](#). There are however exceptions, those being specific on-site infrastructure or direct mitigation measures required as a result of any large scale development. Further updates to the Reg 123 list will be made on an annual basis and will have regard to amongst other things, the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (which will be updated as part of work on the DPD. Network Rail will be consulted upon this, as they have been on previous updates to the IDP).

Network Rail had further comments on level crossing safety and Gypsy and Traveller sites. These comments were noted and it was advised that Network Rail raise any concerns as part of the preferred options consultation.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Regulation 18 consultation on the scope and content of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Vale of White Horse District Council

Outcome: Suggested that the Council should be mindful of all of the supporting infrastructure requirements (particularly the A34) for the future allocations, in order to promote sustainable development of the wider sub area.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Regulation 18 consultation on the scope and content of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Oxfordshire County Council

Outcome: Agreement to work jointly in exploring opportunities to secure improvements to public transport services between West Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Highways Agency

Outcome: Agreement on the strategic issues identified. It was agreed to continue to involve the Highways Agency at all formal stages of the DPD.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Hampshire County Council (HCC)

Outcome: HCC noted that the strategic developments at Greenham Common and Sandford were likely to significantly increase traffic pressures along the A339 including pressures on the route south to Basingstoke. HCC welcomed the recognition of the need to explore sustainable solutions to the growth of traffic along this route.

It was agreed that for transport issues we would build upon the outcomes from the recent meeting of our respective portfolio holders and chief officers. This would include working together to deal with any cross boundary issues relating to the A339.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Vale of White Horse District Council

Outcome: The Vale of White Horse made clear that in regard to transport issues it wanted to cooperate in the role of the A34 and the promotion of more sustainable transport solutions.

As part of the work on our wider Local Plan we agreed we would continue to work with the District Council on transport related issues at both an officer and member level. We would do this primarily through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF). We would also set up individual meetings with the Vale of White Horse District Council to discuss specific issues when appropriate.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Transport for London

Outcome: TfL made clear that Network Rail was currently electrifying the Great Western mainline to Newbury and new Super Express trains would be introduced. This was likely to increase the attractiveness of commuting from the West Berkshire area into London, however from 2018 Crossrail would provide significant additional capacity at Paddington for onward dispersion into central and east London. The Mayor's Transport Strategy (2010), which took into account forecast housing and jobs growth in the South East region (at the time), predicted that crowding on TfL services into and out of Paddington in the peak periods would be acceptable in 2031. This suggests that a degree of housing growth in the West Berkshire area, if resulting in greater rail commuting into London, could be accommodated by the 'committed' future (TfL) transport network in London in 2031. Network Rail would be best placed to comment on future capacity issues, and potential interventions, on National Rail services into Paddington.

It was agreed that for any strategic transport issues arising from the Housing Site Allocations DPD and commuting into London, we would continue to work with the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF) at both an officer and member level. Network Rail is a member of this Forum. We will also continue to formally consult TfL. Please go to -

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Response to Preferred Options consultation

Partners: Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: Request for further information on the transport impacts to be provided for the sites in

Burghfield Common and the strategy for Stratfield Mortimer in order to ensure any issues for Wokingham associated with their development can be resolved

Date: 22nd September 2014

Action: Response to Preferred Options consultation

Partners: Reading Borough Council

Outcome: Reading Borough Council made clear it could only support the identification of the proposed housing site allocations to accommodate up to 875 dwellings in the Eastern Urban Area if the impact of the development of those sites is properly mitigated, which would include impact on infrastructure and services within Reading Borough. In particular, the significant impacts on transport, healthcare and education must be taken into account and reflected in the Housing Site Allocations document.

The Council's Transport Development Control team had assessed the sites within the Eastern Urban Area. Continued investment in non-car modes of transport, including buses and cycling, will be key in minimising the transport effects of these allocated sites.

Reading Borough Council considers it essential to agree a mechanism to ensure that, in planning and approving cross-boundary developments, proper and adequate contributions are delivered towards future education, health and transport infrastructure, whether this is through the Community Infrastructure Levy process, or through Section 106 contributions.

Date: 12th September 2014

Action: Undertaking of transport assessments to assess areas where the impact of housing development could cause stress on the transport network in terms of links and junction capacity and where mitigation measures would be needed.

Outcome: Two assessments, the first covering Newbury, Thatcham, and Theale and the second covering Calcot (the Eastern Urban area)

Date: March - May 2015

Action: Meeting of planning policy officers highlighted that BDBC and HCC were consulted in relation to the Sandleford SPD and the impact on the A339

Partners: Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Outcome: BDBC and WB agreed that the impact of development on the strategic and local highway network continues to be a cross boundary issue that needs to be given due consideration on relevant applications.

Date: 28 April 2015

Action: E-mail correspondence with Highways England regarding the M4 Smart Motorway scheme

Partners: Highways England

Outcome: M4 Junctions 3 to 12 Smart Motorway Scheme - due to the size and scale of the proposed sites Highways England made it clear that there are unlikely be any 'showstoppers' from potential impacts to the safe and efficient operation of M4 Junction 12, however phasing of the delivery of the sites would need consideration. There is not yet a detailed programme of works or detailed design for the M4 Smart Motorway scheme. This is currently being developed and will determine the scale of works that would impact on these sites if they were taken forward. Highways England said there was no need for it to comment on individual transport

