



## AGENDA ITEM: 17

### SUMMARY

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>24 June 2014</b>
<b>PART:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Dacorum Local Planning Framework: Pre-Submission Site Allocations</b>
Contact:	<p>Andrew Williams, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>James Doe, Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration</p> <p>Laura Wood, Team Leader – Strategic Planning and Regeneration (Strategic Planning)</p> <p>Sarah Churchard - Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p>
Purpose of report:	To seek agreement of the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document and arrangements for consultation and submission.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note key issues arising from Issues and Options Consultation, the Core Strategy and new information and advice.</li> <li>2. Recommend the Site Allocations Pre-Submission documents to Council for publication and comment.</li> <li>3. Recommends Council delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Planning Development and Regeneration) in consultation with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to finalise the Report of Consultation and Sustainability Appraisal, to make any factual or non-substantive changes and amendments to the Pre-Submission Site Allocations and to insert the Indicative Spatial Layout plan into Policy LA3 West Hemel Hempstead prior to consultation commencing.</li> <li>4. To recommend Council to approve the Site Allocations for publication, seeking representations in accordance</li> </ol>

	<p>with the Statement of Community Involvement and relevant regulations.</p> <p>5. To recommend Council to approve the following procedure for considering future issues on the Site Allocations:</p> <p>(a) If significant new issues are raised in the representations on the forthcoming consultation, to report to Cabinet and Council for a decision as to whether any change to the Site Allocations is justified;</p> <p>(b) If there are no significant new issues, to delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) to:</p> <p>(i) Submit the Site Allocations for Examination; and</p> <p>(ii) In consultation with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, to agree any minor changes to the Site Allocations to resolve objections and improve clarity of the document.</p>
<p>Corporate objectives:</p>	<p>The Site Allocations forms part of the Council's Local Planning Framework, which as a whole helps support all 5 corporate objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Safe and clean environment:</i> e.g. contains policies relating to the design and layout of new development that promote security and safe access.</li> <li>• <i>Community Capacity:</i> e.g. provide a framework for local communities to prepare area-specific guidance such as Neighbourhood Plans, Town / Village Plans etc.</li> <li>• <i>Affordable housing:</i> e.g. sets the Borough's overall housing target and the proportion of new homes that must be affordable.</li> <li>• <i>Dacorum delivers:</i> e.g. provides a clear framework upon which planning decisions can be made.</li> <li>• <i>Regeneration:</i> e.g. sets the planning framework for key regeneration projects, such as Hemel Hempstead town centre and the Maylands Business Park.</li> </ul>
<p>Financial/ Value for Money Implications:</p>	<p>The process of preparing the Site Allocations as part of the Local Planning Framework (LPF) has financial implications. The Council has created a 'Local Planning Framework' earmarked reserve to support expenditure. Money is drawn down from this reserve to provide an annual budget to support LPF-related work.</p> <p>Having an up-to-date planning policy framework helps reduce the incidence of planning appeals (and thus costs associated with those). It will also be the most effective way of ensuring the optimum level of developer contributions to infrastructure and in mitigation of development impacts can be achieved.</p> <p>Like the Core Strategy, the Site Allocations document, once adopted, can be subject to legal challenge and costs associated with this process.</p>

