



**AGENDA ITEM: \*\***

**SUMMARY**

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>22 July 2014</b>
<b>PART:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Dacorum Local Planning Framework - Local Allocation master plans</b>
Contact:	<p>Cllr Andrew Williams, 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</p> <p>Sarah Churchard – Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p>
Purpose of report:	To seek agreement of the content of the draft master plans for the Local Allocations LA1 to LA6 identified in the Core Strategy, and arrangements for consultation.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note key issues arising from work on the master plans.</li> <li>2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director (Planning Development and Regeneration) in consultation with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to finalise the master plans, and to make any factual or non-substantive changes and amendments to the Local Allocation master plans prior to consultation commencing.</li> <li>3. Agree the use of a single indicative layout showing Option 2 for LA5 West of Tring, as shown in the Site Allocations DPD, for inclusion in the consultation draft and amend the draft master plan accordingly.</li> <li>4. Approve the Local Allocation master plans for publication and consultation alongside the recently agreed Pre-Submission Site Allocations Development Plan Document.</li> <li>5. Approve the use of the draft Local Allocation master plans as a</li> </ol>

	<p>material consideration in the determination of planning applications until superseded by the final adopted versions.</p>
<p>Corporate objectives:</p>	<p>The Site Allocations DPD is part of the Council's Local Planning Framework and the Local Allocations contribute to the overall housing target and strategy. Overall, the LPF 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 at the Local Allocation sites that promote security and safe access.</li> <li>• <i>Community Capacity:</i> e.g. provide certainty to local communities regarding the proposed development at each Allocation</li> <li>• <i>Affordable housing:</i> e.g. sets the practical housing numbers for each site 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 the Local Allocations, with a wider aim of supporting nearby Local Centres and providing financial contributions towards education and community services</li> </ul>
<p>Financial/ Value for Money Implications:</p>	<p>The process of preparing the Local Allocation master plans as part of the Site Allocations DPD 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. The financial impact of preparing master plans has been significantly reduced through joint working with site boundaries and developers.</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>Risk Implications:</p>	<p>A full risk assessment has been carried out as part of the PID for the Local Planning Framework, which includes the Local Allocations. 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 master plans additional risks would arise, as there would be a lack of detail upon which to base discussions on future planning applications and provide clear advice re issues such as phasing and infrastructure delivery.</p>
<p>Equalities Implications:</p>	<p>Equality Impact Assessment carried out for the Core Strategy which sets the framework for the Site Allocations DPD and the master plans. 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</p>

	<p>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, and which covers the Local Allocation sites, found no specific issues with regards to disability, gender or ethnic minority.</p>										
Health and Safety Implications:	<p>They are included in the planning issues covered by the Site Allocations and the technical work for the master plans. 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>										
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer:</p>										
Consultees:	<p>Consultation on the Site Allocations DPD and the master plans to date has been carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), adopted by the Council in June 2006.</p> <p>Advice from key stakeholders, such as the Local Education Authority, Thames Water and the local Highway Authority, has been sought where appropriate. Feedback on the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan has also been significant in developing a clear 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 and have informed the content of the master plans.</p> <p>To help inform the master plans, workshops and/or meetings with local residents and other stakeholders were held in May 2013. For LA3, this was followed by public consultation (including a manned exhibition) in Jul 2013, to seek feedback on development principles for the site.</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 master plans. 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>										
Abbreviations:	<table> <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> </table>	DPD	Development Plan Document	SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	LDS	Local Development Scheme	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
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	<p>InDP            Infrastructure Delivery Plan  SPD             Supplementary Planning Document  LPF             Local Planning Framework  CIL             Community Infrastructure Levy</p>
<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>• Core Strategy (adopted September 2013)</li> <li>• Schedule of Site Appraisals (2006 and 2008)</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 Master plan' 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> <li>– Looking After the Environment</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <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>