<p>assessments for the sites. A more strategic review of the cumulative impact of proposals would likely inform the development of the HSA DPD. <i>Date:</i> May to June 2015</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Officer meeting with Highways England regarding the M4 Smart Motorway scheme</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Highways England <i>Outcome:</i> M4 Junctions 3 to 12 Smart Motorway Scheme Highways England is required to prepare and submit to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) in accordance with the Development Consent Order (DCO) process. The purpose of the meeting was to review the representations made to date by the Council on the M4 Smart Motorway scheme and identify the matters agreed, matters currently the subject of negotiation, and those matters which are not agreed. <i>Date:</i> 23rd June 2015</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Statement of Common Ground with Highways England regarding the M4 Smart Motorway scheme</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Highways England <i>Outcome:</i> Draft Statement of Common Ground with Highways England regarding the M4 Smart Motorway scheme published <i>Date:</i> September 2015</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Officer meeting with Reading Borough Council</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Reading Borough Council <i>Outcome:</i> The cumulative impact on transport and education from the housing sites identified in the Eastern Urban Area are the main issues. Individually, the sites are ok. WBC recognises the pressure on infrastructure, especially in Reading. This will be dealt with through an updated IDP. Reading may want some financial contributions/improvements to bus services and improvements to cycle links to be included. CIL/123 list - RBC has a list of individual projects (often making up a larger improvement) so that funding can be sort. Agreed that all comments would be considered and further technical work undertaken in respect of some of the sites. Eastern Area Transport Assessment to be sent to RBC. Further meetings to be arranged as necessary. <i>Date:</i> 17 July 2015</p>
<p>Outcomes from strategic working</p>
<p>Strategic working has highlighted particular issues of concern to Reading Borough Council. These have been given further consideration as part of the final selection of sites allocated in the Eastern Urban Area through the undertaking of the Eastern Area transport Assessment. Bullet points have been included in the General Site Policy which state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures will be included to improve accessibility by, and encourage use of, non-car transport modes. These measures will be set out as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In a Travel Plan if the site is of 50 dwellings or more (within parking zones 1 and 2 in the Eastern Urban Area zones). ○ In a Travel Plan if the site is of 80 dwellings or more (within parking zones 3). ○ In a travel information pack if the development is 10 or more dwellings.

- Measures will be provided to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. Sites of 30 dwellings or more will require a Transport Statement. Sites of 60 dwellings or more will require a full Transport Assessment.
- Necessary infrastructure will be provided at a rate and scale that meets the needs that arise from the development as a whole, in accordance with both the most up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and through conformity with the appropriate standards.

Two sites shortlisted for allocation within the HSA DPD fall within the area identified by Highways England as a construction compound for the smart motorway – these are ‘land adjacent to junction 12 of M4, Bath Road, Calcot’ (site reference EUA025) and ‘land adjacent to Bath Road and Dorking Way, Calcot’ (site reference EUA026). Each site allocated within the HSA DPD will be supported by a delivery policy, and this may specify phasing requirements. Therefore, should sites EUA025 and EUA026 be allocated, the delivery policy for each will take into consideration the time period for the sites use as a construction compound.

Ongoing cooperation

Once the housing allocations have been confirmed, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated in partnership with service providers, including Network Rail. This work will also include Reading Borough Council and other neighbouring authorities where there are cross-boundary infrastructure implications.

There will be a need for further joint working with Reading Borough Council at the planning applications stage in order to ensure the transport impacts of development are fully considered.

We will continue to work with the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF) at both an officer and member level.

2. Ensuring the appropriate amount, type and/or timing of infrastructure delivery to accompany developments by

c) Ensuring the management of cross boundary movement of school pupils is considered in development proposals

Additional housing will result in an increase in school-age children, particularly in the Eastern Urban Area. There is already substantial cross-boundary movement of pupils between Reading and West Berkshire, with existing strains on education infrastructure in the wider west Reading area. Ensuring that development proposals consider the management of this cross boundary movement has therefore been identified as a strategic issue. Although a particular concern for the Reading area, the issue has also been raised by Oxfordshire County Council.

Evidence base

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012)
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>
Strategic Objective 5 and policy CS5

Infrastructure Delivery Plan
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29223>

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Strategic Partners

Reading Borough Council
Oxfordshire County Council

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)

Actions

Action: Regulation 18 consultation on the scope and content of the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: Oxfordshire County Council

Outcome: Oxfordshire County Council agreed to work jointly with West Berkshire Council to ensure the following issues are taken into account in the preparation of the DPD:

Management of any cross-boundary movement of schools pupils:

- Due to the existing tightness of school capacity on the Oxfordshire side of the Goring/Streatley and Whitchurch/Pangbourne border, shared information about likely future pressures in this area would be useful.

- Future availability of spaces at King Alfred’s to non-catchment children will depend on the changing balance between a locally growing population, King Alfred’s site development plans, and new capacity planned at Grove.
- Information about expected population growth in the Pangbourne/Purley area of West Berks would be of use in helping Langtree plan their future capacity.
- Information about expected population growth in the Compton area of West Berks would be of use in helping alternative schools to plan their future capacity.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Response to Preferred Options consultation

Partners: Reading Borough Council

Outcome: Reading Borough Council made clear it could only support the identification of the proposed housing site allocations to accommodate up to 875 dwellings in the Eastern Urban Area if the impact of the development of those sites is properly mitigated, which would include impact on infrastructure and services within Reading Borough. In particular, the significant impacts on transport, healthcare and education must be taken into account and reflected in the Housing Site Allocations document. Additional housing will result in an increase in school-age children in the Eastern Area. There is already substantial cross-boundary movement of pupils between Reading and West Berkshire, with existing strains on education infrastructure in the wider west Reading area. The need for new school places must be therefore be considered and addressed in co-operation with Reading Borough Council.

Reading Borough Council considers it essential to agree a mechanism to ensure that, in planning and approving cross-boundary developments, proper and adequate contributions are delivered towards future education, health and transport infrastructure, whether this is through the Community Infrastructure Levy process, or through Section 106 contributions.

Date: 22nd September 2014

Action: Officer meeting with Reading Borough Council

Partners: Reading Borough Council

Outcome: The cumulative impact on education from the housing sites identified in the Eastern Urban Area is a particular issue. RBC has a large school expansion programme ongoing, which will provide enough spaces for all Reading pupils to attend Reading schools if they wish. Parental choice means that parents cannot be prevented from choosing a school outside Reading. All funding coming from CIL, not looking at specific impacts. RBC would like to see some recognition in the site policies regarding mitigating the impact on Education. WBC recognises the pressure on infrastructure, especially in Reading. This will be dealt with through an updated IDP. Reading may want some financial contributions/improvements to bus services and improvements to cycle links to be included.

CIL/123 list - RBC has a list of individual projects (often making up a larger improvement) so that funding can be sort. Agreed that all comments would be considered and further technical work undertaken in respect of some of the sites. Further meetings to be arranged as necessary.

Date: 17 July 2015

Outcomes from strategic working

Strategic working has highlighted particular issues of concern to Reading Borough Council.

