



*Basingstoke  
and Deane*



# **Basingstoke and Deane Local Development Framework Core Strategy**

## **Key Themes Public Consultation Document**

**Focusing on our future**



**Basingstoke and Deane  
Borough Council**

**Local Development Framework**

**Core Strategy**

**KEY THEMES**

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

**March 2010**

**This document is available in other formats, such as large print, Braille or audio.**

**If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact the Local Development Framework team by email: [ldf@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@basingstoke.gov.uk), or by telephone on: 01256 845796 or 845532**

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## Preface

A blueprint for the Basingstoke and Deane area until 2026 is being drawn up by the borough council. Called the Local Development Framework, this will guide planning decisions on where to build homes, schools, leisure facilities, shops, offices and other work places. The aim of the framework will be to protect the environment, create places where people want to live and work and meet local housing and employment needs.

This 'key themes' consultation is the next stage in the process of putting together the framework. In the autumn all the work and consultation that has gone before will be used to produce what is called the Core Strategy of the framework. This document seeks views on the key themes that will appear in that Core Strategy.

To help in the reading of this document, there is a comprehensive glossary of terms on pages 39 and 40. A series of background papers has been produced to provide more detailed information on the main issues. These are available from the borough council's LDF team (see page 5 for contact details) or [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes).

Basingstoke and Deane is an attractive area to live and work. The general quality of life for most residents is seen as being high, as a result of a strong local economy, attractive natural and built environments, and thriving communities. The ambition for the borough up to and beyond 2026 is to build on past successes by maintaining and improving what we have already. We want a flourishing local economy; attractive towns, villages and rural areas, which are well managed, protected and enhanced, and the infrastructure and services needed to support our residents and businesses. This will require a higher standard of sustainable design for new development and a greater emphasis on maximising energy efficiency and the generation and use of renewable and low-carbon energy sources.

The sections in this 'key themes' consultation paper set out in more detail how, through the use of land and by working with others, we can provide the framework for realising this ambition. Underpinning these key themes are some cross-cutting priorities which will shape the development and implementation of the Core Strategy:

- community safety
- healthy communities and high quality and accessible healthcare
- better energy efficiency and the development and use of renewable and low-carbon energy sources to tackle climate change
- high-quality design for homes, buildings and public spaces to meet the needs and aspirations of our community
- educational attainment and skills
- high standards of environmental responsibility, such as minimising resource use and protecting and enhancing biodiversity
- protection of the character of the countryside, and natural and built environments
- a diverse and productive local economy, with an emphasis on smart growth
- promotion of social inclusion to reduce inequalities and meet the needs of vulnerable people.

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## Tell us your views on the key themes

This 'key themes' consultation is part of the on-going engagement with the local community on the borough's emerging Core Strategy. The comments we receive back from the consultation on this document will help inform the next stage of the Core Strategy - the 'pre-submission' version, which is scheduled for publication in October 2010.

It is important that we understand the range of views at this stage on the long-term strategy before developing a fully worked up 'pre-submission' draft of the Core Strategy, which will include policies and strategic sites for housing and employment. The 'pre-submission' version will also rely heavily on the comprehensive evidence base that the council and its partners have been putting together.

The consultation starts on Monday 15 March 2010 and runs until **5.00pm on Monday 26 April 2010**.

**Please let us know your views.** This can be done by:

- (i) using the on-line version of this document and linked response form at [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes) (or as pdf version), **OR**
- (ii) by picking up and filling in one of the response forms, available from the council's reception and all libraries in the borough and at the council's information points.

The council's offices are open on weekdays 8.30am to 5.00pm (Monday to Thursday) and 8.30am to 4.30pm (Fridays).

**By post:**

Parklands Building  
Civic Offices  
London Road  
Basingstoke  
Hampshire RG21 4AH

**By e-mail** at: [ldf@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@basingstoke.gov.uk)

**By visiting the council's website** at: [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes)

**Please note that all responses will be made available for public viewing, although addresses and contact details will be excluded.**

## 1. Introduction

### Portrait of Basingstoke and Deane

- 1.1 The borough of Basingstoke and Deane covers an area of over 63,000 hectares (245 square miles) in north Hampshire, over 75% of which is agricultural or land in other non-wooded greenfield use. A further 15% of the borough is covered by woodland or forest. Less than 8% of the borough is 'built up', providing homes, employment and other facilities for a large proportion of its population.
- 1.2 The borough's population has increased from 152,573 at the time of the 2001 Census to an estimated 161,700 as at mid-2008. In 2008 about 93,000 (57%) of the borough's population lived in Basingstoke town, including Chineham and Rooksdown parishes, with the rest in small towns, villages and hamlets across the borough.
- 1.3 As a consequence of being an 'expanded town' of the 1960s Basingstoke has a distinctive population age-structure, with a higher percentage of children and working-age residents compared with the national, regional and county averages. However, in the next four years, there is likely to be a sudden marked increase in the number of residents reaching retirement age together with a very clear peak in the age group 40-44 years who will retire in about 20 years time. The growth in the number of residents over the age of 65 is, however, not confined just to Basingstoke town.
- 1.4 The borough has a strong and diverse economy, with Basingstoke town having a wide range of employment areas and sites. A strong and healthy local economy is a key factor in enhancing the quality of life for local residents and workers. About 89% of the borough's working-age population is economically active, higher than the rates for Hampshire and South East England.
- 1.5 The borough's residents and businesses benefit from good access to the strategic road and rail networks, including the M3 motorway, A34 and A303 and travel times of about 40 minutes on fast rail services to London Waterloo. The town is reasonably well served by public transport. However, public transport services in large parts of the rural areas are much more limited.
- 1.6 Residents of Basingstoke and Deane generally enjoy a high-quality of life, with the borough being amongst the 15% least deprived in the country and 87% of residents saying that the borough is a good place to live (Borough Place Survey). There are, however, areas of relative deprivation around the town of Basingstoke that would benefit from improvement and renewal.
- 1.7 Basingstoke town offers a wide range of retail, cultural, leisure and higher-education facilities. The borough has many national priority habitats and species and important, locally-distinctive, areas of landscape character. Much of the western part of the borough lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The River Loddon and River Test are both high-value chalk rivers which have their sources within the borough and the borough has 19 Sites of Scientific Interest and over 700 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, many of which are ancient woodlands.

- 1.8 The borough has a wealth of architectural heritage with over 1800 listed buildings, 43 conservation areas and around 400 locally listed buildings. There are also 97 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, of which 10 are listed by English Heritage. These historic buildings, areas and landscapes provide valuable evidence of our social and economic history and contribute to the sense of place
- 1.9 The borough has a relatively high degree of self-containment in terms of travel to work with about 67% of borough residents also working in the borough. However, the borough has strong connections with adjoining areas. The A33 corridor to the north of Basingstoke town provides good access to Reading, while the north and north west of the borough has Newbury as its closest service centre, and the western areas are closer to Andover than to Basingstoke.



View of the town from Crabtree Plantation

### **Planning for Basingstoke and Deane's future to 2026**

- 1.10 The Core Strategy is a part of the council's Local Development Framework (LDF) for Basingstoke and Deane, which will set out how the borough will move forward to 2026, and beyond, and how this strategy will be delivered.
- 1.11 The Core Strategy will set out how the vision and key ambitions for the borough will be achieved on the ground. It will identify large sites for development and provide the key planning policies for the borough for the period up to 2026.
- 1.12 The next 16 years are likely to see considerable changes in the environment, society and the economy. To ensure that we maintain and enhance the quality of life the borough has to offer its residents and as a business, retail and service location, we need to ensure that we have a framework in place that allows us to take opportunities and address the needs and challenges that lie ahead.

- 1.13 The changes in the economy over the past 18 months have highlighted the need to ensure that we can be flexible by having in place a planning framework that allows us to respond to different circumstances.
- 1.14 In time, the Core Strategy will be supplemented by other planning policy documents, which together will form the LDF. This will include:
- ❖ Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document, which will allocate sites of a 'non-strategic' nature; and
  - ❖ Supplementary Planning Documents to provide further detailed guidance on specific sites or policies ([www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/spd](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/spd)).
- Other documents such as Area Action Plans may also be provided to help deliver the policies in the Core Strategy.
- 1.15 The LDF includes an adopted Statement of Community Involvement ([www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/sci](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/sci)), which details how the council, in seeking more effective community engagement, will consult on planning policy documents and planning applications. It also produces an Annual Monitoring Report, to regularly monitor the delivery of policies ([www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/amr](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/amr)).
- 1.16 The current timetable for the LDF Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Delivery DPD is set out below.