## **BACKGROUND**

### **1.0 The role and status of the master plans**

- 1.1 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) adopted in September 2013 identified six sites known as Local Allocations to be released from the Green Belt that will contribute towards meeting the Borough's housing target over the course of the Plan.
- 1.2 The forthcoming Site Allocations DPD forms the next part of the local planning framework (LPF) following the adoptions of the Core Strategy. The Pre-Submission version of the Site Allocations document was recommended by Cabinet in June 2014 to Full Council in July for approval for publication and consultation. The policies in the Core Strategy and Site Allocations provide a framework for the master plans to elaborate on.
- 1.3 The master plans are to sit alongside the Site Allocations DPD, and will have weight in determining planning applications on the sites. They will not be part of the statutory development plan, but will be endorsed by the Council when the Site Allocations DPD is finally adopted. It is intended that comments will be invited on the master plans as part of the wide consultation on the Site Allocations document. It is the role of the Site Allocations DPD itself to make the necessary changes to the Green Belt that will enable these sites to be brought forward for development.
- 1.4 As it is not intended that the master plans will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), they are not subject to the Sustainability Appraisal process. However the sites and options for Local Allocations have already been assessed through both the Core Strategy DPD and Site Allocations DPD Sustainability Appraisal process.
- 1.5 The master plans are strategic documents, and there is one for each of the six Local Allocations, including LA1 Marchmont Farm; LA2 Old Town; LA3 West Hemel Hempstead; LA4 Hanburys and The Old Orchard; LA5 West of Tring; and LA6 Bovingdon. The master plans are not intended to go into great detail regarding the design and form of development at each site due to the need for flexibility in light of the long timescales involved.
- 1.6 The role of the master plans is to:
  1. elaborate on the development principles that will guide their development;
  2. show how these principles could be delivered through an indicative spatial layout;
  3. clarify arrangements for delivery and phasing;
  4. provide more explicit advice regarding infrastructure contributions; and
  5. provide a mechanism for obtaining public feedback on the future shape of the sites.

### **2.0 Consultation and engagement**

- 2.1 Previous consultation on the Local Allocations goes back to public consultation on the Core Strategy where the principle of allocating the six sites for housing (and associated development) was established. The Local Allocations have been subject to significant consultation as part of bringing forward the Core Strategy. They have been tested and supported at Examination by an independent Planning Inspector.

- 2.2 The approach to the master plans has been informed by a series of workshops and meetings on each Local Allocation 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. The draft master plans reflect feedback received.
- 2.3 Separate meetings with relevant community groups and town and parish councils (Berkhamsted Town Council, Tring Town Council and Grovehill Futures) have helped to increase understanding of site constraints, opportunities and particular issues of concern. In respect of LA1, work has also been carried out with the neighbourhood forum, Grovehill Futures, on the neighbourhood plan to help ensure consistency. This group will also benefit from increased Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions when the Neighbourhood Plan is in place, which can be used to assist the regeneration of Henry Wells Square.
- 2.4 Regular meetings have also been held with the landowners and developers to discuss issues pertaining to their sites over the last two years. Statements of Common Ground were drawn up in the initial stages to support their identification in the Core Strategy, and agreement on key issues has been sought when finalising the master plans. This process of collaboration is very important as it helps ensure the plans are demonstrably deliverable and in compliance with national and local policy.
- 2.5 Where required, further technical advice has also been sought from appropriate experts, regarding schools, highways, archaeology and sustainable drainage. This has involved, where appropriate, gaining opinions on wording and content of the plans from organisations such as the local Highway Authority, the local education authority, the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), and NHS Hertfordshire, as appropriate.
- 2.6 A Site Allocations Task and Finish Group was set up in early 2014 to seek informal views of Members on the approach to each section of the Site Allocations document, which also included discussion on each of the Local Allocations and the content of the associated master plans. For LA2 and LA5 two scenarios were presented to Members and preferences expressed for each. In particular on LA2 one option was selected for taking forward to public consultation. Work has been undertaken since on LA5 then to refine these options in the written text and spatial layouts of the master plans.
- 2.7 It is recommended that consultation on the draft master plans is undertaken at the same time as the statutory period of consultation for the Pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD. This will be for a period of six weeks from September. There will be staffed exhibitions in the main settlements, aimed particularly at areas where there are Local Allocations. Questionnaires will be available on paper and in online format. The extensive LPF database will be used to notify people and organisations directly. This database includes names and addresses of everyone previously signed a petition or made representations on the sites in the past. Consultation will also be advertised through Dacorum Digest, a press release and the Council's website. Paper copies of material are able to be requested and all material will be available on the Council's website, from Civic Centres, and in Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, and other local libraries.