These have been given further consideration as part of the final selection of sites allocated in the Eastern Urban Area. A bullet point has been included in the General Site Policy which states:

- Necessary infrastructure will be provided at a rate and scale that meets the needs that arise from the development as a whole, in accordance with both the most up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and through conformity with the appropriate standards.

Ongoing cooperation

Once the housing allocations have been confirmed, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated in partnership with service providers. This work will include Reading Borough Council and other neighbouring authorities where there are cross-boundary infrastructure implications.

3. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of the local distinctive character and identity of the District by:

a) Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the North Wessex Downs AONB

The Core Strategy sets out a housing requirement of up to 2,000 new homes in the AONB between 2006 and 2026. Provision of this scale of housing is, however, subject to the overarching objective for the AONB to conserve and enhance its special landscape qualities. Allocated housing sites are distributed across the three rural service centres of Hungerford, Lambourn and Pangbourne and the service villages of Bradfield Southend, Compton, Hermitage and Kintbury

Evidence base

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012)
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>
Strategic Objective 9 and policies ADPP5 and CS19

North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019
<http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/About-Us/aonb-management-plan.html>

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the potential impact of the scale and distribution of development in the North Wessex Downs AONB – Jan 2011
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29344>

Landscape Capacity Assessment of Potential Housing Sites within and adjacent to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, West Berkshire – July 2014
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29344>

Landscape Capacity Assessment of Potential Housing Sites within and adjacent to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, West Berkshire – August 2015
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28515>

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>

Strategic Partners

Natural England (NE)
North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (NWD AONB)

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)
Actions
<p><i>Action:</i> Consultation on the scope and level of detail of the environmental information in the Sustainability Appraisal for the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Natural England <i>Outcome:</i> No comments made. To continue our approach to support the delivery of the Core Strategy by identifying sites for housing, employment and other types of development as well as setting out development management policies <i>Date:</i> October 2013</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Officer meeting with the AONB Planning Advisor to discuss scoping of housing in the countryside policies</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners <i>Outcome:</i> Early identification of specific development management issues affecting the AONB which were then taken forward in the development of the policies <i>Date:</i> May 2014</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Regulation 18 consultation on the scope and content of the Housing Site Allocations DPD</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Natural England, North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners <i>Outcome:</i> To continue to take into account the AONB Management Plan and to seek the views of the AONB Council of Partners throughout the production of the DPD. Ensure development proposals do not have significant impact on the AONB or its setting Please go to - http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0 for further details <i>Date:</i> June 2014</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Natural England <i>Outcome:</i> Agreement on the strategic issues identified. Continue to involve Natural England at all formal stages of the DPD. Confirmation given that our assessments of specific housing sites in the AONB are being informed by individual landscape assessments and that those sites which would have an adverse impact on the special qualities or natural beauty of the AONB would not be taken forward. Please go to - http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0 for further details <i>Date:</i> June 2014</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners <i>Outcome:</i> Request made that the Council takes a landscape led approach to development in the AONB and its setting. Confirmation given that our assessments of specific housing sites in the AONB are being informed by individual landscape assessments and that those sites which would have an adverse impact on the special qualities or natural beauty of the AONB would not be taken forward. Agreement to have informal discussions with officers from the AONB Unit about specific issues when appropriate</p>

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details
Date: June 2014

Action: Following the change of approach from a Site Allocations and Delivery DPD to a Housing Site Allocations DPD an updated consultation on the scope and level of detail of the environmental information in the Sustainability Appraisal

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38057&p=0> for further details

Partners: Natural England

Outcome: Clarification given that Core Strategy policy ADPP5 sets out specific guidelines to ensure growth in the AONB will be sustainable and that the DPD is being prepared within this context.

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38054&p=0> for further details

Date: July 2014

Action: Adoption of the AONB Management Plan for 2014-2019

Preparation of a Management Plan for the North Wessex Downs AONB (AONB) is a statutory requirement placed upon the constituent local authorities by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. The review, production and publication of the Management Plan, together with the coordination of its delivery, has been delegated by the Council to the Council of Partners.

Please go to -

<http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=116&MId=2786&Ver=4>
for further details

Partners: North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners

Outcome: The Council adopted the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan for 2014-2019 as a partnership document prepared by the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners

Date: 22 July 2014

Action: Preferred options consultation on potential housing sites

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30382> for further details

Partners: Natural England

Outcome: Comments to be considered and further technical work undertaken in respect of some of the sites. Please see the Consultation Statement for further details

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28781>

Date: September 2014

Action: Preferred options consultation on potential housing sites

Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30382> for further details

Partners: North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners

Outcome: Agreement on the selection of sites put forward in the service villages. In principle objections to the preferred options housing sites put forward in the rural service centres. Concern about development in the Eastern Area in the AONB and within the setting of the AONB.

Comments to be considered and further technical work undertaken in respect of some of the sites. Please see the Consultation Statement for further details

<p>http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28781 <i>Date:</i> September 2014</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Preferred options consultation on housing in the countryside policies Please go to - http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30475 for further details</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Natural England <i>Outcome:</i> Please see the Consultation Statement for further details http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28781 <i>Date:</i> October 2014</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Preferred options consultation on housing in the countryside policies</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners <i>Outcome:</i> Detailed comments received on the location of new housing and the conversion of existing redundant buildings to residential use to be taken forward in the development of policies to be submitted for examination. Please see the Consultation Statement for further details http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28781 <i>Date:</i> October 2014</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Officer meeting with Natural England to discuss response to preferred options consultation</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> Natural England (NE) <i>Outcome:</i> NE made clear that it wanted to refocus the original comments made as part of the preferred options consultation on the potential housing sites (NE letter dated 15 September 2014). The Council was to take forward and respond to the comments made at this meeting rather than the original NE letter. The Council would continue to take forward site specific policies in the AONB and its setting in accordance with policy ADPP5. The Council to continue to take forward site specific policies in accordance with policy CS18. <i>Date:</i> 28 April 2015</p>
<p><i>Action:</i> Officer meeting with the AONB Planning Advisor to discuss issues raised in preferred options consultation</p> <p><i>Partners:</i> North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners <i>Outcome:</i> WBC confirmed that following concerns raised about the consideration given to the potential impact of development in the Eastern Urban Area on the AONB and its setting, landscape assessments have now been undertaken for all sites within the setting of the AONB. The Council's landscape consultant has also responded to the detailed points raised by the AONB's landscape consultant on individual sites in Hungerford, Lambourn and Pangbourne. It was agreed WBC should continue to take forward site specific policies in the AONB and its setting in accordance with policy ADPP5, but due to staff changes in the AONB team, it was agreed that the AONB would reconsider the comments it made at the preferred options stage when the Council published the Proposed Submission DPD. <i>Date:</i> 19 August 2015</p>
<p>Outcomes from strategic working</p>

The strategic cooperation has clarified and strengthened the Council's approach to development both within the AONB and its setting and this is reflected in the individual housing site policies. The Proposed Submission DPD makes clear that all sites within the AONB and its setting will be expected to be developed in accordance with the Council's relevant Landscape Sensitivity/Capacity Assessment and that they will be further informed by the production of a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment at the planning application stage.