<p>Risk Implications</p>	<p>A full risk assessment has been carried out as part of the PID for the Local Planning Framework. These risks are reviewed monthly through CORVU and reported each year through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Identified risks include failure of external agencies or consultants to deliver on time, change in Government policy and team capacity. If the Council were to decide not to progress the Site Allocations DPD, significant additional risks would arise. These would relate to a lack of an up-to-date framework upon which to base planning decisions within the Borough, and the likelihood of a significant increase in speculative planning applications (and potentially appeals), particularly for housing development in the Green Belt, which would prove hard to defend. There would also be financial implications i.e. extra costs associated with planning appeals and inquiries.</p>
<p>Equalities Implications</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment carried out for the Core Strategy which sets the framework for the Site Allocations DPD. The Sustainability Report for the Core Strategy concludes that the plan avoids any discrimination on the basis of disability, gender or ethnic minority. The Site Allocations builds on the requirements of the Core Strategy with regard to issues such as affordable housing and homes for minority groups, accessibility of facilities and local employment. The Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanies the Site Allocations found no specific issues with regards to disability, gender or ethnic minority.</p>
<p>Health and Safety Implications</p>	<p>They are included in the planning issues covered by the Site Allocations. For example, where appropriate references are made to appropriate site access points and to the need to consult the Health and Safety Executive where sites are potentially affected by the nearby storage of hazardous substances.</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer:  No comments to add to the report.  Deputy S.151 Officer:  No further comments to add to this report.</p>
<p>Consultees:</p>	<p>Consultation on the Site Allocations DPD has been carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), adopted by the Council in June 2006.</p> <p>The nature and scope of this consultation is set out within the Reports of Consultation that followed the 2006 and 2008 Issues and Options Consultations.</p> <p>Advice from key stakeholders, such as the Local Education Authority and Highway Authority, has been sought where appropriate. Feedback on the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan has also been significant in developing a clear</p>

	<p>understanding of local infrastructure needs. This advice is referred to within the relevant Background Issues paper that form part of the Site Allocations DPD evidence base.</p> <p>The Consultation Reports relating to the Core Strategy (Volumes 1-7) are also relevant.</p> <p>In terms of internal processes, a Task and Finish Group have advised on the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD. There have been reports to Cabinet at key stages in the preparation of the Local Planning Framework and the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder has been kept apprised of progress.</p>																						
<p>Abbreviations:</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>DPD</td> <td>Development Plan Document</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SCI</td> <td>Statement of Community Involvement</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LDS</td> <td>Local Development Scheme</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NPPF</td> <td>National Planning Policy Framework</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NPPG</td> <td>National Planning Practice Guidance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>InDP</td> <td>Infrastructure Delivery Plan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SPD</td> <td>Supplementary Planning Document</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SPG</td> <td>Supplementary Planning Guidance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LPF</td> <td>Local Planning Framework</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CIL</td> <td>Community Infrastructure Levy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>GEA</td> <td>General Employment Area</td> </tr> </table>	DPD	Development Plan Document	SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	LDS	Local Development Scheme	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance	InDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan	SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance	LPF	Local Planning Framework	CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	GEA	General Employment Area
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<p>Background Papers:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Community Involvement (June 2006)</li> <li>• Local Development Scheme (February 2014)</li> <li>• Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (adopted April 2014)</li> <li>• National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)</li> <li>• National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)</li> <li>• Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012</li> <li>• Core Strategy (adopted September 2013)</li> <li>• Report of Consultation – Site Allocations Issues and Options (2006)</li> <li>• Report of Consultation – Site Allocations Supplementary Issues and Options (2008)</li> <li>• Consultation Reports relating to the Core Strategy (Volumes 1-7) (as dated)</li> <li>• Schedule of Site Appraisals (2006, 2008 and 2014)</li> <li>• Sustainability Working Notes for Schedules of Site Appraisals (2006, 2008 and 2014)</li> <li>• Workshop Reports for Local Allocations LA1, LA3 and LA5 (July 2013).</li> <li>• Notes from Stakeholder meetings for Local Allocations LA2, LA4 and LA6 (May 2013).</li> <li>• Report on the Consultation event held in July 2013: ‘Shaping the Masterplan’ for Proposal Local Allocation LA3: West Hemel Hempstead (January 2014)</li> <li>• Draft Background Issues Papers (June 2014) on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Sustainable Development Strategy</li> <li>– Strengthening Economic Prosperity</li> <li>– Providing Homes and Community Services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>																						

	<p>– Looking After the Environment</p> <p>All technical studies relating to the Local Planning Framework are available from the online Core Strategy examination library at <a href="http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/corestrategyexamination">www.dacorum.gov.uk/corestrategyexamination</a>.</p>
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## **BACKGROUND:**

