

1: INTRODUCTION TO PLACES

The towns, large villages and the countryside within the Borough have different qualities which we recognise and different opportunities for use. The place strategies (for each town, large village and countryside), which follow, are based on the characteristics of and key issues facing each place and a vision of what the place will be like in 2031. We have identified a small number of development options for each place and outlined how the vision can be achieved.

The consideration of each place follows a similar structure:

- Characteristics;
- Vision;
- Issues;
- Level of development and change to 2031;
- Looking after the environment;
- Social and personal welfare;
- Economic prosperity;
- Access.

The place strategy work is based on:

- 1) extensive evidence from technical studies undertaken for the Council¹; and
- 2) consultation with the local community and other relevant parties.

This included a workshop for each place in 2008 with representatives from the local community and officers from Dacorum Borough and Hertfordshire County Councils. The attendees discussed the key issues for their places and their responses have helped to inform the draft place strategies.

We have considered how the population of the Borough will change and grow over the next 22 years to 2031. We have looked at the Borough as a whole, each settlement individually and the countryside. Details of the data, assumptions and techniques used for this work can be found in the document Population: Background Note to the Core Strategy

¹ 'A Guide to the Evidence Base' provides summaries of the relevant conclusions of each of the technical studies for each of the places

There are significant development needs which we cannot ignore. The majority of this growth will be at Hemel Hempstead, although we are uncertain about the scale. It is reasonable to expect the rest of the borough to accommodate some change. Indeed, towns and villages need some development to remain vibrant and to provide homes for existing residents.

Education is a particular issue and advice on school capacities is evolving. We are taking a long term view, although it is important to plan the rate at which new housing is built. It is important to note that a school is referred to as being at capacity when 90 – 100% of places are filled; therefore the school is not necessarily “full”.