

# 1. Summary of the Strategy

- 1.1 The purpose of the Core Strategy is to anticipate and manage change in Dacorum over the years to 2031. It needs to balance the need for new development and infrastructure against the need to maintain the environmental assets and unique character of the borough. It is also one of the key tools to help maximise and co-ordinate new investment in Dacorum and help promote economic regeneration.
- 1.2 Dacorum is an attractive borough, with a largely affluent, healthy and mobile population. However, when looking ahead there are a number of challenges to face:

<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <p><b>How to achieve:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Balanced and sustainable growth</li> <li>2. A stronger role for Maylands Business Park</li> <li>3. The regeneration of Hemel Hempstead town centre</li> <li>4. Strong, inclusive communities</li> <li>5. A resilient natural environment</li> <li>6. A high quality and sustainable built environment</li> </ol>
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- 1.3 In order to meet these challenges, the Core Strategy sets out a vision of what the borough should be like in 2031. Strategic Objectives set out how this vision will be realised. They include objectives for the central themes of:
- Strengthening Economic Prosperity
  - Providing Homes and Community Services; and
  - Looking After the Environment.

## **How much growth and change there will be within the borough**

- 1.4 An average of 430 new homes will be provided within the Borough each year, for the plan period (2006-2031). This equates to a total of 10,750 homes. The actual level of delivery is expected to be slightly higher, if 'windfall' sites are taken into account for the whole plan period (see Table 8).
- 1.5 The approach to providing homes is to optimise the use of land within defined settlements, with the addition of some 'Local Allocations.' Local allocations are modest extensions to existing settlements which will help meet local housing and infrastructure needs. The release of these sites will be carefully phased.
- 1.6 In addition to new homes, an additional 131,000 sq m (net) of office floorspace will be provided. There will be no net loss of industrial, storage and distribution floorspace over the plan period. This will help deliver about 10,000 new jobs by 2031 and support the drive towards achieving full employment within the borough.

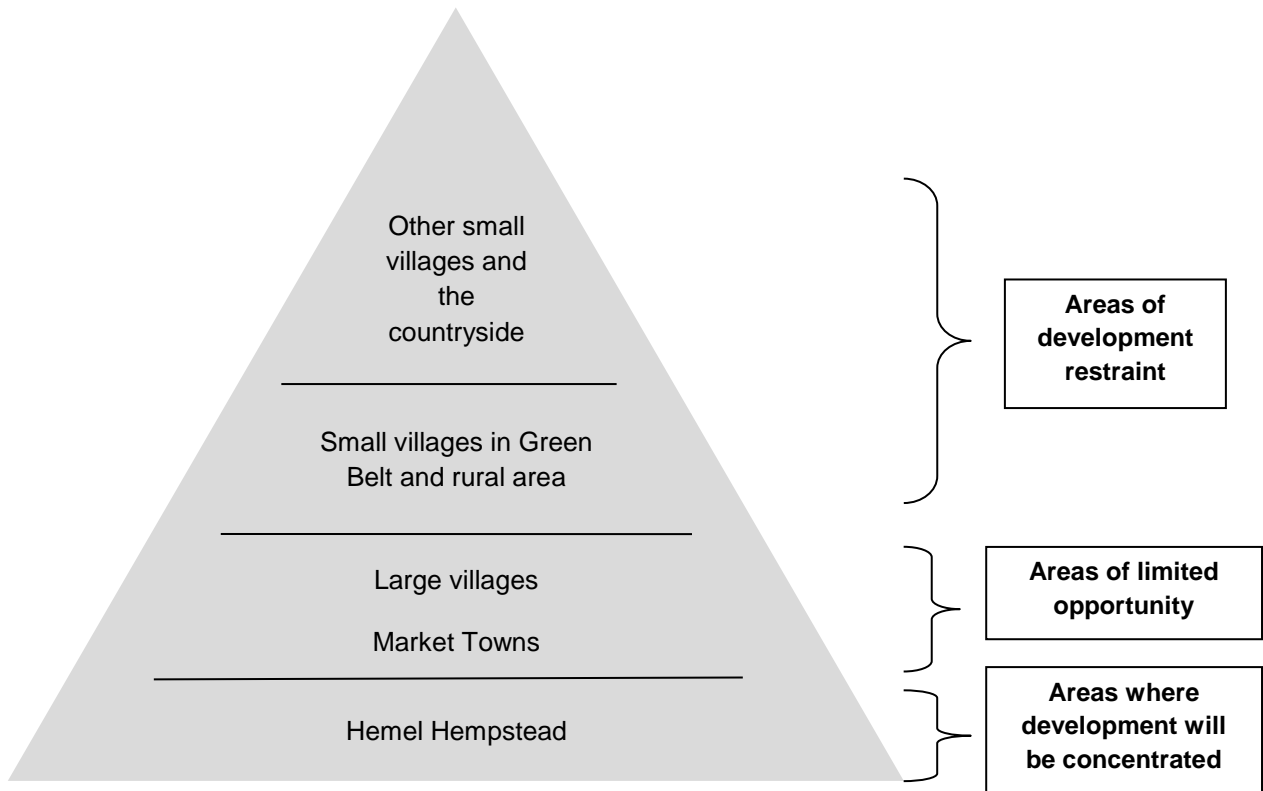
Supporting infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and leisure facilities will also be provided, together with improvements to the local transport network.