Eastrop Park at night, Basingstoke

### Local Development Framework timetable

July 2006	<i>Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan Review 1996-2011 Adopted</i>
November 2007	<i>Scoping of Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal</i>
January / February 2008	<i>Core Strategy 'Issues and Options' consultation</i>
July 2009	<i>Policies 'saved' and 'deleted' from the local plan</i>
<b>March / April 2010</b>	<b>Core Strategy 'key themes' consultation</b>
October 2010	Core Strategy 'Pre-Submission' consultation and Sustainability Appraisal
January 2011	Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal 'Submission'
April 2011	Core Strategy Examination in Public
June 2011	Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD) Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report consultation
July 2011	Core Strategy Inspector's Report published
October 2011	Adoption of Core Strategy
November 2011	Allocations and Delivery DPD 'Issues and Options'
October 2012	Allocations and Delivery DPD 'Pre-Submission'
February 2013	Allocations and Delivery DPD 'Submission'
May 2013	Allocations and Delivery DPD Examination in Public
August 2013	Allocations and Delivery DPD Inspector's Report Published
November 2013	Adoption of Allocations and Delivery DPD

Source: *Basingstoke and Deane Revised Local Development Scheme*, March 2009  
([www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/localdevelopmentscheme](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/localdevelopmentscheme))

## LDF evidence base

- 1.17 To understand the borough and its characteristics in more detail, a series of studies have been, or are being, undertaken to inform the Core Strategy and other documents. The studies completed, or close to completion, which have been used to inform this 'Key Themes' document and, are available on the council's website at: [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/evidencebase](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/ldf/evidencebase). Some of the studies include:
- ❖ Affordable Housing Viability Study
  - ❖ Biodiversity Assessment
  - ❖ Economic Growth and Employment Land Requirements in North Hampshire
  - ❖ Employment Land Review
  - ❖ Hotel Study
  - ❖ Landscape Capacity Study
  - ❖ Leisure and Recreation Needs Assessment
  - ❖ Neighbourhood Housing Stock Analysis
  - ❖ Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Development Study
  - ❖ Retail Assessment
  - ❖ Rural Housing Study
  - ❖ Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
  - ❖ Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
  - ❖ Strategic Housing Market Assessment
  - ❖ Sustainability of Settlements Study
  - ❖ Transport Assessment
  - ❖ Urban Character Study
  - ❖ Water Cycle Study – Phases One and Two.
- 1.18 Some of the key points that the evidence base has highlighted, and the Core Strategy will need to consider, include:
- ❖ Basingstoke and Deane is among the 15% least deprived local authority areas in the country, although there are pockets of relative deprivation in some wards
  - ❖ average life expectancy is higher than the national average, 79.1 years for males and 82.6 years for females, however, there is a five year disparity between the highest and lowest average life expectancies between wards
  - ❖ there is a growing population, with births exceeding deaths by about 900 every year
  - ❖ the population aged over 65 is forecast to increase by more than 13,000 over the period 2006 to 2026
  - ❖ average household size is forecast to continue to decline from 2.39 persons in 2006 to 2.18 persons in 2026 (which is a slower rate of decline than in the past)

- ❖ the borough's housing land supply (as of April 2009) identifies land for over 6550 new homes within the borough. This is made up of those sites with planning permission and sites allocated in our current local plan
- ❖ a need to change the approach for future provision for leisure and recreation to respond to changing age structure and lifestyles
- ❖ attainment at primary schools up to Key Stage 2 is within 1% of the Hampshire average, but educational attainment is 4% lower than the county average at GCSE level
- ❖ a diverse local economy, with no need to identify major new employment sites, but a requirement to ensure the regeneration of Basing View
- ❖ forecasts suggest that most future demand will be for offices with little change in the demand for warehousing and distribution (B8) uses and a decline in the demand for general industry (B2) floorspace
- ❖ possible opportunities to consider the re-use of employment sites for alternative uses
- ❖ generally healthy and vibrant town and district centres in the borough, with some requirement for further 'non-food' retail floorspace up to 2026, but limited need for additional 'food' floorspace
- ❖ a shortage of mid-week overnight hotel accommodation in Basingstoke and a general oversupply at weekends
- ❖ traffic and congestion issues at key 'hot spots' in and around Basingstoke during the peak periods, but a generally good road network
- ❖ a well connected borough, with good access by road and rail across the region and to the main airports and ports
- ❖ carbon dioxide emission levels per capita are higher than the regional average and most Hampshire local authorities areas
- ❖ the introduction of new requirements on water quality through the European Water Framework Directive
- ❖ the need to consider the timing, phasing and funding of infrastructure.

## Previous consultations

### Core Strategy 'issues and options' consultation responses

1.19 In preparing this key themes document, account has been taken of the comments received at the 'issues and options' stage carried out in January / February 2008. This included 140 written responses, in addition to the comments made at a series of six workshops and two exhibitions held across the borough. Furthermore, use was made of previous consultation on the initial thoughts for the Core Strategy, including:

- ❖ an informal workshop for councillors and key stakeholders in March 2007;
- ❖ visits to six schools in the borough to discuss with young people their ambitions for the borough; and
- ❖ the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP's) Annual Conference in July 2007.

## Engagement on the vision and ambitions

1.20 Further consultation has been carried out more recently by the borough council in drafting the 'Vision and Key Ambitions' to inform the development of the borough's Sustainable Community Strategy and the LDF Core Strategy. This is described in Section 2 and has been developed through the following approaches:

- ❖ a visioning workshop for all borough councillors in April 2009; and
- ❖ the Local Strategic Partnership's Annual Conference in May 2009.

This resulted in a detailed formal response from the LSP (now the Basingstoke Area Strategic Partnership) to the draft 'Vision and Key Ambitions' consultation.

1.21 Following these events, which helped to shape the draft 'Vision and Key Ambitions', views have been sought from members of the public and stakeholders through:

- ❖ 600 face-to-face surveys across the borough in both urban and rural locations;
- ❖ a special edition of the LDF Newsletter, sent to all those on our database;
- ❖ distribution of a Community Guide to the LDF to all Town and Parish Councils in the borough and those community groups on our database; and
- ❖ the provision of an on-line questionnaire on the council's website to gauge views on the draft vision.

1.22 In addition to specific engagement on the 'Vision and Key Ambitions' including the response from the Strategic Partnership, account has also been taken of feedback from other events and consultations including:

- ❖ Place Survey and Residents Survey, July 2009;
- ❖ A Question of Business Event, January 2009
- ❖ Feedback from the winter edition of the council's residents' magazine, which resulted in over 200 comments on planning for the borough's future and also on the types and location.

1.23 Furthermore, account has been taken of the views of the Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 4 February 2010 in considering the consultation responses on the draft 'Vision and Key Ambitions'.

## Sustainability appraisal / appropriate assessment

1.24 To ensure that the Core Strategy identifies policies that produce the most sustainable outcome, a comprehensive Sustainability Appraisal will be published alongside the Core Strategy. It will highlight social, economic and environmental considerations and assess the Core Strategy's policies and strategic allocations against a number of sustainability objectives in order to identify and understand their impact.

## Relationship with national guidance and other strategies

- 1.25 In preparing the Core Strategy we also have to take into account the guidance and policy framework provided at the national, regional and local level, including:
- ❖ Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance and Circulars
  - ❖ the South East Plan and Regional Economic Strategy
  - ❖ the borough's Community Strategy – which is to be reviewed during 2010, taking the emerging vision as central for setting local priorities for action.
  - ❖ relevant local strategies, including the council's Economic Strategy, Housing Strategy and Vision for central Basingstoke, the Local Strategic Partnership's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and other organisations' strategies, such as the North Wessex Downs Management Plan and the planning strategies of neighbouring authorities.

## Core Strategy 'key themes'

- 1.26 In the following sections of this consultation paper Section 2 highlights the borough's emerging 'Vision and Key Ambitions' that will help inform the Core Strategy, and Section 3 focuses on the key themes are likely to appear in Core Strategy and set out our ambitions, how the ambitions are supported by national, regional and local policy and evidence, the benefits from pursuing the ambitions, issues to consider and how the ambitions could be achieved.

## Questions

1. Do you agree that the key themes that we have identified are the right ones (see contents list on page 4)? Yes / No
2. If not, what other themes do you think should be included?

For each key theme we have also asked a number of questions which we would like your views on.