### **1. Introduction to the Site Allocations**

- 1.1 In September 2013 the Council adopted its Core Strategy. This was the first document that makes up the Council's new Local Planning Framework (LPF) or Local Plan. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to set the strategic planning policies for the Borough up to 2031.
- 1.2 The Site Allocations DPD is the next part of the LPF. Its principal role is to deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy, by establishing detailed proposals and requirements for particular sites and areas. It:
- allocates sites for future development in the Borough;
  - defines the boundaries of planning designations; and
  - ensures appropriate infrastructure is identified and delivered alongside new development.
- 1.3 Designations and allocations are illustrated on a Policies Map (previously referred to as a 'Proposals Map').
- 1.4 The Site Allocations DPD comprises a written statement and a map book. The latter shows amendments and additions required to the existing Policies Map.
- 1.5 The Site Allocations DPD excludes consideration of allocations and land designations within the area covered by the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan. This area largely equates to the Maylands Business Park. However, where the AAP contains important sites, these are cross referred to within the Site Allocations DPD supporting text to ensure a comprehensive picture of sites and designations is provided for the Borough.
- 1.6 A summary of the coverage of the Site Allocations DPD is set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.7 Once adopted, the planning policies and associated designations within the Site Allocations DPD will be used to determine planning applications, together with policies in the Core Strategy and relevant development management policies. Development management policies are currently provided through 'saved' policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011, which will be superseded over time by the Development Management DPD or through the early partial review process.
- 1.8 The Site Allocations DPD contains a list of those policies from the 'saved' Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 that are now superseded. This list is an update to that contained within Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy.
- 1.9 As stated above, the Site Allocations DPD allocates sites and takes forward designations in support of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy was found 'sound' by a Planning Inspector on the basis that the Council signs up to an early partial review of the plan. This will look again at the Council's overall housing target and

associated policy issues. If this early partial review process identifies a higher housing requirement than the current Core Strategy, the Site Allocations DPD will also need to be reviewed. This will be achieved through the early partial review being incorporated within a new single Local Plan.

## **2. Where we are in the process**

- 2.1 Appendix 2 sets out key stages in the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD. Whilst initial work on the Site Allocations DPD was progressed in parallel with the consultation on the Core Strategy (with Issues and Options consultation in 2006 and supplementary issues and options consultation in 2008), work on preparing the Site Allocations document was slowed due to the need to prioritise taking the Core Strategy through to examination and adoption. The Core Strategy sets the strategic context for the Site Allocations and the two documents largely share the same evidence base.
- 2.2 The Council is about to reach a key stage in the Site Allocations process, known as Pre-Submission (or 'Publication'). This is where the Council publishes the version of the Site Allocations document that it proposes to submit to the Planning Inspectorate and take forward to Examination (see Figure 2 below).
- 2.3 The recently published National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that Council's no longer need to consult on an interim Preferred Options Plan or Draft Plan, but can proceed direct from Issues and Options to Pre-Submission stage in order to expedite the plan-making process.
- 2.4 The Pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD must be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal Report and Consultation Statement. Both of these documents have been prepared on an iterative basis and show how the Site Allocations DPD has developed from a consideration of issues and site options, to the Pre-Submission version. The Pre-Submission Site Allocations document, the Sustainability Appraisal Report and the Consultation Report are jointly referred to as the 'Proposed Submission documents.'
- 2.5 Once endorsed by Full Council, the Pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD becomes a material planning consideration for relevant planning decisions and will be published for formal comment for a 6 week period (as required by planning regulations).
- 2.6 If the Council wishes to make any significant changes to the Pre-Submission version in the light of representations made during this 6 week period, it will either need to repeat the Pre-Submission version or consult further on proposed modifications, before it submits the document to the Planning Inspectorate. This additional stage would have an impact on the timetable for the Local Planning Framework set out in the recently adopted Local Development Scheme (February 2014), as well as resource implications. This timetable is attached as Appendix 3.