A bullet point has also been included in the General Site Policy which states:

- A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in accordance with the Landscape Institute *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* 3rd ed. 2013 will be provided for each site. This will inform the final capacity, development design and layout of the site and requirements for green infrastructure and the provision of public open space.

Although Natural England is content that development affecting the AONB is in accordance with the Core Strategy and policy ADPP5, there remains an 'in principle' objection from the AONB that the Council's approach to development on individual sites in the rural service centres is not in accordance with the landscape advice received from the AONB's landscape consultant in 2011. However, the AONB intends to reconsider the comments it made at the preferred options stage when the Council publishes the Proposed Submission DPD.

Ongoing cooperation

The Council will continue to work through the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners at both an officer and member level to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. At a strategic scale this will be achieved and monitored both through the delivery of the West Berkshire Local Plan and the AONB Management Plan.

The delivery of the AONB Management Plan is monitored by the AONB Council of Partners through an annual review of the delivery of the AONB Business Plan, and achievements are reported through the AONB's Annual Report.

3. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of the local distinctive character and identity of the District by

b) Continuing to use Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) to make positive changes for biodiversity at a landscape scale.

BOAs are areas where biodiversity improvements are likely to have the most beneficial results at a strategic scale, enabling the efficient focusing of resources to where they will have the greatest positive conservation impact. They have been agreed by the South East England Biodiversity Forum and there are 17 which have currently been identified, either whole, or in part, across the District. By working in partnership, the Council will pursue net gains for biodiversity from those allocated housing sites in and around BOAs.

Evidence base

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012)

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>

Core Strategy policy CS17 states that strategic opportunities for biodiversity improvement will be actively pursued within BOAs.

Berkshire Local Nature Partnership – Biodiversity Strategy objectives

1.9 Promote the use of biodiversity opportunity areas in the planning system(s) so as to guide development to the best locations.

The BLNP has also set out guiding principles that they would expect to underpin local documents and decision making with respect to the planning of sustainable development.

http://berkshirelnp.org/images/Guiding_Principles_for_Local_Plans.pdf

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>

Strategic Partners

Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (BLNP)

Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

BBOWT West Berkshire Living Landscape Project

Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)

Natural England (NE)

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)

Actions

Action: to produce a strategy for protecting and enhancing the natural environment across Berkshire

Partners: BLNP

Outcome: Berkshire Biodiversity Strategy 2014-2020

Please go to <http://berkshirelnp.org/images/Biodiversity%20Strategy%20Small.pdf> for further details

Date: September 2014

Action: Identifying the strategic planning issues for the Housing Site Allocations DPD

Partners: BBOWT and BLNP

Outcome: BBOWT and BLNP recommended that reference to BOAs was included as a strategic issue for the Housing Site Allocations DPD. It was agreed that BOAs represent a targeted landscape scale approach to conserving and enhancing biodiversity and as an opportunity, rather than restraint that they are considered within the strategic planning process as a positive and proactive mechanism. As such they are recognised as a strategic issue that needs to be addressed as part of the West Berkshire Local Plan. Although BOAs were not originally drawn out as a particular key strategic issue for the Housing Site Allocations DPD, they are still being taken into consideration as part of the preparation of the DPD and in particular when assessing potential housing sites for allocation. However, as there are a number of cross boundary BOAs which do cross the boundaries of adjacent authorities we have amended our key strategic matters to include the following – ‘to continue to use Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) to make positive changes for biodiversity at a landscape scale.’ Please go to - <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38036&p=0> for further details

Date: June 2014

Action: Officer meeting with Natural England to discuss response to preferred options consultation

Partners: Natural England

Outcome: Natural England acknowledged the importance of taking a strategic led approach to the Living Landscape Project and made particular reference to the value of seeking contributions from individual developments as part of this. NE stated that it would fully support WBC in requesting contributions through individual site policies. WBC to reflect this approach in the proposed submission DPD

Date: 28 April 2015

Outcomes from strategic working

The Berkshire Biodiversity Strategy identifies local objectives to help achieve its vision for the natural environment. One of these is to increase habitat connectivity by encouraging targeted habitat creation within BOAs

<http://berkshirelnp.org/index.php/what-we-do/strategy/biodiversity-opportunity-areas>

The Proposed Submission HSA DPD makes clear that for those allocated housing sites within BOAs, development will be expected to make net gains for biodiversity in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS17. Details would need to be confirmed for each site at the planning application stage.

The Proposed Submission HSA DPD makes clear that for those allocated housing sites within or adjacent to the area covered by the Living Landscape Project, development will be expected to make net gains for biodiversity in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS17. Details would need to be confirmed for each site at the planning application stage.

A bullet point has been included in the General Site Policy which states:

- All adverse impacts on habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and other biodiversity will be mitigated through avoidance, appropriate buffering, on-site mitigation and off-site compensation measures.

Ongoing cooperation

The Council will continue to engage at both an officer and member level with the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership in the delivery of the Berkshire Biodiversity Strategy 2014-20.

Annual monitoring will continue to be undertaken in cooperation with the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre and will be reported through the Council's Annual Monitoring report.

3. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of the local distinctive character and identity of the District by:

c) Regulating development affecting the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework

There are no SPAs within West Berkshire, although there is a very small part of the District (256 hectares) around Beech Hill within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. The 5km boundary has been determined by Natural England as a buffer area to regulate development near the SPA. However, it is possible that certain types of development up to 7km from the boundary of the SPA could have an impact on the SPA. Core Strategy policy ADPP6 therefore states that proposals for new residential development of one or more net additional dwellings up to 5km from the boundary of the SPA, and residential development of over 50 dwellings located between 5 and 7km of the boundary of the SPA, will therefore require screening to assess whether they will have a likely significant effect on the SPA. Where a significant effect exists or cannot be excluded, an Appropriate Assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 would need to be undertaken. Proposals will only be permitted if they do not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA. The Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework will be used to guide assessment and any avoidance or mitigation measures that may be needed. The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to attract new residents away from the SPA is a key part of these avoidance measures, together with strategic access management on the SPA and monitoring. Since the level of development expected to come forward in this area of the District is extremely low, the Council will explore opportunities for cross boundary working in this regard. Alternatively, SANG may be provided by developers for individual developments where it complies with Natural England's guidelines and there is an appropriate contribution to strategic access management and monitoring. In all cases SANGs will need to be agreed with Natural England.

Evidence base

South East Plan Policy NRM6: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
Please go to - http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/427/pdfs/ukxiem_20130427_en.pdf for further details

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006- 2026 (July 2012)
<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>
Strategic Objective 9 and policies ADPP6 and CS17

Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/490/contents/made>

Strategic Partners

Natural England
Wokingham Borough Council

(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)

Actions

Action: In 2010 the Council asked Wokingham Borough Council if it was possible for development in this area to contribute towards SANG in its Borough. The Council informally indicated that for the low level of development expected it may be acceptable to do that. The Council's formal response made clear though that until it had prepared its Managing Development Delivery DPD it would not know whether it had any spare capacity at the SANG it was delivering at Rooks Nest Woods. Although the HSA DPD is not proposing any development in the area, officers have sought to obtain an update to the Wokingham Borough Council's position regarding an in principle agreement to share capacity at the Rooks Nest Woods

Partners: Wokingham Borough Council

Outcome: Work ongoing

Date : October 2015

Outcomes from strategic working

The main issue for the Council is that the level of development expected to come forward in this area is likely to be extremely small and that no sites have been identified in this area in the HAS DPD. The area within the 5-7 km is open countryside where development will be tightly controlled. Only 2 new dwellings have been given approval in the last 13 years for instance. This level of development would not trigger the need to identify Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace SANG in the District. The Council would therefore be seeking financial contributions towards SANG within adjacent authorities in line with guidance outlined in para 5.12 of the Delivery Framework. Wokingham BC informally indicated in 2010 that for this low level of development it may be acceptable for West Berkshire to contribute towards SANGS in its Borough. The Council has existing measures for CIL in place to deal with this and also strategic biodiversity measures.

A bullet point has been included in the General Site Policy which states:

- All adverse impacts on habitats and species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and other biodiversity will be mitigated through avoidance, appropriate buffering, on-site mitigation and off-site compensation measures.

Ongoing cooperation

The Council will continue to monitor individual planning applications and respond as appropriate. The Council has existing measures for CIL in place to deal with this and also strategic biodiversity measures.

3. Ensuring the protection and enhancement of the local distinctive character and identity of the District by:

d) Considering the potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows to provide an enhanced open space and biodiversity resource.

The Kennet Valley Meadows has been identified as an important part of West Berkshire and Reading's green infrastructure. It noted that joint working will be important to conserve and enhance the management of this area.

Evidence base

Lower Kennet Valley Management Plan February 2003
Reading Borough Council & West Berkshire Council

The agreed objectives of the Management Plan were:-

- To provide a comprehensive conservation strategy and framework based on the intrinsic wildlife, landscape, educational and recreational values of the Lower Kennet Valley that will guide the future maintenance and management of the area, as well as inform and direct future enhancement projects.
- To provide a strategy that will ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained between the need to re-create, conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the area and the need to accommodate the increasing demands for access and recreation.

The final Plan was produced in February 2003 following extensive site survey and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and included two public consultation events as well as a survey of people using the area.

Although an overall strategic approach has been agreed for this area, the resources required to implement the Management Plan have not been available.

The Council reaffirmed its intentions for this area in the Core Strategy and identified Kennet Valley Meadows as an important part of West Berkshire and Reading's green infrastructure. It noted that joint working will be important to conserve and enhance the management of this area. The area now forms part of the Kennet Valley East Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) <http://berkshirelnp.org/images/BOAmaps/Kennet%20Valley%20East%20BOA.pdf> BOAs are areas where biodiversity improvements are likely to have the most beneficial results at a strategic scale, enabling the efficient focusing of resources to where they will have the greatest positive conservation impact. Core Strategy policy CS17 states that strategic opportunities for biodiversity improvement will be actively pursued within BOAs.

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Strategic Partners
<p>Reading Borough Council Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) BBOWT</p> <p>(Please see Appendix 5 for further details)</p>
Outcomes from strategic working
<p>Previous partnership working at both an officer and member level has identified the potential for improving the management of Kennet Valley Meadows as an important cross boundary issue for Reading and West Berkshire.</p> <p>There are no sites proposed for allocation that are actually within the Kennet Valley East Biodiversity Opportunity Area, only one site, EUA025 lies adjacent and so there is very limited opportunity to progress this work through the HSA DPD.</p> <p>In taking the work forward there remain a number of considerations,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the vast majority of the land in this area is in private ownership and many of the actions identified in the Management Plan require the co-operation of landowners2. the baseline data is now likely to be out of date and would need updating3. the cost of implementing the Management Plan with the appointment of a project officer and operational budget
Ongoing cooperation
<p>By continuing to work with Reading Borough Council and the Berkshire Local Nature Partnership at a strategic level through the use of BOAs to make positive changes for biodiversity at a landscape scale.</p> <p>In conjunction with Reading Borough Council to continue to seek specific opportunities from future development to support the long term future management of Kennet Valley Meadows.</p>

Appendix 5: Glossary of bodies engaged

There are a number of organisations who have played a particularly key role in helping to identify and develop the strategic issues and priorities to be considered as part of the Housing Site Allocations DPD and will also be key in helping in their monitoring and delivery. These include:

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

We primarily work with the Borough Council at both an officer and member level on dealing with specific issues, such as any cross boundary concerns relating to transport and traffic on the A339 or regarding AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield. We coordinate the officer level off site planning group for AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP). Until June 2015 West Berkshire had an outstanding objection to the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan regarding its housing requirement, but this was withdrawn following main modifications proposed by the Borough Council.

Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

We are committed at both an officer and member level to our partnership working with BBOWT. In January 2014 we entered into an innovative partnership with the organisation, which now manages our commons, country parks and nature reserves. The overarching partnership agreement is for 50 years and in return for ongoing funding BBOWT delivers countryside management at the sites according to an agreed business plan and annual management plan. A Steering Group has been established as part of the governance arrangements which comprises senior officers and Council members/trustees. Part of our partnership working covers the Living Landscape Project. Please go to <http://www.bbowl.org.uk/what-we-do/living-landscapes/west-berkshire-living-landscape> for further details.

Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (BLNP) -

Please go to <http://berkshirelnp.org/index.php/homepage/the-partners> for further details. We are fully engaged with the BLNP at both a member and officer level. The Council's Executive Portfolio Holder for Countryside sits on the BLNP Executive Board and the Council's Principal Ecologist sits on the BLNP Steering Group. The Partnership includes representatives from Natural England, Thames Water, Environment Agency, BBOWT and the AONB.

Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB)

The Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) is a partnership of the six Berkshire authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership which has been established to prioritise funding for local major transport schemes devolved from the Department for Transport. Slough Borough Council is the Accountable Body for the BLTB. The Council's Executive Portfolio Holder for Transport sits on the Body. For full details of membership, agendas and meeting minutes please go to <http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=601>

Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF)

The Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF) brings together the six Berkshire authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Department

for Transport (DfT), Network Rail, Highways England, Heathrow Airport Limited, and some train and bus operating companies to discuss and consult on matters of mutual interest relating to strategic transport issues in Thames Valley Berkshire. It operates at two levels – one with elected members and business representatives, and the other with senior transport officers. The Berkshire Chief Executives' Group has recognised the importance of these arrangements by nominating one of its members to chair the officers' meeting and liaise with the LEP and the members. The membership of the BLTB and of the Berkshire Strategic Transport (Members') Forum is identical, and the two bodies operate in tandem with each other.

For full details of membership, agendas and meeting minutes please go to <http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=601>

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

We use the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Planning (MoU) signed by all the Berkshire unitary authorities as a starting point to guide our approach to cooperation. The MoU provides a framework for joint working between the Berkshire authorities and it allows refined Agreements to be agreed between individual authorities on specific areas where they consider it appropriate. In accordance with the MoU, which was formally adopted by West Berkshire Council on 19th December 2013, we use existing partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. At an officer level these include the Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) which provides a co-ordinating role for planning policy officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest on a bi monthly basis. This reports to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP) which provides a strategic planning policy overview for chief planning officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest. To date, together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership, the Group has been instrumental in coordinating the work of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the identification of a Functional Economic Market Area.

BHoP periodically keeps Lead Councillors informed on how mechanisms for fulfilling the duty to co-operate are progressing and being taken forward. At a member level there are regular meetings of Berkshire Leaders (and occasional meeting of portfolio holders for specific issues). In addition, a Member Reference Group has been set up to move the outcomes of the SHMA forward into capacity work across the Housing Market Areas and beyond.

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency has responsibility for water quality and resources and we primarily work with it at an officer rather than member level. The Agency provided comments on potential housing sites in advance of any formal public consultation and has also been involved at all formal stages of the process to date. The continued use of one to one discussions will be important at the planning application stage and in the delivery of the DPD.

Hampshire County Council

We primarily work with Hampshire County Council at both an officer and member level on dealing with transport issues relating to the A339 and the updating of the freight network. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

Hart District Council

We continue to work with the District Council at an officer level, although a memorandum of understanding was prepared by Hart District Council in 2013 which made clear there were no strategic issues that needed to be considered between us.

Highways England (formerly Highways Agency)

As the government company charged with managing motorways and A roads, we have worked with the Highways Agency at an officer level to provide comments on potential housing sites in advance of any formal public consultation and the organisation has also been involved at all formal stages of the process to date. The continued use of one to one discussions will be important at the planning application stage and in the delivery of the DPD. A Statement of Common Ground has been prepared in relation to the M4 Smart Motorway scheme. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF).

Natural England

Natural England is the government's adviser on the natural environment, providing practical scientific advice on how to look after England's landscapes and wildlife. It is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Please go to -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about> for further details

We have worked with Natural England at an officer level to provide comments on potential housing sites in advance of any formal public consultation and it has also been involved at all formal stages of the process to date. The continued use of one to one discussions will be important at the planning application stage and in the delivery of the DPD. We also work together as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (NWD AONB)

The Council of Partners includes member representatives (with officer support) of the nine local authorities which have the administrative responsibilities for the area covered by the North Wessex Downs. It also includes representatives of Natural England, community and parish councils, farming and rural businesses, nature conservation, historic environment, rural recreation and tourism. All have signed a Charter which sets out how we work together for the long term benefit of the AONB and all who live and work in it. The current list of members can be found here -

<http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/About-Us/minutes-of-meetings.html>

The Council of Partners has no independent executive powers. Its work is carried out with the prior approval of its constituent local authorities and DEFRA (the funding partners). Minutes of its meetings can be found here -

<http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/About-Us/minutes-of-meetings.html>

The Partnership is underpinned by a small AONB delivery team.

Preparation of a Management Plan for the North Wessex Downs AONB (AONB) is a statutory requirement placed upon the constituent local authorities by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. The review, production and publication of the Management Plan, together with the coordination of its delivery, has been delegated by the Council to the Council of Partners. The delivery of the AONB Management Plan is monitored by the Partnership through an annual review of the delivery of the AONB Business Plan, and achievements are reported through the AONB's Annual Report.

Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)

The ONR is responsible for regulation of nuclear safety and security across the UK and is responsible for advising on land use planning (LUP) applications in the vicinity of licensed nuclear installations. The aim is to ensure that developments around nuclear installations do not result in populations rising to unacceptable levels.

The ONR administers the government's policy on the control of development and provides advice to the Council, who take this into account in considering whether or not to approve planning applications. Please go to - <http://www.onr.org.uk/land-use-planning.htm> for further details.