## 2. Vision and key ambitions

### Introduction

- 2.1 A shared long-term and locally-distinctive vision and set of ambitions for the borough is at the heart of identifying the type of place and community you would want to live or work in. These will help identify the borough's changing needs and how you would like us to take forward our economic, social and environmental ambitions and provide a clear and shared set of priorities for the future.
- 2.2 The local distinctiveness of a place can be an economic asset. A clear vision can draw out the area's inherent strengths and opportunities, and set out ways to tackle challenges and manage risks, giving more certainty to communities and partners. The vision can also be used to establish the relationship of an area with its neighbours and how it is placed within the region to help distinguish it from its competitors.
- 2.3 Paragraphs 1.20 - 1.23 highlight the consultation that has been carried out with respect to the draft Vision. The Basingstoke Area Strategic Partnership responded to the consultation on the draft Vision and its main comments include:
- advocating the importance of a shared vision and one that sets a strong direction for sustained economic prosperity involving attracting inward investment and retention
  - sharing the ambition for thriving successful communities that benefit from a flourishing economy and environment
  - seeing growth as an outcome of the ambition rather than a goal in itself.
- 2.4 The draft vision will be reviewed in the light of the consultation responses and a report made to the borough council's Cabinet on 23 March 2010. The Full Council will then be asked to adopt the final vision on 1 April 2010. Following the engagement with residents, stakeholders and councillors the adopted '*Vision for Basingstoke and Deane to 2026*' will be the overarching vision for the borough to inform strategic planning and partnership plans. In particular, the vision will connect and inform the preparation of:
- the LDF Core Strategy
  - the borough's Sustainable Community Strategy
  - the Council Plan.

## DRAFT VISION 2026

**In 2026 Basingstoke and Deane's people, communities, and businesses will be flourishing and enjoying an excellent quality of life which has been improved by well planned growth and a positive attitude to change. Regenerating our towns and estates, and enriching the character of our villages and outstanding countryside will support Basingstoke as a major vibrant centre, leading the north Hampshire agenda and fulfilling an influential role in the region.**

The borough will be:

### 1. PROSPEROUS AND THRIVING

- a regenerated state-of-the-art Basing View, along with easy transport connections, attract major new business to the town
- links with higher education stimulate innovative business growth
- residents can readily improve their skills and play their part in and benefit from the area's prosperity.



### 2. CONNECTED AND ACTIVE

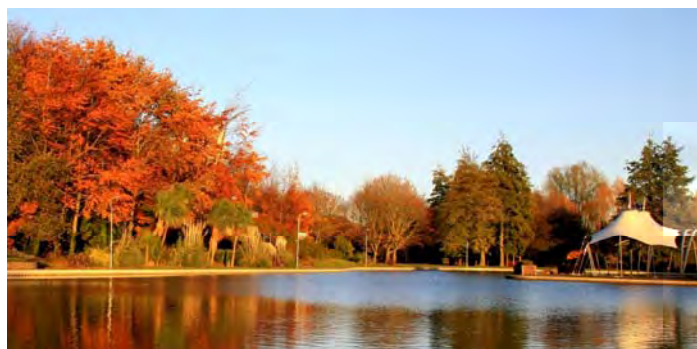
- there are safe and inviting places and communities where people want to live, feel at ease and that they belong
- people can connect, enjoy their lives, and get involved in their communities
- new homes meet local needs, and bring improved and new local facilities



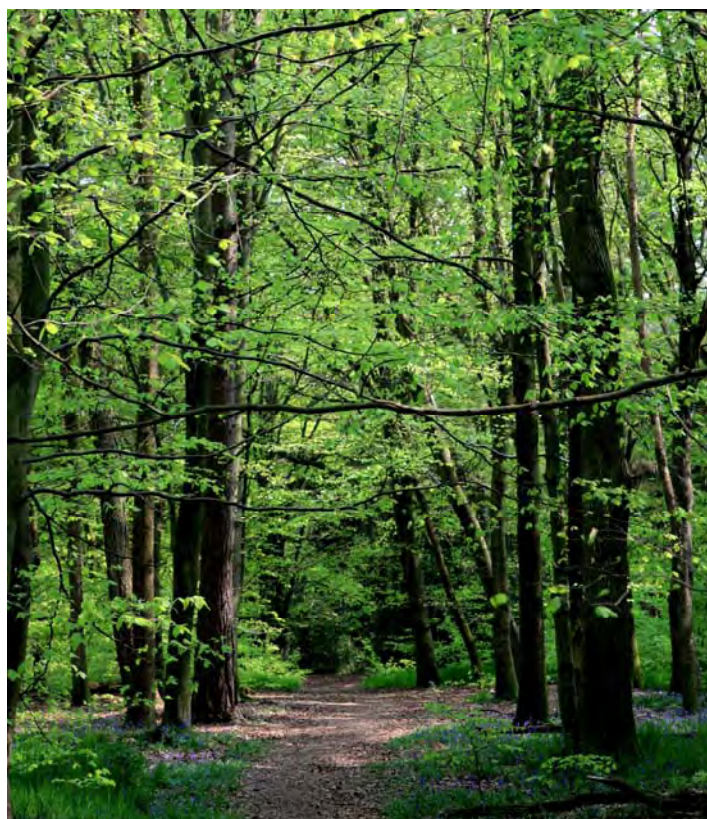
Eastrop Roundabout, Basingstoke

### 3. GREEN AND DISTINCTIVE

- the different characters of and relationships between towns, villages and the countryside are enriched, in the way we plan, such as the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Basingstoke and Deane is a prominent hub for eco-living and green business
- the highest quality design and environmental standards demonstrate pride in our place.



Eastrop Park in Autumn



### 3. Key themes

- 3.1 This section details how the emerging Vision can be delivered through the Core Strategy and the strategies of our partners in the borough. It is divided into nine 'key themes'. For each theme it looks at:
- **our proposed ambition** - which describes how the borough could look and feel in the future
  - **the background to the proposed ambition** – which includes relevant national and regional guidance, how the proposed ambition supports the delivery of the emerging Vision and key outcomes from the evidence base
  - the **benefits** that will be delivered through the achievement of our proposed ambition
  - **issues for consideration** in taking forward our proposed ambition
  - **how the proposed ambition can be achieved**, including key actions or areas of partnership that need to be progressed and
  - **questions for consideration**, to help us understand whether our proposed ambitions are correct, whether alternatives could be progressed, or whether there are other considerations that need to be taken into account.
- 3.2 The key themes explore the principles that the Core Strategy could follow. The document does not explore site-specific issues and these will be considered in the 'pre-submission' version of the Core Strategy that is scheduled to be published for consultation in October 2010.
- 3.3 The key themes should not be seen in isolation. Each theme is inter-connected with all the others and delivery on all themes will be necessary for our ambitions for Basingstoke and Deane to be achieved.



## a) Infrastructure

### Introduction

The provision of infrastructure, such as transport, community and health facilities and utilities (see the glossary in the Appendix for the full list) to support new development has been, and will continue to be, an area of much discussion and debate. The impacts of the economic downturn over the past 18 months have highlighted uncertainties regarding:

- (i) the viability of some development schemes, given the effect of the downturn on land values, and
- (ii) expectations that the availability of public finance will be significantly constrained in the short to medium term. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that we need to plan for the long-term covering both periods of economic downturn and economic growth.

The provision of the necessary additional infrastructure and services required to serve the borough and any new development is critical. The scale and pace of development will be dependent on additional capacity being provided where current infrastructure is insufficient to accommodate the requirements of new development. This is a critical area of consideration in being able to maintain the quality of life of our residents and support communities and businesses.

The identification of Basingstoke as a 'Regional Hub' in the *South East Plan* and as a 'Diamond for Investment and Economic Growth' in the *Regional Economic Strategy* is linked to, amongst other factors, investment in infrastructure.

### Our proposed ambition

*All residents and businesses have good access to excellent services and facilities in order to ensure prosperity and a high quality of life. Many of these services and facilities will be provided in a more innovative and flexible way in the future to ensure that as many people as possible can access them in the most cost effective way.*

*This will include the provision of all forms of infrastructure, from utility provision, such as high-speed broadband across the borough, and effective sewerage disposal, to services such as education, health provision and transport, which will have been introduced to support existing and new communities and will be of benefit to all. Opportunities to share resources and premises between different services will be prioritised to ensure local service provision works for, and supports, local communities. This could include, for example, health-care provision linked to a community hall, or a school providing opportunities for community use or adult learning.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by:

- The LDF evidence base highlights the need for new infrastructure to support new development, and overcome existing issues
- A significant proportion of stakeholders have identified infrastructure provision as being fundamental to support new development and to address any infrastructure deficit
- The identification of Basingstoke as a Regional Hub and a Diamond for Investment and Economic Growth

- The emerging vision for the borough, within which infrastructure and service provision is embedded
- The economic development strategy, *Driving Economic Prosperity for Basingstoke and Deane*, identifies the need to improve infrastructure to attract and retain major employers and encourage enterprise development in the borough.