## **3. Implications of Core Strategy Legal Challenge**

- 3.1 The outcome of the legal challenge to the Core Strategy, brought by Grand Union Investments Ltd, is still not known. Whilst the outcome of this challenge may have significant implications for the Site Allocations DPD it is important to proceed with the document for a number of reasons:

- It will demonstrate the availability of a robust and deliverable 5 and 15 year land supply, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- It helps establish planning requirements for key housing sites (particularly the Local Allocations), and provides a basis on which to seek public feedback on these;
- It supports delivery of the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Master plan by formally designating key sites for development and redevelopment; and
- Work on the Site Allocations will help inform production of a new single Local Plan, as part of the early partial review of the Core Strategy.

3.2 A verbal update on the legal challenge position will be given at the meeting, if available.

#### **4. Role of Consultation and technical evidence and advice**

4.1 The starting point for the Site Allocations DPD has been the strategic policy position set out in the Core Strategy. Sites and designations shown on the existing Policies Map (based on the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011) have been reviewed and where necessary updated.

4.2 A series of Background Issues Papers (June 2014) have been prepared to support the Site Allocations DPD. These papers form part of the evidence base. Their role is to inform the content of the Site Allocations DPD through:

- (a) summarising background policy, guidance and advice relevant to each subject area; and
- (b) assessing which sites, designations and/or boundary changes it is appropriate to take forward in the context of this advice and set out any additional selection criteria used.

4.3 Information has been collected from a number of different sources and as the assessment has been an iterative process, incorporating the conclusions of sustainability appraisal and advice from technical experts as appropriate. These sources include:

- Feedback from public issues and options consultation (2006 and 2008)
- Information in the Schedule of Site Appraisals (2006, 2008 and 2014)
- Outcome of independents sustainability assessment of sites submitted for consideration
- Feedback from consultation and Examination of the Core Strategy
- Monitoring information and known changes on the ground
- Site visits by Officers
- Technical studies
- Map-based research
- Advice from technical experts
- Government advice and good practice.

#### **5. Key Issues for the Site Allocations document**

##### Green Belt changes

5.1 The Site Allocations DPD does not seek to look again at the Council's housing target or Green Belt boundaries (apart for the correction of minor anomalies and the

release of land associated with the Local Allocations). These issues will be considered further through the early partial review of the Core Strategy which is scheduled for adoption in autumn 2017 (see Appendix 3). The proposed changes to the Green Belt and Rural Area and any necessary revisions to settlement and village boundaries are explained further in the Sustainable Development Strategy Background Issues Paper (June 2014).

#### Housing:

- 5.2 One of the key roles of the Site Allocations document is to demonstrate how the Council will deliver the housing target set out in the Core Strategy. However, not all future housing land needs to be explicitly identified through a housing allocation and listed in the housing schedule within the document. Sites also come from a variety of other sources including:
- Completions (i.e. dwellings already completed within the plan period - 2006-2013)
  - Commitments (i.e. schemes with planning permission which have yet to be constructed)
  - Sites identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
  - Rural exceptions sites (under Policy CS20: Rural Sites for Affordable Homes)
  - Gypsy and Traveller pitches (17 pitches as specified in the Core Strategy); and
  - An assumed continuation of small 'windfall sites (excluding back garden land)
- 5.3 All potential development sites have been assessed against a detailed and wide ranging list of criteria, which were based on the principles of sustainable development and compliance with the strategic policies set by the Core Strategy. Where appropriate, the site assessment process involved site visits and desk based research. All site options have also been subject to separate, independent sustainability appraisal. Not all of the sites identified or put forward were selected for inclusion within the housing schedule: rather the Site Allocations document focusses on sites that will make a significant contribution to delivering the objectives of the Core Strategy.
- 5.4 For practical reasons, and taking account of the size of Dacorum and the considerable number of sites that have been advanced for possible development, a size threshold has been adopted for allocations of 0.3 hectares or greater (or capable of accommodating 10 dwellings or more). Developments below this threshold can still be considered on their merits, through the planning application process, and will contribute to overall housing delivery.
- 5.5 The housing programme set out in the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document demonstrates that (a) the Core Strategy target can be met and modestly exceeded and (b) there is a clear and deliverable 5 year housing land supply. If full account is taken of all potential future sources of housing land (e.g. small windfalls on garden land and larger windfall potential) this provides for an additional margin to allow some additional flexibility, as required by the NPPG.
- 5.6 The Local Allocations identified within the Core Strategy remain the only housing sites identified for release from the Green Belt.