- 1.7 The emphasis is upon sustainable growth which links social and economic objectives and balances these with environmental considerations.

**Where change will be focussed within the borough**

- 1.8 The Key Diagram (Map 1) shows where these changes are expected to happen. These changes will be managed through a ‘settlement hierarchy’ which identifies areas which will be the focus for development and areas which will be subject to greater development restraint.

The Settlement Hierarchy



- 1.9 Further detail about the development strategy for each town and large village and the wider countryside is set out in the ‘Place Strategies’ (Sections 19 to 26). Each strategy includes a local vision and objectives, which express specific aspirations for these places. The visions are framed in the context of what each place will be like in 2031.

## The place where development will be concentrated

### 1. Hemel Hempstead

1.10 Hemel Hempstead will be the Main Centre for Development and Change in the borough and the focus for new homes, jobs and infrastructure. This will include:

- **New homes.** Around 8,800 new homes will be provided in the town. This includes local allocations at West Hemel Hempstead, Marchmont Farm and the Old Town. 35% of all new homes will normally be made available at affordable prices or rents.
- **New jobs.** A significant proportion of the anticipated new employment floorspace will be delivered in the town over the lifetime of this strategy. The Maylands Business Park will be the focus for this growth.
- **New services and facilities.** New leisure and cultural facilities and a cemetery will be provided. Hertfordshire County Council has also advised that several new primary schools will be needed to serve both the new and existing population of the town.
- **New infrastructure.** Public transport links between Maylands Business Park, the town centre and Hemel Hempstead railway station will be improved.

1.11 Within Hemel Hempstead four areas have been identified for particular attention:

#### (a) Town Centre

The regeneration and refurbishment of the town centre will continue, building on its distinctive identity through improvements to the public realm. This will include provision of around 1,800 new homes, a local general hospital, a primary school, a new supermarket and community facilities.

#### (b) East Hemel Hempstead (Maylands Business Park)

Maylands Business Park will be promoted as a sub-regional business centre. It will be the focus for high quality, energy efficient development, with improved access to open space and local services and facilities. Approximately 1,000 new homes, a primary school and a significant amount of new office floorspace will be developed. The delivery of some facilities, perhaps Park and Ride and a new sports ground, may require extending into St Albans District, on land between the town and the M1.

#### (c) Neighbourhood Centres

The New Town neighbourhood structure will be reinforced and enhanced, and work will continue to regenerate, reinvigorate and “green” neighbourhood centres.

**(d) Green Spaces**

The network of open land will be maintained. Public open spaces will be improved, particularly the greenspace in the Two Waters area of the town.

- 1.12 The town centre and Maylands Business Park are designated as Key Regeneration Areas.