### Benefits

- Timely and comprehensive infrastructure provision would ensure that businesses and residents are able to prosper and have a high quality of life in the borough
- It helps create a positive image and is attractive to outside investors and those wishing to live in the borough
- Local service provision ensures that facilities are accessible to all and the need to travel is minimised.
- Delivery of infrastructure will assist in more effective, joined-up services - through “co-location”, such as children’s centres and/or extended schools acting as a neighbourhood hub. This can help to reduce running costs through shared buildings and day-to-day functions and provide a focal point for local communities.

### Issues to consider

- What types of new and improved infrastructure will need to be provided and when to deliver enhanced opportunities, quality of life and prosperity for local communities?
- The likely contraction of future public funding in the short to medium term will make the provision of all necessary infrastructure a challenge. Therefore, difficult decisions will need to be made about what infrastructure will provide the most efficient and effective ways of supporting existing and new communities
- That the Core Strategy is a long-term plan which may well cover periods when the economy is both weak and strong.

### How the Ambition Can Be Achieved:

- By early identification of both current infrastructure gaps and the infrastructure which is necessary to support the borough in the future
- By close working with infrastructure and service providers to ensure plans are co-ordinated, opportunities for funding are maximised and that services are delivered in a timely and customer focussed manner
- By preparation of a Delivery and Implementation Plan, to accompany the Core Strategy, and to detail what infrastructure will be provided, broadly what it will cost, who will be responsible for its delivery and when it will be provided
- By having a full understanding of the needs of communities through extensive consultation to ensure that these can be taken into account in master-planning new development.

### Questions

1. What infrastructure (see Appendix for full list) do you think is necessary to address existing gaps and support new development?
2. Do you have any views which should be considered in preparing our Delivery and Implementation Plan that will support the Core Strategy?

## b) Regeneration and renewal

### Introduction

Based on the various successful regeneration schemes that have been delivered to date, part of the overall strategy is to look at bringing forward similar schemes in other parts of Basingstoke and the wider borough. This includes proposals to improve the social and physical environments of neighbourhoods and, where appropriate, their housing stock. To extend such schemes further across Basingstoke will require a strategic approach with the borough council taking a lead co-ordinating role in conjunction with other key partners and the local community.

### Our proposed ambition

*The housing areas of poorest quality in Basingstoke town, built during the initial town expansion in the 1960s and 1970s, will have been regenerated and improved through a combination of providing high quality and energy-efficient homes, better laid out with attractive and useable open spaces together with the provision of comprehensive supporting infrastructure. These will have been delivered through a partnership approach with key stakeholders, landowners and communities to ensure that needs are met and that the design and layout reflects the desires of local people.*

*In addition, better use will have been made of vacant and under-used employment land and sites to deliver a range of alternative types of development including residential, modern business premises and community facilities, which will re-vitalise areas, and reduce the impacts of some existing employment uses on communities.*

*It is recognised that successful regeneration is about much more than just the “bricks and mortar”. Physical improvements, arising from redevelopment or refurbishment, need to be dovetailed with a range of other initiatives to tackle the inequalities identified locally in the ‘Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy’. This identifies the need to improve education, skills and training, and access to housing, together with reducing crime and disorder and income deprivation. The Strategy contains the ambitious aim of ensuring that by 2025 no-one in Basingstoke and Deane will be disadvantaged by where they live.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by:

- The emerging vision establishes a desire to regenerate our towns and estates, to provide for an excellent quality of life and create safe, inviting places and communities where people want to live and no one is left isolated
- PPS3 sets out that local authorities should make effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, including encouraging innovative housing schemes that make effective use of public sector previously-developed land
- The *South East Plan* states that the prime focus for development in the South East should be on the urban areas, by seeking at least 60% of development on previously-developed land and ensuring that urban infill and intensification is well designed and consistent with the principles of urban renaissance and sustainable development
- The benefits arising from recent and ongoing regeneration activities in areas such as Bishops Green, Oakridge and Longfellow Parade in Popley will be spread more widely, with the borough council taking a more proactive and strategic role in the future.

### Benefits

- Improves residents' quality of life by:
  - providing well-designed, modern homes in an attractive environment, that meet local needs and achieve high levels of energy efficiency
  - reducing the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour by better layout and design
  - providing additional or improved facilities to benefit existing communities
- Regeneration of existing residential areas and vacant and under-used sites will provide scope to make better use of land in accessible and sustainable locations
- Scope to address the impacts of employment areas on existing communities (for example, Heavy Goods Vehicle movements and 24 hour / seven days a week working practices)
- Reduces the requirement to develop on greenfield sites.

### Issues to consider

- Progressing schemes will involve close working with partners, including housing associations, the local community and other stakeholders
- Funding for schemes is known to be limited, and it will therefore be necessary to seek innovative approaches to securing financial backing
- Experience shows that schemes can take many years to plan and deliver
- There will be a need to carefully manage expectations given the issues identified above.

### How the ambition can be achieved

- By identifying key areas for regeneration through the results of the Employment Land Review and further work to identify which areas could be re-used for alternative uses, in addition to working with partners and communities to highlight those residential areas that may benefit from such an approach
- By establishing a framework for identifying regeneration sites in the Core Strategy, with the specific allocations being made through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document or Area Action Plans
- By working with communities / landowners / partners to understand local issues and develop an approach to achieve ambitions
- By reviewing and updating the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

### Questions

1. Should the borough actively seek to regenerate and improve existing urban areas of the borough?
2. What should be the priorities for regeneration and renewal schemes in the borough?
3. If funds are known to be an issue, should efforts be concentrated on lower cost measures? If so, what types of improvements could be made?

## c) Local economy

### Introduction

There is significant potential for economic and employment growth in the borough which will help support economic prosperity and provide employment opportunities for local residents. To assist in developing the local economy further, the Core Strategy will need to address the following:

- what level of local economic growth and productivity growth should we plan for, both for existing local business and inward investment?
- how much employment land is needed?
- what type of employment generating uses will it need to accommodate?
- where should it be located?
- if there is currently considered to be too much employment land in uses such as manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, or employment land which is vacant, should we be considering releasing these for other forms of development? If so, which employment sites could be released?

### Our proposed ambition

*The ambition is for thriving and well-designed employment areas hosting a wide variety of businesses, and supporting the local economy through providing a range sites for office, high-technology, research and development, and high-technology manufacturing uses. We will have well located industrial and distribution centres which operate with minimal negative impact on local communities. This includes the borough's premier location for business at Basing View, which has the potential to provide a cutting edge, carbon-efficient centre for innovation and prosperity and supporting services such as cafes, bars, some shops and hotels. If possible, there would be close links between Basing View and the proposed learning campus and incubation units described in the section on education and health.*

*Across the borough, ageing, out-dated commercial buildings and vacant employment sites will have been regenerated for a range of uses to meet current needs, including new business premises. Some areas will have supporting services including shops, cafes, bars, fitness centres and hotels, where these are likely to be economically viable, in addition to homes and community facilities. In the regeneration schemes there will be an emphasis on high-quality design and energy efficient buildings. To ensure sufficient employment land remains to meet future economic requirements across the borough, and ensure long-term prosperity, there will be a flexible approach to the use of greenfield sites for employment uses.*

*That the growth in the local economy be predominantly through 'smart' growth, that is increased local economic activity rates, enhanced local skills, improved enterprise and productivity levels and a more efficient use of employment land and sites, and in the knowledge economy.*

*Existing high and stable levels of employment will be maintained and the available jobs balanced with the resident workforce.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by

- The emerging vision supports a thriving economy and identifies Basing View as a vital component
- The LDF evidence base highlights the role that Basing View can play in providing for local economic needs, and the emerging master-plan outlines the overwhelming need to secure regeneration to meet aspirations
- The promotion of the local economy which will help to fulfil our potential as a Regional Hub and Diamond for Investment and Economic Growth
- Planning Policy Statement 4 *Planning for Prosperous Economies* sets out the policy framework for local sustainable economic policy and locating uses that generate substantial transport movements in locations that preserve local amenity
- The Economic Strategy, *Driving Economic Prosperity for Basingstoke and Deane* identifies the diverse nature of the economy with the borough being home to many international and large UK companies, as well as being the base for many smaller companies, with 90% of the economy being made up by small/medium enterprises
- Research shows that there is demand for incubation premises locally and that they can contribute significantly to the growth of the knowledge economy.