We have primarily worked with the ONR at an officer level through the off site planning group for AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield which consists of emergency planning officers from West Berkshire, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council. This meets on a quarterly basis, with planning policy officers attending as appropriate.

Oxfordshire County Council

As part of the work on our wider Local Plan we work with the County Council on transport related issues at both an officer and member level. We do this primarily through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF). We set up individual meetings to discuss specific issues when appropriate such as the updating of the freight network. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

Reading Borough Council

We use the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Planning (MoU) signed by all the Berkshire unitary authorities as a starting point to guide our approach to cooperation. The MoU provides a framework for joint working between the Berkshire authorities and it allows refined Agreements to be agreed between individual authorities on specific areas where they consider it appropriate. In accordance with the MoU, which was formally adopted by West Berkshire Council on 19th December 2013, we use existing partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. At an officer level these include the Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) which provides a co-ordinating role for planning policy officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest on a bi monthly basis. This reports to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP) which provides a strategic planning policy overview for chief planning officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest. To date, together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership, the Group has been instrumental in coordinating the work of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the identification of a Functional Economic Market Area. BHoP periodically keeps Lead Councillors informed on how mechanisms for fulfilling the duty to co-operate are progressing and being taken forward. At a member level there are regular meetings of Berkshire Leaders (and occasional meeting of portfolio holders for specific issues). In addition, a Member Reference Group has been set up to move the outcomes of the SHMA forward into capacity work across the Housing Market Areas and beyond.

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

We use the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Planning (MoU) signed by all the Berkshire unitary authorities as a starting point to guide our approach to cooperation. The MoU provides a framework for joint working between the Berkshire authorities and it allows refined Agreements to be agreed between individual authorities on specific areas where they consider it appropriate. In accordance with the MoU, which was formally adopted by West Berkshire Council on 19th December 2013, we use existing

partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. At an officer level these include the Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) which provides a co-ordinating role for planning policy officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest on a bi monthly basis. This reports to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP) which provides a strategic planning policy overview for chief planning officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest. To date, together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership, the Group has been instrumental in coordinating the work of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the identification of a Functional Economic Market Area.

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Slough Borough Council

We use the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Planning (MoU) signed by all the Berkshire unitary authorities as a starting point to guide our approach to cooperation. The MoU provides a framework for joint working between the Berkshire authorities and it allows refined Agreements to be agreed between individual authorities on specific areas where they consider it appropriate. In accordance with the MoU, which was formally adopted by West Berkshire Council on 19th December 2013, we use existing partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. At an officer level these include the Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) which provides a co-ordinating role for planning policy officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest on a bi monthly basis. This reports to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP) which provides a strategic planning policy overview for chief planning officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest. To date, together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership, the Group has been instrumental in coordinating the work of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the identification of a Functional Economic Market Area.

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South Buckinghamshire District Council

We have primarily worked with the District Council at both an officer and member level during the preparation of the Berkshire SHMA once it was identified as part of the area covered. South Bucks has now indicated that it does not want to be actively involved in the Berkshire SHMA but is pursuing alternative options which are linked to it taking forward a joint local plan with Chiltern District Council. It has also declined to take part in the jointly commissioned work on the Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).

South Oxfordshire District Council

As part of the work on our wider Local Plan we work with the District Council on transport and economic related issues at both an officer and member level. We do this primarily through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF) and the Berkshire Thames

Valley Local Economic Partnership. We also set up individual meetings with the District Council to discuss specific issues when appropriate, such as the cross boundary implications of housing growth. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

Test Valley Borough Council

We have agreed that with the exception of our work in the North Wessex Downs, there are no strategic issues of concern at this stage. We will set up individual meetings with the Borough Council to discuss specific issues when appropriate. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership (TVB LEP)

<http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/>

We are fully engaged at both an officer and member level with the TVB LEP. The Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development and the Chief Executive sit on the Forum and Executive Board respectively. Joint working is focused on the production of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the analysis of our Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).

Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)

TVERC is a 'not for profit' organisation covering Berkshire and Oxfordshire. It is run by a partnership and is one of a national network of local records centres. Its funding partners include all the local authorities in Oxfordshire & Berkshire plus Natural England and the Environment Agency. It also works closely with the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust. TVERC provides the following services for the Council –

- Provision of sites, species and habitat data
- Data collection and management
- Data analysis and presentation
- Supporting recorders and volunteers
- Local Wildlife Sites surveys
- Review of Ancient Woodland inventory
- Roadside nature reserves surveys

All this information has informed the SA/SEA work as part of the housing site selection process. It also forms part of the regular data collected and monitored as part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report.

Thames Water

As the statutory water and waste water provider we have worked with Thames Water at an officer level to provide comments on potential housing sites in advance of any formal public consultation and the organisation has also been involved at all formal stages of the process to date. The continued use of one to one discussions will be important at the planning application stage and in the delivery of the DPD.

Vale of White Horse District Council

As part of the work on our wider Local Plan we work with the District Council on transport and economic related issues at both an officer and member level. We do this primarily through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF) and the Berkshire Thames Valley Local Economic Partnership. We also set up individual meetings with the Vale of

White Horse District Council to discuss specific issues when appropriate, such as the cross boundary implications of housing growth. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

Wiltshire Council

As part of the work on our wider Local Plan we work with Wiltshire Council particularly on transport related issues at both an officer and member level. We do this primarily through the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum (BSTF). We set up individual meetings to discuss specific issues when appropriate such as the updating of the freight network. We also work together at both an officer and member level as constituent members of the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (CoP).

Wokingham Borough Council

We use the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Planning (MoU) signed by all the Berkshire unitary authorities as a starting point to guide our approach to cooperation. The MoU provides a framework for joint working between the Berkshire authorities and it allows refined Agreements to be agreed between individual authorities on specific areas where they consider it appropriate. In accordance with the MoU, which was formally adopted by West Berkshire Council on 19th December 2013, we use existing partnerships and working groups to take issues forward as appropriate. At an officer level these include the Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG) which provides a co-ordinating role for planning policy officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest on a bi monthly basis. This reports to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP) which provides a strategic planning policy overview for chief planning officers across Berkshire to discuss matters of mutual interest. To date, together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership, the Group has been instrumental in coordinating the work of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the identification of a Functional Economic Market Area.