- 5.7 Further information regarding housing land availability and the site selection process is contained within the Providing Homes and Community Needs Background Issues Paper (June 2014).
- 5.8 The housing programme contained within the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document is based on the most up-to-date housing monitoring information currently available. This has a base date of April 2013. It is recommended that the programme is updated (as a matter of fact) to reflect the latest (April 2014) position when these figures are released by the County Council. This information will be available in time to include within the document before it is published for formal comment in September (see consultation arrangements below). This will ensure that the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document contains the most up-to-date information on housing available. The Meeting Homes and Community Needs Background Issues Paper will also need to be updated to incorporate and explain these updated figures.
- 5.9 The same principle applies to updating the employment monitoring data to a base date of April 2014.

#### Local Allocations

- 5.10 The Core Strategy has identified urban extensions to some of the larger settlements referred to as Local Allocations. Developing these sites requires their release from the Green Belt. This principle was established through the Core Strategy. They will contribute over 1,595 homes over the plan period. This total capacity has increased slightly from the original indicative figure in the Core Strategy (1,550) due to the conclusion of subsequent technical work to inform the site masterplans (see below).
- 5.11 The role of the Site Allocations document is to define:
- (a) precise site boundaries;
  - (b) the area to be released from the Green Belt (where this differs from the site boundary);
  - (c) detailed requirements in the form of development principles that will guide their development; and
  - (d) requirements with regard to delivery and phasing.
- 5.12 Policies LA1-LA6 of the Site Allocations document set out in more detail how the Local Allocations will be brought forward, with associated changes to the Policies Map shown in the accompanying map book.
- 5.13 The indicative spatial layout for LA3: land West of Hemel Hempstead is still being drawn up by the urban design consultants preparing the masterplan on behalf of the developers of the site. It is requested that the indicative spatial layout plan be agreed for inclusion within Policy LA3 of the Site Allocations document through delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration (as per recommendation 3 of this report). Such agreement would follow consideration of the indicative spatial layout for this site (and all other Local Allocations) by Cabinet as part of the report of the Local Allocations draft masterplans being considered at the July meeting.
- 5.14 The approach has been informed by a series of workshops and meetings held in May 2013, and, in the case of LA3: West Hemel Hempstead, by wider public consultation on 'Shaping the Masterplan' carried out in summer 2013. Where

required, further technical advice has also been sought from appropriate experts e.g. regarding schools, highways, archaeology and sustainable drainage. Regular meetings have also been held with the landowners / developers to discuss issues pertaining to their sites.