### Benefits

- Ensures that we meet the requirements of a diverse range of businesses through the provision of a range of sites and that the borough is attractive to investors
- Redevelopment of vacant or underused employment sites with more appropriate uses to meet our aspirations, particularly where these are well located will help to ensure that our resources are used in an efficient manner
- A regenerated Basing View provides the opportunity to reinvigorate an ageing commercial environment that would continue in a spiral of decline if not addressed, and promote a positive image of Basingstoke as a place to do business
- Reduces the impacts that some employment uses have on existing communities, for example, from movements of heavy goods vehicles or 24-hour operation
- Re-use of vacant sites for other uses minimises the need for greenfield development
- A reduction in vacant stock will ensure that overall supply of sites is controlled, with the impact that investment can be concentrated in key areas
- A flexible, but managed, approach to the use of greenfield sites for employment uses if necessary will ensure that we are able to meet needs if they arise
- The provision of local employment opportunities reduces the need for our residents to travel outside of the borough, with benefits for wider transport infrastructure
- Provision of a diverse range of commercial accommodation will provide an environment in which to develop innovation and enterprise in the local economy, attracting entrepreneurs as well as major employers.

### Issues to consider

- Achieving a balance between the growth in the number of jobs and the number of additional 'economically-active' residents in the borough, and the implications for the borough if there is a greater imbalance

- A fully occupied Basing View is likely to result in additional traffic growth at peak times into and out of Basingstoke town centre, even if some journeys are not made using the car, and this will need to be carefully managed
- Ensuring flexibility to accommodate the needs of business where they cannot be met using existing employment sites
- Lower office space rental levels in the borough are an attractive proposition for new occupiers but reflect a persistent high level of availability compared to demand and impact on the attractiveness to new investors
- The extent to which the Core Strategy can assist in maximising the potential for smart growth in the borough
- How new technologies may effect working practices and the impact this may have on commercial property requirements.

#### How the ambition can be achieved

- By regularly reviewing our current employment areas (as defined in the local plan) to ensure they are still fit for purpose and should be retained in employment use
- By releasing some employment land to other uses, where appropriate
- By providing flexibility by having a policy framework that allows for some new employment provision on greenfield sites, if this becomes necessary
- By the inclusion of the Basing View area in the Core Strategy and a related policy to support its regeneration and implementation
- By the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document to provide greater detail on the means of achieving the ambitions for the area
- By a widening of the existing town centre boundary to incorporate the western part of Basing View to enable key services and facilities to be provided to support the businesses and provide greater links between the town centre and Basing View
- By close working with the landowners, the business community and infrastructure providers to ensure delivery
- By facilitating growth in the knowledge economy through a Learning Campus and incubation units that would make a considerable contribution to knowledge transfer. It is anticipated that a Learning Campus will help to make Basingstoke and Deane attractive as a location for existing knowledge-based companies looking to relocate
- Through the development of a Town Access Plan and other transport investment by working closely with the Highways Agency and Hampshire County Council.

#### Questions

1. Should consideration be given to the re-use of some of the borough's existing employment land for other types of development (such as retail, housing)?
2. Should consideration be given to locating certain types of employment uses (such as those that have 24 hour operations) to areas away from existing residential areas to minimise the negative impacts of the business activity?
3. Should there be scope to release greenfield sites on the edge of the urban area for employment related purposes, if the need arises to support the local economy?
4. If you do not support the potential approaches identified above, what should the strategy for employment land be based around?

## d) Climate change, renewable energy and biodiversity

### Introduction

Mitigation against climate change and minimising carbon emissions will be fundamental elements of all plans looking to the future. Traditional carbon-based fuel is likely to become increasingly expensive and environmentally-damaging through the course of the plan period and consequently it is important for Basingstoke and Deane to embrace cleaner and 'smarter' growth that focuses on productivity gains without environmental impacts.

Biodiversity produces considerable benefits including carbon storage, clean air and water, food sources, timber and other raw materials. A bio-diverse environment is more attractive, improves people's quality of life and contributes to the economy through leisure and tourism-related activity.

### Our proposed ambition

*To set high standards for reducing our carbon footprint and adapting to climate change within the borough through developing low carbon and renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency To protect and enhance biodiversity within the borough through protecting existing key habitats and actively pursuing opportunities to restore, enhance and create new habitat, with an emphasis on delivering this as part of a network of 'multi-functional' green spaces.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by

- The Climate Change Act, which commits the UK to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% (from 1990 levels) by 2050, and by at least 34% by 2020
- The *South East Plan*, which includes a target of reducing the region's carbon dioxide emissions by 25% by 2015, and a renewable energy production target for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight of 122 megawatts
- *PPS1 Delivery Sustainable Development*, and its supplement *Planning and Climate Change*, which advises that LDF documents should include reference to low carbon and renewable energy generation and that it may be appropriate for standards higher than those required by building regulations to be sought
- The borough council being a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change committing the council to delivering the UK Climate Change programme. The borough council also has its own Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, including objectives to reduce carbon emissions
- The *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006* which requires local authorities to have regard to biodiversity in carrying out their functions
- *PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation* which states that local planning policies should reflect and be consistent with national, regional and local biodiversity priorities and objectives, that is the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the Hampshire Biodiversity Plan. PPS 9 also states that LDFs should indicate the location of designated sites of importance for biodiversity and identify any areas or sites for the restoration or creation of new priority habitats
- The *South East Plan Policy NRM5* states that local planning authorities should avoid a net loss of biodiversity and actively pursue opportunities to achieve a net gain and deliver a network of multi-functional green spaces

- The LDF evidence base, which provides evidence for the development of appropriate policies on sustainable construction and renewable energy and to ensure that impacts on and opportunities for biodiversity are taken into account in assessing potential development areas.

### Benefits

- In the longer-term future there is likely to be an increasingly greater reliance on cleaner and more secure forms of energy from local sources and it will be important to embrace these changes at an early stage
- Embracing the climate change challenge and having strong green credentials may provide the borough with a future economic advantage
- Protecting, restoring and enhancing important habitats will help to reverse the historic trend of declines in wildlife and improve the resilience of our ecosystems to withstand climate change and other pressures
- A network of green spaces will contribute to residents' quality of life, providing opportunities for recreation and contact with nature. It will help to reduce and manage urban rainwater run-off and will allow easier movement of wildlife across the landscape, which will be of increasing importance in the face of climate change.

### Issue to consider

- Higher standards of energy efficiency and sustainable construction have higher up-front costs to developers and these are likely to be passed onto the purchasers of the properties
- Balancing wildlife and habitat protection with improving access to the countryside.

### How the ambition can be achieved

- By setting out Core Strategy policies that require high standards of sustainable design and construction and seek and encourage the development of opportunities for low carbon and renewable energy schemes
- By ensuring that the impact of new development on biodiversity is minimised and that the opportunities to enhance biodiversity from development are maximised
- Through an enhanced network of green spaces brought forward through using the opportunities provided by strategic development areas.

### Questions

1. Should the LDF Core Strategy be seeking energy standards that are in excess of those set out in the Building Regulations? Yes / No
2. Should the LDF Core Strategy include a target for low carbon and renewable energy installations? Yes / No
3. How do we best ensure the delivery of a network of green spaces that will improve biodiversity and opportunities for recreation?

## e) Education and health

### Introduction

The provision of a high and improving quality of education and health provision in the borough is of great importance. They both have significant implications for the local economy and the success and quality of life of our population. Education maximises the potential of our younger people to excel and succeed in the future. Good quality health care helps increase the opportunities for residents to enjoy a fulfilling life into older age.

With respect to education the borough council needs to work closely in partnership with Hampshire County Council, as the education authority, and other education providers to ensure a significant improvement in education provision and attainment in the borough, including further and higher education provision. The borough's Education Improvement Partnership has identified some critical issues to achieve success, including actions to prevent children falling into a cycle of low achievement and alienation; targeting educational resources at children and families in need; and additional activities for gifted and talented children.

With respect to health the borough council needs to work closely with NHS Hampshire (formerly the Primary Care Trust), Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital, Hampshire County Council and the voluntary sector providers to plan for the provision of health and social care facilities to meet future needs. In addition, the borough's Health and Wellbeing Partnership, of which the borough council is a partner, will focus on community-based interventions to improve health and wellbeing in communities. The Partnership has the objective of providing local leadership to create a framework for health and social care that meet the needs of the residents of Basingstoke and Deane in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To help achieve this objective the partnership has produced a 'Shared Plan to Improve Health and Wellbeing in Basingstoke and Deane, 2010-13' sets out how it intends to achieve this.