**Places of limited opportunity**

**2. Market Towns**

- 1.13 A 'second tier' of market towns will meet their local housing needs and provide employment and services for local and adjacent communities.

- a) **Berkhamsted** – will have around 1,180 new homes. This includes a local allocation at Hanburys, Shootersway and the strategic site at Durrants Lane/Shootersway (Egerton Rothesay School), which will provide new homes, improvement to the school and additional playing pitches. Two 'education zones' have also been identified on the edge of the town to ensure the future primary age schooling needs are met. Existing employment land will be retained.
- b) **Tring** – will have around 480 new homes. This includes a local allocation at West Tring to provide new homes, an extension to the Icknield Way General Employment Area and new open space. An extension of Tring School will be accommodated.

**3. Large Villages**

- 1.14 The following villages have been identified as areas where limited development is appropriate to ensure population stability.

- a) **Markyate** – will have around 200 new homes. 90 of these will be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Hicks Road General Employment Area, together with a new doctor's surgery, public space, employment premises and other commercial uses.
- b) **Bovingdon** – will have around 130 new homes. This includes a local allocation north of Chesham Road to provide new homes and open space. Existing employment uses such as the Prison and Brickworks will be protected. A long-term solution to parking issues in the village centre will continue to be sought.
- c) **Kings Langley** – will have around 110 new homes and see improvements to school facilities. Its growth will complement proposals to the east of the Grand Union Canal in Three Rivers District.

## **Areas of development restraint**

- 1.15 In rural areas and the urban fringe the priority is to maintain existing urban boundaries and protect the character of the smaller villages and the wider countryside.

### **4. Small Villages within the Green Belt and Rural Area**

- 1.16 Significant environmental constraints apply in this 'fourth tier' of small villages and their rural character will continue to be protected. Some small villages are identified as being important for local services and facilities. Local affordable housing and other very limited development will help sustain the villages, i.e.:

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| a) Chipperfield | e) Aldbury      |
| b) Flamstead    | f) Long Marston |
| c) Potten End   | g) Wilstone     |
| d) Wigginton    |                 |

### **5. Other small settlements and the wider countryside**

- 1.17 The approach in other small settlements and the wider countryside is to:
- a) maintain the openness of the areas of the borough designated as Green Belt or Rural Area;
  - b) protect and enhance both the natural and historic landscape character;
  - c) protect and extend the identified network of green infrastructure within and outside settlements, with particular attention being given to Key Biodiversity Areas; and
  - d) conserve and enhance the special qualities of the parts of the borough within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- 1.18 Maintaining the countryside helps to prevent towns and villages from merging into one another and ensures that they retain their distinctive characters.
- 1.19 Support will be given to the rural economy, with particular emphasis upon farming, local food production and sustainable tourism. The landscape, habitats and biodiversity will be protected and enhanced, particularly those that are rare or locally distinctive.

## **How development and change will be managed**

- 1.20 Development and change will be controlled through a series of policies designed to help the borough respond to future challenges. The policies cover topics such as accessibility, economic development, the mix and tenure of new homes, the provision of social and community facilities and protection of the historic and natural

landscape. Particular emphasis is placed upon the use of sustainable design and construction methods and ensuring that all development is of a high quality and reflects local character.

- 1.21 New development will be phased to ensure that there is either existing infrastructure capacity to accommodate increased demand or that additional infrastructure is provided. Careful consideration will be given to the provision of physical infrastructure (e.g. roads, sewerage and waste disposal facilities), social infrastructure (e.g. such as schools, healthcare and recreational facilities) and green infrastructure (e.g. formal and informal open space and waterways). Development will be expected to make appropriate contributions towards these infrastructure needs. These contributions will usually be in the form of planning conditions, obligations and a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charge. Where appropriate, pooled contributions will be pooled and used to address the cumulative impact of development proposals.
- 1.22 The Council's monitoring processes will determine whether the Council's planning policies are being delivered as intended, are having the desired outcomes and whether they are successful at responding to changing needs and circumstances.