### 3.0 Key Issues

#### Housing capacities

- 3.1 The principle of releasing the sites for housing development, and an estimate of site capacities the master plans was established through the Core Strategy. The Local Allocations will contribute significantly to the housing supply in the Borough in order to meet the housing target to 2031. The Core Strategy was found sound by the Planning Inspectorate, and adopted by Council in September 2013. Furthermore, the Council successfully defended a legal challenge against the Core Strategy, meaning that the approach to Site Allocations and the supporting master plans is appropriate.
- 3.2 Capacity estimates in the Core Strategy were based on prevailing densities and the area of the site and informed by technical work support of the Local Allocations in the Core Strategy. Following more detailed technical work on the layout of the site and inclusion of necessary infrastructure, several of the sites housing numbers are subsequently recommended to be adjusted. Overall this does marginally increase the level of housing supply proposed across the Local Allocations, although the number of homes expected to be declined by the smallest of the sites (Hanburys and The Old Orchard in Shootersway, Berkhamsted) will decrease slightly.
- 3.3 The Core Strategy estimated a total supply of homes from Local Allocations to be 1,550. Table 1 shows the change in the number of homes, which in some cases is shown as a range:

<b>Local Allocation</b>	<b>Indicative number of homes estimated in the Core Strategy</b>	<b>Number of homes proposed through the Site Allocations and master plans</b>
LA1 Marchmont Farm	Around 300 new homes	300-350 new homes
LA2 Old Town	Around 80 new homes	No change
LA3 West Hemel Hempstead	Up to 900 new homes	No change
LA4 Hanburys and The Old Orchard, Berkhamsted	Around 60 new homes	40 new homes
LA5 Land to the West of Tring	Around 150 new homes	180-200 new homes
LA6 Bovington	Around 60 new homes	No change
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,550 new homes</b>	<b>Over 1,595 new homes</b> ( <i>taking the mid-point of each range</i> )

- 3.4 The number of new homes proposed through the Site Allocations DPD works together with the phasing requirements in the housing programme. Further information can be found in Section 6 of the Site Allocations DPD. This was a matter raised informally with Members at the Task and Finish group in early 2014. There was broad consensus that the variation in housing numbers was more appropriate at this point in time as part of the work for the master plans. This is an upfront approach, to ensure that public consultation can take place prior to planning applications being made with a change in housing numbers.

#### Gypsy and traveller pitches

- 3.5 It is a requirement that local planning authorities plan for all types of housing including pitches for gypsies and travellers. Policy CS22 in the Core Strategy 2013 establishes principles by which to determine whether new sites are suitable or not. Policy F of the Government's guidance on 'Planning for traveller sites' states that LPAs '*should consider...including traveller sites suitable for mixed residential and business uses*'<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.6 Each of the Local Allocation sites has been assessed for its suitability in accommodating pitches. Much of the Borough is Green Belt or Rural Area, in which traveller sites are classified as 'inappropriate development' (NPPF). This limits the options for the location of new pitches. Highways capacity and accessibility have also been considerations in assessing sites. The design of sites, the access, landscaping and the facilities are important factors, and will be considered in detail at the planning application stage.
- 3.7 The Site Allocations DPD proposes that a number of pitches are incorporated in the proposals for the Local Allocations, as per the table below. This takes account of the minimum number of pitches required in Dacorum up to 2031, and would be phased in line with the housing programme. The master plans take forward this requirement and show the broad location for these pitches within the sites.

<b>Local Allocation</b>	<b>Number of pitches</b>
LA1 Marchmont Farm	5
LA3 West Hemel Hempstead	7
LA5 West of Tring	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

### Highways

- 3.8 Master plans are supported by additional technical work commissioned by the landowners and/or the Council. The local Highway Authority at the County Council has been involved in each of the master plans, ensuring that sufficient consideration has been given to highway matters. The Highway Authority is satisfied that the proposed access points are capable of supporting the level of development proposed.
- 3.9 There has also been consultation with the Passenger Transport Unit at the County Council, and consideration given to the inclusion of pedestrian and cycle routes between the site and existing neighbourhoods.
- 3.10 Representatives from the Highway Authority have attended meetings with developers and landowners, and subsequently provided comments on spatial layouts and transport options. The proposed access arrangements at each of the Local Allocations are shown in the Map Book that accompanies the Site Allocations DPD as specific transport proposals, sites and schemes.