### The proposed ambition

*A well educated local population and workforce, with significantly improved educational attainment, particularly at secondary school level. Better links to Further and Higher Education establishments with good connections to the local business community through innovation and incubation units.*

*The presence of a learning campus at a location within Basingstoke town which would bring together further 'vocational'-style training with higher-education degrees and state-of-the-art research, building on successful colleges and link with 'best-in-class' universities, both national and international.*

*These improvements being combined with excellent standards of teaching and learning in high quality and energy efficient buildings which are well located and provide a wider focus for local communities with the sharing of facilities.*

*An active and healthy local population supported by high-quality and accessible recreational and leisure facilities, open spaces, walking and cycling paths. The three priorities for community-based health and wellbeing interventions are:*

- *reducing levels of obesity*
- *keeping older people independent longer*
- *increasing physical activity and promoting wellbeing.*

*Our communities will be supported by accessible and high-quality health care provision at all levels.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by

- The emerging vision seeks the improvement of skills and better links between business and education. Consultation responses seek improvement in educational (secondary school) attainment
- The borough's recognised status in the *Regional Economic Strategy* as a location which offers significant opportunities for economic growth (a Diamond for Investment and Economic Growth) identifies opportunities to improve educational attainment and skills to ensure prosperity
- The Leitch Review, Hampshire's Local Area Agreement and the *Regional Economic Strategy* identify skills at all levels as a key element of success for any economy
- Focus on Basingstoke in Hampshire County Council's 'Building Schools for the Future' programme
- Work undertaken to date to deliver a Learning Campus in Basingstoke
- The Basingstoke and Deane Education Improvement Partnership 0-19 Strategy, which identifies priorities for providing education pathways for 14 year olds, and supporting the gifted and talented, staff, and behaviour and achievement
- Consultations with residents identify health services and education provision as being important to their quality of life
- The location for acute hospital services for around 300,000 people based at Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital
- Hampshire Health and Wellbeing Partnership's 'Healthier Hampshire' Strategy focuses action on: (i) promoting healthy lifestyles; (ii) focusing on people at risk
- The emergence of a Basingstoke Children's Partnership, with a shared commitment to achieving the objectives of the Hampshire Children's and Young People's Plan, by improving the way all services for children and young people are planned and delivered
- An expanding network of Children's Centres across the borough, designed as one-stop shops for families with young children.

### Benefits

- Significant social and economic benefits to improving the health, fitness, skills and educational attainment of the local population including:
  - reduced levels of in-commuting into the borough through having a well skilled and healthy local workforce
  - improved quality of life for residents and providing greater equity
  - improvements in key indicators, including educational attainment, school attendance levels and potential for a decrease in crime levels
  - improved image of the borough to existing and potential future employers / investors / residents
- The ability to provide support for local businesses and ensure that the workforce has the necessary skills to meet employers' needs
- Helps to address the borough's identified weaknesses, as recognised by SEEDA when designating Basingstoke as a Diamond for Investment and Economic Growth

- Provides the opportunity for most local people to undertake their recreational and leisure activities and have their health care and educational needs met without having to leave or travel out of the borough.
- Maintains a healthy pool of graduates in the town – helping to support local services
- Helps attract and retain good teaching and health care staff
- Reducing costs on the health system.

#### Issues to consider

- Uncertainty over the levels of funding to be made available under the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme, and Learning and Skills Council (or its successor) for post 16 years education
- A potential shortage of capacity or room to expand existing schools in areas where development proposals may come forward
- The expected large increase in the age groups over 65 years will require opportunities and services to help keep this age group active and healthy and have significant impacts on the need for health and social care
- There is a disparity of five years in life expectancy across the borough between wards with the highest life expectancy and those with the lowest
- Obesity is a major factor in the prevalence of conditions of cardio-vascular disease, heart disease and strokes
- Physical activity underpins mental and physical health
- Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital provides high-class health facilities for residents of the borough and residents of neighbouring areas. The hospital's continued evolution and accessibility is an important aspect of health provision within the borough and beyond.

#### How the ambition can be achieved

- By working closely with Hampshire County Council and other partners to prepare an Education Strategy for the borough to show how education can be delivered in the future. This should include an assessment of existing education provision in the borough and identifying opportunities for improving existing schools. This could include, for example, the creation of 'academies' from existing schools, or investment in improved facilities to provide modern teaching facilities to benefit all and address any issues of under-performance. This will also fully consider the potential for school facilities to benefit the wider community through the sharing of facilities
- By continuing to work with further and higher education establishments to provide a Learning Campus in the town and to develop greater links with schools and businesses in the borough
- By ensuring that master-planning of sites takes full account of the educational requirements arising from development and that this is reflected in the Education Strategy and the Core Strategy Delivery and Implementation Plan
- The implementation of the action plans for the three health and wellbeing priorities being led by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- By working closely with providers in the health and care sectors to improve access to health services across the borough

- Working in close partnership with the Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital and other health and social care providers
- The implementation of actions arising out of the priorities set by the Basingstoke Children's Partnership.

### **Questions**

1. What should be the priority in the preparation of a Strategy for Education in the borough?
2. Is it appropriate to consider concentrating resources at the secondary education level (that is, years 11-16/18) on improvements to existing schools?
3. Should a University presence and a learning campus be encouraged in Basingstoke? If so, what form should they take and where should they be located?
4. What are the key facilities and services to be addressed at local neighbourhood or village level that would most improve the health and wellbeing of residents?

## f) Rural areas

### Introduction

The borough has a significant rural area. Over 90% of the land area is undeveloped. About 40% of the population live outside Basingstoke town. Rural businesses form a fundamental component of the borough's economy. The rural areas pose different challenges to the urban areas, with poor accessibility being a significant issue for most rural communities, with only limited public transport services in operation and restricted access to local services, such as shops and health facilities.

### Our proposed ambition

*Outside Basingstoke town, the borough's communities and the countryside are flourishing with vibrant towns and villages providing homes and services to meet local needs, including affordable housing. There are strong and sustainable local rural economies underpinned by locally-distinctive and environmentally-sustainable farming, forestry and other land uses, and a range of businesses that meet rural needs or add value to rural products and services.*

*The rural communities are empowered to continue to support and manage themselves and opportunities to do so are strengthened. They are supported by high-quality service provision, such as health and education in addition to broadband infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and businesses. The countryside provides an excellent range of opportunities for tourism and for urban and rural residents to enjoy quiet forms of rural recreation and well-managed countryside pursuits.*

### The ambition is supported by

- The emerging vision recognises the contribution rural areas make to the borough and the need to enrich our villages and the way that we plan for our countryside
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 *Planning for Prosperous Economies* specifically seeks to raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas, promoting sustainable patterns of development, improving economic performance to fulfil potential and promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agricultural sectors
- The work undertaken as a part of the Sustainability of Settlements Study which considers the roles and needs of the borough's rural towns and villages
- The Rural Housing Study, which assesses current and future demand for market housing and need for affordable housing in the rural areas of the borough.

### Benefits

- A pro-active approach to supporting the rural parts of the borough will bring significant benefits to a large number of people who live or work in the rural areas. It can also ensure that homes are provided to meet local needs and ensure that villages can continue to evolve
- Positive approach to meeting local needs in rural areas can reduce the need to travel for many residents and can assist in supporting other local services which may be in decline such as local shops. It is recognised that a network of villages and rural towns can provide essential local key services to wider rural communities
- A pro-active approach to the management of the landscape ensures that this is protected and enhanced and can provide opportunities for recreation and tourism which benefits the rural economy. This approach can also be applied to rural

buildings, to ensure that these are preserved and enhanced through new uses and which can provide opportunities for small businesses to develop.

#### Issues to consider

- Access to and from some rural settlements can be difficult compared to the main settlements in the borough due to infrequent public transport connections, or more isolated villages that are not within walking or cycling distance of local facilities. The opportunities to deliver public transport in rural areas are limited, where commercially-operated services are not viable
- The delivery of services in rural areas can be difficult due to the limited local population to support these facilities
- The identification of suitable sites for affordable housing provision in rural areas can be contentious due to the limited availability of sites, given the lower land values associated with affordable housing.

#### How the ambition can be achieved

- By identification in the Core Strategy of key settlements - Tadley, Overton and Whitchurch - as 'service centres' which smaller settlements look to for higher-order facilities and services that they lack
- By recognising the importance of access to neighbouring towns – Reading, Newbury and Andover – for higher-order facilities and services.
- By providing a flexible planning framework to support the provision of services and homes in rural settlements to meet local needs
- By developing a proactive approach to the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas through close working with the local community and consideration of the provision of an element of 'market' homes for sale, to support the development of affordable homes
- By working closely with, and empowering, communities as to how they might work best in the future, including through the preparation of Parish Plans and Village Design Statements to establish aspirations for how villages should look, to identify their particular needs and identify how these will be achieved.