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Other bodies

As part of the Duty to Cooperate process the Council has also engaged with a number of other bodies and these include:

- Berkshire Association of Local Councils
- British Aggregates Association
- Cemex (UK)
- Centrica PLC (British Gas)
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Community Council For Berkshire
- Country Land & Business Association
- English Heritage
- Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT)
- Grundon Waste Management Ltd

- Gypsy Council
- Highways Agency
- Home Builders Federation
- Homes and Communities Agency - South and West
- Marine Management Organisation
- Mayor of London
- Mineral Products Association Ltd
- National Farmers Union
- National Grid
- Network Rail
- Newbury and District Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS England
- North and West Reading Clinical Commissioning Group
- North Wessex Downs AONB
- Office for Nuclear Regulation
- Office of Rail Regulation
- Openreach newSites
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Renewable UK Association
- Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust
- Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Scottish and Southern Energy Plc
- Showmen's Guild of Great Britain
- Swindon Borough Council
- Thames Valley Police
- The Coal Authority
- The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
- Transport for London
- Veolia Environmental Services
- Wales and West Utilities
- West Berkshire Disability Alliance

Appendix 6: References to key documents

National

Localism Act (2011)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/110/enacted>

Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>

Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made>.

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites>

Core Strategy

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 (July 2012)

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28782>

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29223>

West Berkshire Core Strategy DPD Habitats Regulations Assessment

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36470&p=0>

Evidence base

West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD Habitats Regulations Assessment

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28515>

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29343>

Transport Assessments

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29342>

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the potential impact of the scale and distribution of development in the North Wessex Downs AONB – Jan 2011

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29344>

Landscape Capacity Assessment of Potential Housing Sites within and adjacent to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, West Berkshire – July 2014

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=29344>

Landscape Capacity Assessment of Potential Housing Sites within and adjacent to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, West Berkshire – August 2015

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28515>

North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

<http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/About-Us/aonb-management-plan.html>

Other documents

Memorandum of Understanding between the Berkshire Unitary Authorities on Strategic Planning and the “Duty to Co-operate” on Planning Matters in Berkshire (please see page 80 below)

Draft terms of reference of the Member Reference Group for the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment

www.westberks.gov.uk/shma

Berkshire Biodiversity Strategy

<http://berkshirelnp.org/index.php/what-we-do/strategy/biodiversity-opportunity-areas>

The BLNP has set out guiding principles that they would expect to underpin local documents and decision making with respect to the planning of sustainable development. http://berkshirelnp.org/images/Guiding_Principles_for_Local_Plans.pdf

Lower Kennet Valley Management Plan
(Available on request)

Thames Basin Heaths SPA Delivery Framework
(Available on request)

Memorandum of Understanding between the Berkshire Unitary Authorities on Strategic Planning and the “Duty to Co-operate” on Planning Matters in Berkshire

As single tier authorities, the six Berkshire unitary authorities are both local and strategic planning authorities for their areas. The Localism Act 2011 brings significant changes to strategic planning in England. Strategic planning remains an essential part of the planning system. The Act provides for a bottom up approach to strategic planning in a local area through the “duty to co-operate.”

The Act sets out that a local planning authority has a duty to co-operate by:

“engaging constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of development plan and other documents and in activities that can reasonably be considered to prepare the way for the preparation of such documents for strategic matters.”

The requirements of the Localism Act are complemented by the guidance in paragraphs 178-181 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), although these are additional to those within the Act. The NPPF includes reference to local authorities considering agreements on joint approaches to the undertaking of activities and to considering whether to agree to prepare joint local development documents. The duty involves a continuous process of engagement from initial thinking through to implementation. It should result in meeting development requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities, where it is practical to do so. Authorities should also consider producing plans or policies prepared as part of a joint committee, a memorandum of understanding or a jointly prepared strategy which is presented as evidence of an agreed position.

The Duty to Co-operate has become the first matter that is tested at a local plan examination. Failure to co-operate will result in delay and increased costs in bringing forward up to date local plans thereby increasing the risks at planning appeals.

In the light of the duty the Berkshire Unitary Authorities have formulated and agreed the following memorandum of understanding:

- A. **Agreeing Strategic/Cross Boundary Issues:** The authorities will endeavour to agree appropriate Berkshire, or part of Berkshire, baseline positions on relevant strategic planning matters as a starting point for the potential development of strategic planning policies for all or part of Berkshire.
- B. **Joint Evidence Base:** The authorities will develop an evidence base that provides potential for sharing across authorities where it is prudent and appropriate to do so relating to strategic planning matters. This might include issues such as demographics, population projections, housing market assessments, gypsy and traveller needs, employment, retail and transport studies, infrastructure plans, minerals and waste (see separate Memorandum of Understanding), strategic environmental and green infrastructure, decentralised energy infrastructure and other issues of cross boundary interest. This could include the joint commissioning by two or more Berkshire authorities of studies into these matters.

- C. **Other Authorities Plans:** Where it will add weight, the authorities will consider, assess and make joint representations on the strategic aspects of local plans prepared by authorities adjoining Berkshire, especially on minerals and waste matters;
- D. **Joint Strategies:** The authorities will consider opportunities to develop joint strategies and deliver agreed or joint positions or policies in relation to specific topics or development needs where the evidence demonstrates that this is appropriate, (e.g. planning for the SPA or AWE).
- E. **Statements of Common Ground:** The authorities will involve their neighbouring authorities and other partner organisations (e.g. the Berkshire LEP, Environment Agency, Highways Authority, etc.) to which the duty to co-operate applies in the identification of issues and options, in resolving objections and preparing statements of common ground in relation to the preparation of individual local plan documents and other planning policy documents.

The operation of this Memorandum of Understanding will be the responsibility of Berkshire Development Plans Group (DPG), reporting to the Berkshire Heads of Planning (BHoP). In turn, BHoP will periodically (at least once a year) keep Lead Councillors informed on how mechanisms for fulfilling the duty to co-operate are progressing and being taken forward.

This Memorandum of Understanding provides a framework for joint working between the Berkshire authorities and it allows refined Agreements to be agreed between individual authorities on specific areas where they consider it appropriate.

Signed:

Bracknell Forest Council

Reading Borough Council

Royal Borough of Windsor Maidenhead

Slough Council

West Berkshire Council

Wokingham Borough Council