### Green Belt and landscaping

- 3.11 The impact of new development at the Local Allocation must be managed appropriately to limit the impact on the wider countryside and setting of the towns. It should be noted that the sites will become part of the settlement they adjoin

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012)



when the Site Allocations DPD is adopted. Each site will be treated as open land in the interim, until the sites have been developed for their allocated uses

- 3.12 A common feature of the master plans is a proposed landscape buffer around each site, consisting of significant trees and vegetation in order to provide a defensible boundary, as a physical feature to each town for the future. The importance of the landscaping at each Local Allocation will relate to:
- the topography of the site and how visible it is from a distance;
  - any existing landscape and tree features already at the site;
  - the scale of development proposed; and
  - any existing defensible boundaries.
- 3.13 By way of an example, LA6 at Bovingdon is one of the smallest Local Allocations and already benefits from a logical and defensible boundary with Molyneux Avenue. LA4 at Berkhamsted has a less clear boundary on one side, meaning that a substantial landscape buffer is proposed; together with a building line that creates a 'soft edge' to the Green Belt. LA1 also does not benefit from an existing physical boundary, but the ridge line of the topography to the north of the site creates a natural 'stop' to the urban extension. This is the current boundary of the field defined by vegetation along the ridge, but will be enhanced as part of the master plan. Further explanation regarding the treatment of the new Green Belt boundaries is set out in individual master plans.

#### Delivery and timing

- 3.14 As identified in the Core Strategy Policy CS3: Managing Selected Development Sites, there are controls on the timing of delivery of the Local Allocations. This states that the Local Allocations will be delivered from 2021 unless certain specified criteria are met. 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.
- 3.15 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, meaning that the site can be delivered earlier. 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).
- 3.16 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.
- 3.17 The remaining Local Allocations (i.e. LA1 to 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.
- 3.18 This matter is key to the timely delivery of new housing in the Borough and maintaining a readily available five-year supply, which is necessary to ensure that both housing needs are met, and that the Council can help ensure that its selected sites are built out – and speculative proposals that sit outside the local planning framework can be resisted effectively.

#### **4.0 Local Allocations – Key Issues**

- 4.1 A summary of the key issues for each site is set out below. See the Site Allocation policies LA1 to LA6 for the full planning and infrastructure requirements agreed by the Council each site.

##### LA1 Marchmont Farm in Hemel Hempstead

- 4.2 The primary access to the site will be via the new road junction off the Link Road (the A4147). Initial transport assessments have determined that this is the most appropriate location compared to alternative options. There are no other vehicular access points to the site that would be feasible. It is also been demonstrated that this can accommodate the development of the scale proposed of 300-350 units. There will need to be highway works in relation to a new junction on Link Road to serve the new development. This new junction will also have the additional benefits of slowing traffic speeds on the Link Road, and enabling improved pedestrian and cycle crossings across the A4147.
- 4.3 Nevertheless, connected and enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes into the existing housing area at Grovehill West and along Margaret Lloyd Park will be implemented to connect the new development with the rest of Grovehill. There are also requirements for the site to provide for sustainable transport facilities, such as the ability for buses to enter the site and provision for bus stops.
- 4.4 A change is proposed at LA1 in relation to the overall number of homes. The Core Strategy estimated ‘around 300’ and 300 to 350 homes are now proposed, as discussed previously in this report. This figure has been tested against other issues at the site, such as highway capacity, financial contributions, impact on local services, impact on spatial layout, density of homes and building heights. This range has been established as the lower and upper extents of the number of homes at LA1. Part of the housing requirement also relates to the provision of 5 travellers pitches, which will follow the standards set out in the Government’s guidance<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Good Practice Guide (2008)

### LA2 Old Town in Hemel Hempstead

- 4.5 The main issue for LA2 is how to achieve a high quality design on a steeply sloping site in close proximity to the Conservation Area at the Old Town. The balance at this site is between the siting the open space to protect the wider landscape, protecting significant trees, providing for the required number of homes, and deciding on the height of buildings. The relationship of the new development to the Old Town Conservation Area is also very important, and advice has been sought from the Conservation and Design Team at the Council.
- 4.6 Task and Finish Group Members advised that siting the open space in order to protect the landscape, whilst slightly increasing the density of housing and building heights, would be a reasonable compromise and approach to the spatial layout of the site. There was a preference for this option rather than for a layout which would have a lower density of housing, with buildings not higher than 2 storeys, but with less open space. The proposed spatial layout relates to a mix of 2 and 3 storey buildings, meaning a slightly higher housing density, and open space located to the top of the hill adjacent to The Bounce and Townsend. This also further protects the belt of trees located at the top of the hill, which local residents have always been keen to retain.