#### Questions

1. Is the approach of identifying key settlements as service centres for other smaller settlements the right one? Yes / No - reasons
2. Do you agree with identifying a proposed settlement hierarchy of:
  - (i) primary service centre (wide range of facilities) – Basingstoke town
  - (ii) service centres (reasonable range of facilities) – Tadley, Overton, Whitchurch
  - (iii) local centres (small range of facilities) – Kingsclere, Old Basing, Oakley, Bramley
  - (iv) villages (at least two facilities) - Woolton Hill, Sherborne St John, Sheffield on Loddon, Silchester, North Waltham, St Mary Bourne, Burghclere, Headley, Ashford Hill, Preston Candover, Upton Grey, Penwood, Bishops Green?
3. What forms / scale of development should be permitted for each type of settlement?

4. Should the provision of affordable housing be supported in rural areas and should the principle of providing an element of market homes to support the affordable dwellings be considered?
5. Are Parish Plans the best way of identifying the aspirations of rural communities, including affordable housing, and other services and facilities that may be needed?

## g) Basingstoke town centre and district and local centres

### Introduction

Basingstoke town centre and the district centres (at Brighton Hill, Chineham, Overton, Tadley and Whitechurch) have a significant role in maintaining and enhancing prosperity and providing access to services across the borough. Local centres, such as Kingsclere and Bramley, also play an important role for individual local communities.

Basingstoke town centre is the retail, employment, cultural, commercial, leisure and public transport hub for both the borough and the wider area. As the most sustainable location in the borough it should provide the main focus of major development that will create additional journeys, whilst recognising that centres beyond the borough's boundaries, such as Andover, Newbury and Reading, also provide services for some of the borough's population.

Basingstoke town centre's boundary is currently drawn quite tightly around the main retail area (see Map 1), which could limit opportunities for providing additional services and facilities. Extending the town centre boundary could help provide greater opportunities for town centre uses to expand in the future and reduce the possibilities of such uses being located in out-of-centre areas. A suggested revised boundary for the town centre is shown in Appendix Two.

In addition to the town, district and local centres there are also a number of local shopping parades across the borough which serve the day-to-day needs of the community.

### Our proposed ambition

*A Basingstoke town centre that:*

- *is a destination of choice for local residents and workers, and those living outside the borough and fully provides for the retail needs of borough residents without the need for them to travel to other towns*
- *is well-connected - on foot, and by cycle and public transport and car - to the rest of the town and borough, and is well-designed*
- *has the flexibility to grow and improve to support Basingstoke's sub-regional role by having the opportunity for some of the services and facilities needed to expand to support the re-vitalised Basing View, and the distinctive cultural and historic offer of the Top of Town;*

*district and local centres that:*

- *continue to provide a network of hubs for communities across the borough for their day-to-day needs; and*

*for retail areas outside centres:*

- *achieve higher-quality design and improved integration.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by

- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 *Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth*, which states that: retail development should be focused within existing centres and that any development outside defined centres will need to demonstrate why it cannot be located within a centre
- Basingstoke being recognised in the *South East Plan* as an important centre, reflecting the important offer provided in terms of retail, commercial activity and its transport connections
- The emerging vision putting an emphasis on supporting Basingstoke as a major vibrant centre, to ensure that it plays an influential role in the region and supports our ambitions for regeneration
- Closely linked to strategies to regenerate Basing View and implement the *Vision for Central Basingstoke*
- Evidence base shows that the town centre is generally vibrant but highlights areas of weakness, such as a declining number of shops in the Top of Town
- The borough council's economic strategy *Driving Economic Prosperity for Basingstoke and Deane*, identifies the town centre as one of the key attractions of the town, but recognises that some improvements need to be made if the town is to compete with neighbouring town centres, such as having more independent and high fashion retailers
- The evidence base also highlights that the borough's district centres are generally healthy and vibrant, and that these play an important role in meeting day-to-day requirements, albeit, that some residents travel to other nearby centres for their main shopping needs.

### Benefits

- Allows the town centre to change to support the needs of a growing population
- Ensures that our town centre remains an attractive, vibrant and safe place to visit
- Helps to support and attract businesses and retailers to the town and reduces the need for our residents to travel elsewhere to meet their needs
- Supports other areas of the town by improving linkages and enabling some additional development to strengthen the facilities the town centre can offer
- Will help to provide for a more accessible town centre, with good links by public transport, cycling and walking
- Promotion and expansion of the town as a vibrant and competitive centre, in accordance with the newly published PPS4 *Planning for Prosperous Economies*
- Protects and supports the borough's existing district centres, ensuring that they can continue to meet local needs and support the approach of identifying key settlements as service providers in the settlement hierarchy, which is referred to in the section on Rural Areas.

### Issues to consider

- The image of Basingstoke town centre has improved significantly since the opening of Festival Place in 2002 but there is room for improvement
- The need to avoid the town centre becoming too large and consequently diluted by having town centre uses spread over an area that is too wide

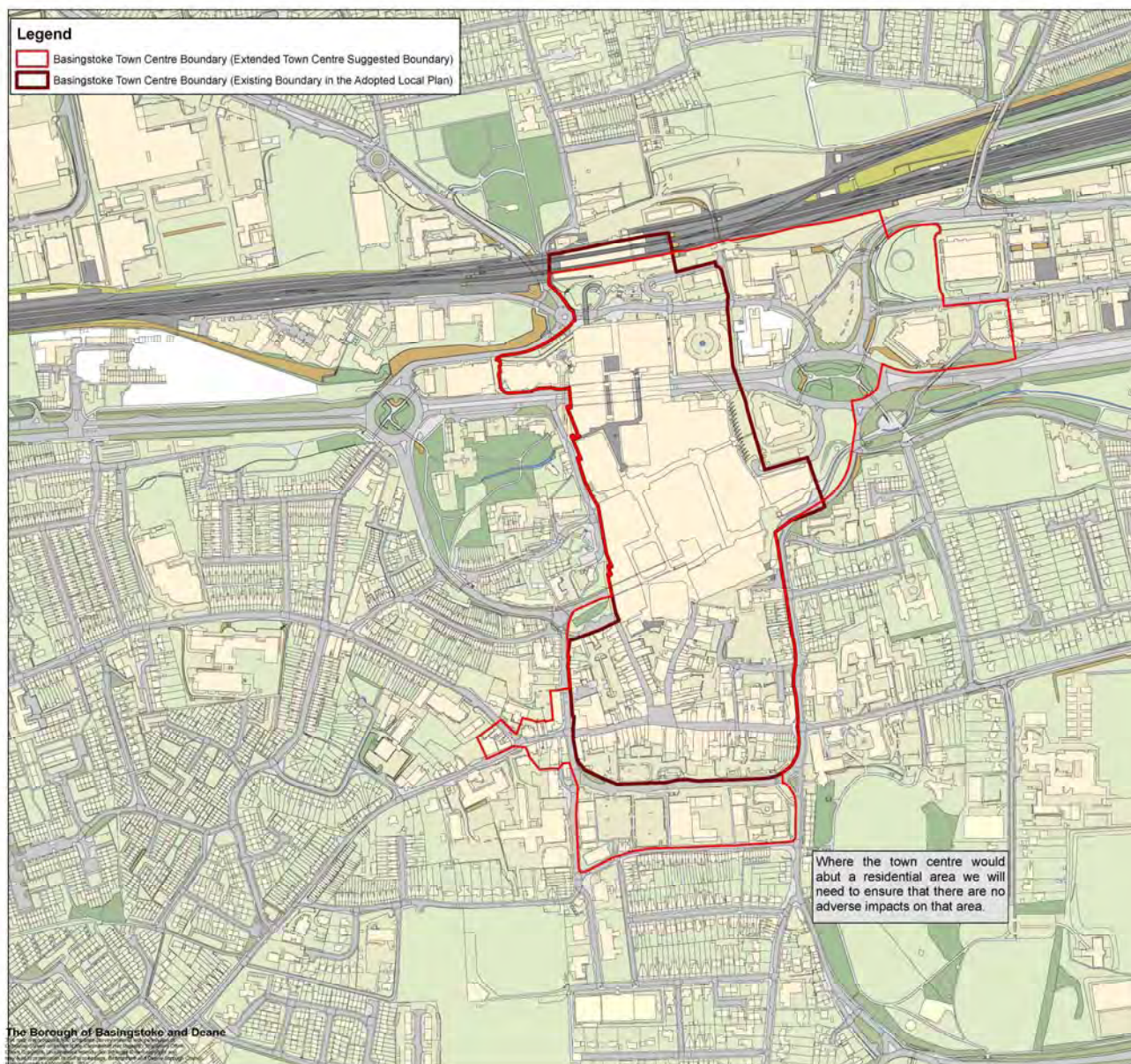
- Ensuring that any extension to the town centre boundary does not have adverse impacts on residential areas adjoining the town centre
- The need to improve access to, and links across, the town, providing a choice through improving public transport, walking and cycling access to the town centre
- The need to manage and control the loss of shops to other uses which may dilute the appeal of an area to shoppers, or mean that local facilities are not available in our shopping areas. This can have the effect of forcing people to travel further to meet their needs
- Out-of-centre retail areas which are not well connected or integrated with their surrounding areas and have low standards of design.