- 5.15 Core Strategy Policy CS3: Managing Selected Development Sites controls the timing of delivery, stating that the Local Allocations will be delivered from 2021. This approach is principally to ensure a steady release of housing land over the plan period, to encourage earlier opportunities for homes on previously developed land within the settlements, to boost supply over the latter half of the housing programme (where identified urban sites decline), and to maintain housing activity for the development industry and wider local economy. In the short to medium term, housing supply in the Borough is strong, without their contribution.
- 5.16 Following further consideration of local housing needs and the role the site will play in delivering other essential local infrastructure, the delivery of Local Allocation LA5: Icknield Way, west of Tring has been brought forward into Part 1 of the Schedule of Housing Proposals and Sites. Whilst no specific delivery date has been set, this will follow the formal release of the site from the Green Belt i.e. after adoption of the Site Allocations DPD. Further explanation for this earlier release date is set out within the Providing Homes and Community Services Background Issues Paper (June 2014).
- 5.17 The reasons for the earlier release of Local Allocation LA5 are set out in the Meeting Homes and Community Needs Background Issues Paper (June 2014). They include:
- the role the site will play in ensuring a robust 5 year housing land supply (for both bricks and mortar homes and Gypsy and Traveller pitches);
  - the benefits of the early delivery of the extension to the Icknield Way GEA;
  - the benefits of securing land for an extension to Tring cemetery and associated public open space; and
  - the lack of any infrastructure capacity issues that require site delivery to be delayed until later in the plan period.
- 5.18 The remaining Local Allocations (i.e. LA1-LA4 and LA6) are included in Part 2 of the Schedule of Housing Proposals and Sites and will bring forward completed homes from 2021 onwards. No detailed phasing of individual sites is warranted as they vary significantly in size, character, and location, and these factors will naturally regulate their release over time. However, there will need to be a lead in period in order to allow practical delivery from 2021. In practice, this will mean that applications will be received and determined in advance of 2021 and that site construction and works may actually take place ahead of the specified release date to enable occupation of new homes by 2021.
- 5.19 Masterplans are currently being drawn up for each Local Allocation, in conjunction with the landowners and/or developers of the sites. These masterplans do not form part of the formal Site Allocations document, but will take forward the development principles and provide further detailed information and guidance regarding how the sites should be developed. They will be a material planning consideration for future planning applications. Draft versions of the masterplans will be considered by Cabinet in July, with a view to public consultation on these running in parallel with that on the Site Allocations document.

- 5.20 For both the Site Allocations document and the associated masterplans, the forthcoming consultation is an opportunity for members of the public and organisations to comment on the detailed proposals for the Local Allocations, not the principle of their designation.

## **6. Duty to Co-Operate**

- 6.1 The 'duty to cooperate' was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with regard to 'strategic cross-boundary matters' when preparing document such as the Site Allocations. Whilst the duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree, local planning authorities are expected to make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on relevant matters before they submit their plans for examination.

Local planning authorities must demonstrate how they have complied with the duty at the independent examination of their plans. If a local planning authority cannot demonstrate that it has complied with the duty then the plan will not be able to proceed further in examination.

- 6.2 It is primarily the role of the Core Strategy, rather than the Site Allocations, to address strategic cross-boundary matters. A 'duty to co-operate statement' was prepared as part of the evidence submitted to the Core Strategy Examination and the Planning Inspector who oversaw this examination was satisfied that the duty had been met. It is recommended that a short factual update to the Core Strategy duty to co-operate statement is prepared to support submission of the Site Allocations DPD. Whilst it is not considered that there are any strategic cross-boundary issues that it is appropriate for the Site Allocations document to address, all statutory consultation bodies and relevant district and county councils have been contacted by letter / email to ask if there are any outstanding matters they would like to raise.
- 6.3 To date, three replies have been received. Bedford Borough Council has confirmed they have no comment at this stage. North Herts District Council has confirmed that the document doesn't raise any concerns regarding their district's needs. Chiltern District Council has requested a meeting with Officers to discuss the potential for Dacorum to help meet some of their housing and Gypsy and Traveller needs. The outcome of this meeting, and any further duty to co-operate issues raised, will be reported verbally at the meeting.

## **7. Next Steps**

### Agreement of Proposed Submission Documents

- 7.1 The Pre-Submission Site Allocations document has been assessed by the Council's independent sustainability consultants (C4S). They have suggested a few very minor changes to the document, largely to improve clarity, rather than as a result of any sustainability concerns. These changes have been incorporated into the document. The final version of the Sustainability Appraisal Report (June 2014) will be updated following Cabinet and be available in its final form for consideration by Full Council.
- 7.2 In order to enable limited changes to be made to the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document prior to consultation commencing, and to allow for supporting documents to be completed, it is requested that Cabinet delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Planning Development and Regeneration), in consultation with

the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, to finalise the Report of Consultation and Sustainability Appraisal and to make any factual and/or non-substantive changes and amendments to the Pre-Submission Site Allocations prior to consultation commencing.

