

PART A

THE CONTEXT

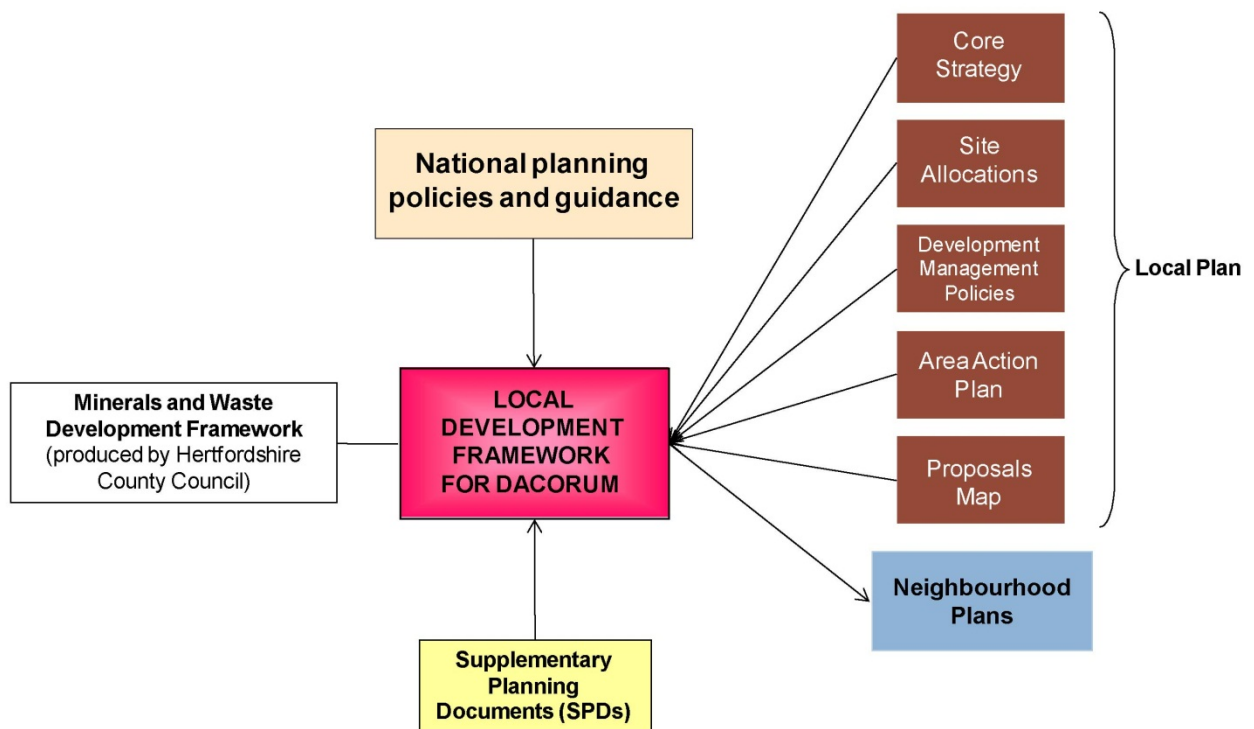


2. Introduction

The Core Strategy

- 2.1. The Core Strategy is the first of the documents that will make up the borough's new local plan. The local plan is the collective name for a series of documents (known as Development Plan Documents) that together will guide future development. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the local planning framework.

Figure 1: Structure of the Local Planning Framework



- 2.2. The Core Strategy sets out the planning framework for guiding the location and level of development with the borough over the next 20 years. It will be used to determine planning applications and as a starting point for more detailed policies and site specific proposals that will be contained in subsequent planning documents. It will also help implement the land use elements of other plans and strategies.

- 2.3. Other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that will help to achieve the vision and objectives set out within this Core Strategy are:

- **Development Management Policies** – supports the Core Strategy by setting out additional, more detailed planning policies that the Council will use when considering planning applications.
- **Site Allocations** – sets out the Council's detailed proposals and requirements for particular sites and areas. These will be illustrated on the Proposals Map.