### LA3 West Hemel Hempstead

- 4.7 This Local Allocation is the largest in terms of site area, and number of homes proposed. By virtue of its size and constraints, it has given rise to a number of complexities which Officers have been working through with the landowners and developers over the last year or so. The proposed spatial layout for this site has been finalised for this Cabinet meeting in accordance with Recommendation 3 of the 24<sup>th</sup> June Cabinet Report on the Site Allocations DPD.
- 4.8 The potential access points to the site have been a matter for significant discussion given existing road infrastructure and the proposed size of the development. The local Highway Authority have advised on technical work undertaken for the master plan and will continue to provide support for this work. Primary highway access points will be from Long Chaulden and The Avenue. There will be incorporation of a bus route within the site including new bus stops, and connected and enhanced pedestrian and cycle links between new and existing neighbourhoods via the adjoining culs-de-sac.
- 4.9 The site as a whole will provide for significant proportion of open space above the standard set out in Appendix 6 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan. There will be a provision of approximately 10-11 hectares of open space as shown in the indicative spatial layout for LA3. Open space includes significant wildlife corridors, landscaping, formal open space, play areas and playing fields.
- 4.10 The site will incorporate a central focus with a community square with a hall, shop and other commercial spaces. There will be a new 2 form entry primary school and support for the new GP provision, whether in the form of an off-site extension to Parkwood Surgery, provision of an on-site satellite surgery for Parkwood, or accommodation for a new GP practice on-site. This follows consultation with NHS Hertfordshire and the Local Education Authority. In addition, 7 traveller pitches will also be provided in accordance with the Pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD.

4.11 The site is outside of any flood plains, but surface water drainage is of local concern. A flood risk assessment will be required as part of the planning application for the site. In addition, sustainable drainage systems will also need to be incorporated into the proposals in order to manage surface water quality and capacity, and surface water runoff. Technical work regarding this issue has already been carried out by the developer and reflected in the spatial layout plan.

#### LA4 Hanburys and The Old Orchard, Shootersway in Berkhamsted

4.12 This site is the smallest of the Local Allocations. Following additional technical work undertaken for the site and the proposed development, the number of homes to be built here will decrease from the estimated capacity in the Core Strategy from 60 to 40 homes. There are a number of constraints at the site that restricts the capacity, including the presence of significant trees at the site. A reduction in the density will also help it better fit with the character of surrounding housing.

4.13 There will be one access point to the site from Shootersway, which will be suitable to support this development. Highway improvements will also be sought for the junction with Kingshill Way, which has also been identified as a Transport Proposal in the Site Allocations DPD. The local Highway Authority will be consulted on the application.

4.14 There is significant tree coverage in the centre of the site and around the perimeter of the site. An arboricultural assessment has already been undertaken where the most valuable and significant trees are located. This has had an impact on the capacity that can be delivered, but can be used to provide an element of open space and landscaping that enhances the 'soft edge' to the Green Belt, creates a defensible boundary, and meet the objectives of wider landscape aims.

4.15 There are no statutory or local environmental designations affecting the site, although appropriate assessments and mitigation will be required with the planning application. The Council's Ecology advisor from the County Council has provided initial advice and will also be a consultee for the master plan and subsequent application.

#### LA5 West of Tring

4.16 The main change relating to LA5 since the Core Strategy was adopted is regarding the timing of delivery of the site. As explained above, the site can be delivered in Part 1 of the housing programme, so before 2021. This change is in order to address the level of housing supply in Tring over the next 5 years, as well as the provision of the employment proposal, five traveller pitches with its own access point, and the cemetery extension.