Consultation arrangements:

- 7.3 The 2012 Planning Regulations require a 6 week representation stage for Pre-Submission versions of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) such as the Site Allocations document. It is intended to begin this consultation in early September, to avoid the peak summer holiday period.
- 7.4 As a minimum, consultation must follow the requirements set out within the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This includes:
- press release
  - formal notice in local paper(s)
  - Reference copies of documents available at deposit points and local libraries
  - Information available on the Council's website,
  - Letters / emails to all statutory consultation bodies, adjoining local planning authorities, town and parish councils and individuals and organisations on the Council's Local Plan database.
  - Articles in Dacorum Digest (if publication dates allow).
- 7.5 For the Pre-Submission stage of the Core Strategy, it was not considered appropriate to hold any public consultation events, such as drop-in sessions or manned exhibitions. This was due to the fact that (a) such events are not a requirement of the SCI for the Pre-Submission stage and (b) such events had been held at an interim, 'Draft Plan' stage.
- 7.6 As the Site Allocations DPD has progressed directly from issues and options consultation to Pre-Submission, there has been no previous opportunity for residents and interested parties to talk to Officers and Members about the Site Allocation documents in person. There is also expected to be considerable interest in the Local Allocations masterplans. It is therefore recommended that the consultation programme includes a number of manned exhibitions. Details will be agreed with the Portfolio Holder, but as a minimum it is suggested they will include an afternoon and evening session at:
- Hemel Hempstead Civic Centre
  - Berkhamsted Civic Centre
  - Victoria Hall, Tring
  - Memorial Hall, Bovingdon
  - A community centre near the West Hemel Hempstead (LA3) site i.e. Warners End or Chaulden.

Venues, dates and times will be dependent upon room availability.

- 7.7 Due to the very limited implications of the Site Allocations DPD for Markyate and Kings Langley, and the lack of a Local Allocation in these areas, manned exhibitions are not considered necessary. Arrangements will however be made to ensure residents have access to consultation material and can contact Officers if any questions do arise.

- 7.8 Prior to consultation commencing, it is also suggested that Officers invite representatives from organisations who have a particular interest in the content of the Site Allocations to meet to discuss the document and how they can best respond.

Agreements for Submission:

- 7.9 In addition to agreeing arrangements for representations to be received on the Pre-Submission Site Allocations, it is recommended that Cabinet also agrees the next stages in the process, to allow us to proceed effectively towards Examination. The first step is to draw up a Report of Representations. This will summarise the comments raised with regard to the Pre-Submission Site Allocations. If significant new objections are raised, these will be reported to Cabinet and Full Council. If no significant new issues are raised, Cabinet and Full Council are asked to delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) to submit the Site Allocations DPD for examination and, in consultation with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, agree minor changes to the document to resolve objections and improve clarity. It is normal to allow this degree of flexibility to enable the smooth running of the examination process and for the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable to be met.
- 7.10 The timetable within the LDS (see Appendix 3) assumes that Submission will take place in July 2015, with Examination following in October 2015. Following receipt of the Inspector's Report, Cabinet and Full Council will consider its findings. It is hoped that the final Site Allocations DPD can be adopted by the Council in early 2016.
- 7.11 As the masterplans for the Local Allocations are not part of the Site Allocations DPD itself, they are not governed by the same planning regulations and do not need to be submitted for independent Examination. All comments received on the masterplans will be considered and reported to Cabinet, together with any recommended changes to their content. It is hoped that the masterplans will be adopted by the Council at the same time as the final Site Allocations DPD.

## Appendix 1

### Site Allocations DPD - Summary of Content

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The structure and content of the Site Allocations broadly reflects that of the Core Strategy. Strategic Objectives from the Core Strategy are repeated at the beginning of each section. The content of the Core Strategy is not repeated, although necessary cross-references are made. Coverage of each section is outlined below:

**The Sustainable Development Strategy** – This section sets out the extent of key boundaries relating to the Green Belt, Rural Area, major developed sites in the Green Belt and individual towns and villages. These boundaries are important as they affect the approach to development that will be taken in different locations. In recognition of the increased role of ‘mixed use’ schemes within the Borough, a number of mixed use development sites are also identified. These will deliver a range of complementary uses as part of their development or redevelopment. Sites are also identified and protected for transport uses.