- **East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan (AAP)** – provides a detailed planning framework for the eastern part of Hemel Hempstead, whose regeneration is of particular importance to the wellbeing and prosperity of the borough and beyond. The extent of this AAP within Dacorum is shown on the Proposals Map. The extent of the AAP within St. Albans is to be confirmed.
- 2.4. These DPDs will be supported by a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which give specific guidance on how the Council's planning strategy and policies will be implemented for specific topics, areas or sites. Although they will not form part of the statutory development plan for Dacorum, they will be important considerations in the Council's planning decisions.
- 2.5. Neighbourhood Plans may become part of the statutory development plan. The decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan will be a matter for the local community – either a town or parish council or neighbourhood forum. The Council will support local communities in preparing relevant neighbourhood plans and will adopt plans that are supported by local referendums.
- 2.6. The Borough's new local plan will replace the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (DBLP). The Core Strategy itself only replaces part of the DBLP. Those DBLP policies which are superseded by the Core Strategy are listed in Appendix 1.

Consultation and Evidence

- 2.7. This Core Strategy has been prepared following extensive consultation with stakeholders and the local community, in line with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The main preparation stages are shown in Figure 2.
- 2.8. The Core Strategy has been based on a thorough understanding of the issues and challenges faced: a wide range of information and studies, collectively known as the 'evidence base', was prepared. The evidence base, together with links to the individual documents, is available online at www.dacorum.gov.uk.

Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment

- 2.9. The policies and proposals in the Core Strategy have been subject to formal Sustainability Appraisal (SA), carried out by independent consultants C4S. This Sustainability Appraisal incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), as required under European law.
- 2.10. Sustainability Appraisal has been a systematic and continual process, assessing the social, environmental and economic effects of policy, policy wording, strategy and sites at different stages. All documents, from an initial Scoping Report (February

2006) through a series of Working Notes or Report associated with each stage of consultation, are included in the evidence base for the Core Strategy.

- 2.11 A separate and final Sustainability Report accompanies the adopted Core Strategy. It explains how sustainability considerations have been taken into account and incorporated into the Core Strategy. It also outlines how significant sustainability effects due to the implementation of the plan will be monitored. The Sustainability Report is available online at www.dacorum.gov.uk.
- 2.12. The Council also assessed whether the Core Strategy would affect sites of European importance for nature conservation, as required under national and European law¹. One Special Area of Conservation, the Chilterns Beechwoods, partly lies within Dacorum (see Map 3). Screenings were undertaken in 2008 and 2011 to assess whether proposals within the Core Strategy would have any adverse impacts upon these sites, either alone, or in combination with other plans. No significant effects were identified. Both reports are available with the evidence base for the Core Strategy.

¹ The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. They apply to Special Protection Areas for birds and Special Areas of Conservation.

Figure 2: Stages in the Preparation of the Core Strategy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adoption of Core Strategy ~ Sustainability Statement 	September 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receipt of the Inspector's Report 	July 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publication of Main Modifications to the Core Strategy ~ Receipt of representations – referred to the Inspector as a continuation of the Examination 	January / March 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examination ~ Hearing 	October 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submission of ~ Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal 	June 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publication of, and representations on ~ Pre-Submission Core Strategy ~ Sustainability Appraisal Report 	October 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation on ~ Draft Core Strategy ~ Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal 	Nov 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation on ~ Emerging Core Strategy ~ Issues and Options – East Hemel Hempstead. Area Action Plan ~ Sustainability Appraisal Working Notes 	June 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation on ~ Supplementary Issues and Options– Site Allocations ~ Sustainability Appraisal Working Note ~ Place Workshops 	September/ November 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation on ~ Issues and Options– Site Allocations ~ Supplementary Issues and Options – Core Strategy, Growth at Hemel Hempstead ~ Sustainability Appraisal Working Notes 	November 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultation on ~ Issues and Options – Core Strategy ~ Sustainability Appraisal Working Note 	May 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 	February 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consulting on ~ Emerging Issues and Options 	July 2005
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gathering background information and commencing technical studies 	2004 onwards