4.17 With regards to the extension of Tring Cemetery there are two options:

Option 1 – The existing site could be extended in its current position adjacent to the existing urban area. There are operational disadvantages with regards to vehicular access. In addition, the developer is not willing to provide the full amount required for the timescales that cemeteries are planned for. Only half of the required need would be met; or

Option 2 – A larger extension to the cemetery could be provided outside of the part to be removed from the Green Belt and within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This would meet the longer term needs of cemetery

space, and no other sites would be required near Tring for the next 100 years. The Council's cemetery services support the provision of a larger site, although there would also be some operational disadvantages in the two sites being separate.

- 4.18 Cemetery uses are appropriate uses in the Green Belt, in line with paragraph 89 of the NPPF. Consideration also needs to be given to the landscape and the setting of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Aylesbury Vale District lies adjacent to this site and this District Council has been notified of these options.
- 4.19 It is recommended that Members agree an approach to public consultation on the matter of the cemetery. At the Task and Finish group, Members advised it was preferable that both options were consulted on. However, following further technical work and consultation with the Council's cemetery services, Officers recommend that Option 2 is consulted on. This is because the Cemetery Manager has subsequently advised that his clear preference is for a larger cemetery extension to the west of the housing site. Option 2 is the spatial layout shown in the Pre-Submission Site Allocations DPD, which has been agreed by Cabinet and Full Council.
- 4.20 Similarly to the other Local Allocation consultation has been undertaken with the local Highway Authority. The primary access points to the site will be from Aylesbury Road and Icknield Way. The employment extension is on the northern side will share the new access from Icknield Way. The cemetery extension and traveller pitches would have separate vehicular access from Aylesbury Road.

#### LA6 Chesham Road and Molyneaux Avenue in Bovingdon

- 4.21 The main constraint at LA6 is the balancing pond. As with other large sites there is the requirement to assess flood risk issues and plan for sustainable drainage. Sustainable drainage aims to maintain the current level of surface water drainage with the increased level of hard standing and surface water runoff. Careful consideration will be given to the role of the pond, and the impact of future development on the capacity and quality of surface water. The Lead Local Flood Authority at the County Council and the Environment Agency will be involved in this process during planning application stage.
- 4.22 The local Highway Authority has agreed that the primary access will be from Molyneaux Avenue. There is scope for a few individual properties to be accessed directly from Chesham Road. Specific technical work is to be undertaken at the time of the planning application, when a more precise layout is drawn up. There will also be pedestrian and cycle links from the site into the surrounding residential area and to improve links to the village centre.

## **5.0 Next steps**

- 5.1 All six master plans have been drawn up in partnership between the Council, the landowners and the developers in consultation with relevant stakeholders appropriate for this strategic level.
- 5.2 In order to enable limited changes to be made to the Local Allocation master plans prior to consultation commencing, 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 master plans

and to make any factual and/or non-substantive changes and amendments prior to consultation commencing.

### Consultation

- 5.3 The 2012 Planning Regulations require a six 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 from September, to avoid the peak summer holiday period.
- 5.4 As the master plans for the Local Allocations are not part of the Site Allocations DPD itself, they are not governed by the same planning regulations. However it is logical to run consultation on both at the same time. All comments received on the master plans will be considered and reported to Cabinet, together with any recommended changes to their content. The timetable within the LDS assumes that submission of the Site Allocations DPD will take place in July 2015 with adoption by the Council in early 2016. It is hoped that the master plans will be adopted by the Council at the same time as the adoption of the final Site Allocations DPD.
- 5.5 As with the programme for the Site Allocations document, it is recommended that the consultation 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 (or suitable alternative) in Tring
  - Memorial Hall (or suitable alternative) in Bovington
  - 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.

### Adoption

- 5.6 When the master plans are finally adopted, they will be used alongside relevant DPD and Local Plan policies to determine planning applications. In the interim it is recommended that the draft master plans are approved as a material consideration. This will enable the master plans to be used to support the Council's approach to each site in the event there are speculative applications for any of the sites in advance of their specified delivery dates.

Electronic copies of the master plans themselves are available on the Committee Meeting page of the Council's website at <http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/meetings-minutes-and-agendas/events/2014/07/22/cabinet/cabinet>; and hard copies available for Members to view in the Members' room at the Civic Centre. Contact Sarah Churchard in the Strategic Planning and Regeneration team for further information, or if you are not able to view the master plans.