**Providing Home and Community Uses** – One of the main functions of the Site Allocations is to identify how specific sites will contribute towards delivery of the housing target, which is set out in the Core Strategy. Key housing sites are identified, detailed requirements set for the Local Allocations, and specific provision is also made for travelling communities. In order to ensure appropriate supporting infrastructure is provided to support residents and workers, a number of sites are specifically identified and protected for community and leisure uses and open land.

**Promoting Economic Prosperity** – A review of employment allocations and designations within the Borough has been carried out. This review has sought to ensure that sufficient good quality employment land is available to meet the Core Strategy’s employment targets (for offices and industrial, storage and distribution floorspace). The scope to reallocate some employment land for housing development has also been considered. This work has also sought to ensure the uses permitted in designated employment areas remains appropriate in terms of their character and current market demands and supports growth in local economic prosperity. Following changes in national policy on retail matters, the opportunity has been taken to update the Council’s approach to the main retail centres, and in particular to redefine the role and extent of protected shopping frontages within the Borough’s three town centres. The approach to the Borough’s more numerous local centres remains unchanged.

**Looking after the Environment** – Identifies designations relating to landscape, biodiversity and historic heritage that are illustrated on the Policies Map, updating these as necessary. Some designations are defined locally by the Council, in consultation with its advisers, whilst others reflect designations that are set at a national or European level.

**Place Strategies** – Individual strategies are set out in the Core Strategy for each of the Borough’s town and large villages and for the countryside. The Place Strategies within the Site Allocations set out how these place visions will be delivered by pulling together key allocations by settlement, rather than by use.

**Monitoring and Review** – provides further explanation (in addition to that set out in the Core Strategy) regarding how sites will be monitored and any issues with delivery addressed.

**Appendices** – provide more detailed information, including an updated schedule of superseded policies, a glossary and a revised housing trajectory.

**Appendix 2**

**Site Allocations  
Preparation  
Stages**



Stages of the Site Allocations

Date

Adoption	Feb 2016
Examination	Oct 2015
Submission Stage	July 2015
Publication of and representation on Pre-Submission	Sept 2014
Adoption of Core Strategy*	Sept 2013
“Shaping the Masterplan” consultation on Local Allocation LA3	July 2013
Stakeholder Workshops and meetings on Local Allocations LA1-6	May 2013
Consultation Report on Issues & Options Paper (Nov 2006-Feb 2007) – Volume 1	Oct 2010
Supplementary Issues and Options Gypsy and Traveller Consultation	Dec 2008
Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) Working Note on Supplementary Issues and Options	Dec 2008
Supplementary Issues & Options Consultation	Nov-Dec 2008
Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment Working Note on Supplementary Issues and Options	Dec 2006
Issues & Options Consultation	Nov-Dec 2006
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	Feb 2006

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\*Note: Please see Figure 2 in Core Strategy for stages in the preparation of that document.

**Extract from Local Development Scheme (February 2014) - Programme of Development Document Production**

SUBJECT	2014												2015												2016												2017											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
▼ ▲ = 3 year period 2014/17			▼																																				▼									
<b>Development Plan Documents</b>																																																
Site Allocations								P										S		E																												
Development Management Policies								I												P										S		E		A														
Single Local Plan (incorporating Partial Review)																																							S			E				A		
East Hemel Hempstead Action Plan																																																
Proposals Map - Updating																																																

**Key:**

- I - Issues and options consultation (consultation stage)
- P - Pre-Submission / Proposed Submission consultation (representations stage)
- S - Submission of plan and associated documents to Secretary of State
- E - Examination of plan by the Planning Inspectorate
- A - Adoption of plan by the Council

**Notes:**

- The Core Strategy was adopted in September 2013 and so is not shown on this programme
- All timings are subject to the programming of Cabinet and Full Council meetings and the availability of Planning Inspectors to conduct the Examinations.
- The timetable will be subject to review through the Annual Monitoring Report and any necessary changes to programming made.