#### How the ambition can be achieved

- By defining a town centre boundary that is wider than currently set out in the local plan, in line with the above requirements and the results of the evidence base and to meet the demands of residents and businesses
- By identifying particular areas of the town centre where we may wish to encourage certain types of activities, such as in the Top of Town
- By developing a policy approach which restricts the loss of shops from our town and district centres where this impacts upon their vitality and viability
- Working with Hampshire County Council and transport providers to develop and implement a Town Access Plan
- Embedding in the LDF Core Strategy and development proposals the principles set out in the '*Vision for Central Basingstoke*' to:
  1. achieve a well-connected town centre;
  2. enhance the vitality, accessibility, character and appearance of public streets, spaces and areas in the town centre in a way that is compatible with town centre living; and
  3. build on Basingstoke's successful shopping 'heart' by widening the appeal of the town centre
- Exploring opportunities to re-shape out-of-centre retail areas.

#### Questions

1. Do you consider an extension to Basingstoke's town centre boundary is desirable? Yes / No. If yes, do you consider the proposed new boundary is appropriate? Yes / No,  
If no, why not and what areas should be in or outside the town centre boundary?
2. Should certain parts of the town centre be designated for certain activities? If so, which ones and for what purpose?
3. Should we seek to protect and enhance the district and local centres around the borough and how should we do this?
4. Should we allow a wider range of uses within local shopping parades to enable them to continue to serve the day-to-day needs of local communities?



Map no.1 – Basingstoke Town Centre Boundary

## **h) Culture, Leisure and Recreation**

### Introduction

This section covers all types of open space, sport and recreation facilities, community buildings, youth facilities and cultural facilities, including concert halls, theatres and art and craft centres.

### Our proposed ambition

*The borough's cultural and leisure offer provides significant recreational and learning opportunities for North Hampshire and beyond. This offer reflects: our historic past, innovative and modern visitor attractions and high-quality sporting and play facilities. The borough's network of open spaces provides excellent walking and cycling access to the countryside and has been delivered by exploiting the opportunities that are presented through new development. Sufficient allotments are provided locally to meet the demand for them from residents of new housing.*

*These facilities will be maintained to ensure that our residents, workers and visitors have the opportunity to participate in cultural and physical activities, to lead stimulating and healthy lifestyles without having to travel outside the borough. We also recognise that communities need a variety of public spaces and community buildings that they need to be able to "connect" and have the opportunity to get involved in their local area, through the provision of attractive, well designed open spaces and communal areas.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by:

- The emerging vision sets out a desire for new and improved well-designed local facilities, improved linkages with the countryside, and safe, active and healthy communities
- The LDF evidence base, which highlights a need for a change in approach in the provision of open space. This includes issues such as increased quantities of multi-functional green space, changes in population and society, including an ageing population, and also issues such as climate change which may impact on the types of sporting activity that are appropriate and the management of facilities
- The connection between recreation and leisure with healthy lifestyles.

### Benefits

- Ensures that borough residents, workers and visitors are well provided for in respect of leisure, community and cultural opportunities
- The borough is able to provide good opportunities for local clubs and teams through facilities like a new athletics track and possibilities such as a new football stadium
- Access to the countryside is significantly improved through new links provided as a part of developments, which allows greater opportunities for new residents to take part in leisure activities
- Positive benefits for biodiversity through the creation, expansion and linkage of habitats
- Provides the borough with additional attractions which will encourage further inward investment and visitors to benefit the local economy.

### Issues to consider

- There is strong competition for funding for large-scale facilities, such as a new football stadium, and it will be important to ensure that future investment in new and improved leisure, community and recreational facilities is well directed and such facilities thrive in the long term
- Balancing the protection of wildlife and other habitats with improving access to the countryside
- The increased frequency of grass pitches becoming unplayable in winter months and the opportunity to explore an increase in provision of artificial playing surfaces.

### How the ambition can be achieved:

- By identifying opportunities to provide green infrastructure as a part of new development and securing its implementation through the master-planning of sites
- By developing the necessary plans and strategies with partners, local clubs, stakeholders and the community to accompany the Core Strategy to deliver the required facilities and respond to the findings of the Leisure and Recreation Needs Assessment. This includes meeting the changing recreational demands of our residents
- By continuing to promote and enhance our existing cultural offer and secure new facilities, where possible
- By protecting and maintaining existing highly-valued community facilities to preserve and where appropriate, increase capacity and quality of provision
- By adopting a hierarchy of leisure and recreational facilities based on the level of sport and recreation provision appropriate to its significance (that is, local / neighbourhood facilities, facilities of borough-wide importance, and facilities of strategic importance beyond the borough boundaries)
- By identifying a number of locations, including the Leisure Park, within the Core Strategy as a focus for new and improved recreation and leisure facilities. This would cover both community facilities and those operated on a commercial basis.

### Questions

1. Do you consider that the approach to achieving the ambition is correct or should alternatives be considered?
2. Do you consider that the priority in terms of culture, leisure and recreational provision should focus on:
  - effectively maintaining what we already have
  - improving the cultural provision in central Basingstoke
  - improving the quality of our public open spaces
  - improving the quality and quantity of recreational and sporting facilities
  - improving the provision of community facilities
  - improving links from our towns and villages into the countryside
  - providing more allotments where there is local demand.

## i) Accommodating Housing Needs

### Introduction

The *South East Plan* looks to Basingstoke and Deane to provide an average of 945 (net) new homes per year from 2006 up to 2026, 915 of which would be in an area designated the 'Blackwater Valley / Western Corridor' (see Map no.2). Outside the Western Corridor (that is, in Overton, Whitchurch, St Mary Bourne, Highclere village and the surrounding area) the *South East Plan* looks for an average of 30 new homes each year.

Background work to the Core Strategy indicates that to accommodate sufficient new homes to meet the housing need of the existing population in the borough ('locally-generated housing need') will require an additional 740 homes per year to 2026. This requirement is a result of projected natural changes (that is, more births than deaths) and the projected continued decline in average household size.

However, due to the ageing of the local population, just meeting the local population's housing need may result in not enough residents of working age in the borough to meet local employment requirements. This will depend on future employment rates and retirement ages, and could affect our ambition for economic prosperity.

### Our proposed ambition

*New homes and new communities in the borough will be built to a high-quality, sustainable and locally-distinctive design in a carbon neutral and resource-efficient manner. They will be fully integrated into existing communities and incorporate a range of high-quality infrastructure to benefit existing and new residents.*

*New housing development will provide a range of house types, sizes and tenures, including social rented and shared equity housing, to meet locally identified housing needs both through redevelopment / regeneration opportunities and on greenfield sites. Homes to suit all will be incorporated, from starter homes to executive homes, to those looking to downsize and retire, and those requiring care, and these will be served by high quality infrastructure.*

*The focus for new development should be in, and around, Basingstoke town - as the largest and most sustainable settlement in the borough. However, there may be opportunities for a limited amount of new development in and around some other towns and villages.*

*The most sustainable greenfield sites will be identified for development, having fully explored and taken forward opportunities for regeneration and redevelopment in the urban areas. This approach will provide housing which meets our identified needs and provide high-quality homes and services. New and existing communities will be fully integrated - through access and by ensuring connectivity and through the sharing of facilities.*

### The proposed ambition is supported by

- The emerging vision fully recognises the need for well-planned growth to create safe and inviting places and communities where people want to live with high-quality facilities, including the improvement of existing facilities
- Government guidance in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1 *Delivering Sustainable Development*, PPS3 *Housing* and PPS12 *Local Spatial Planning* provides a high-

level framework for the provision of housing, communities and sustainable development

- PPS3 emphasizes that: good design is fundamental to the development of high-quality new housing and that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Proposals for development that are inappropriate in design for the context, or fail to improve the character or quality of an area and how it functions, should be unacceptable.

### Benefits

- New homes will be built to meet the locally-generated needs of the borough's growing population and the long-term trend of smaller households
- Local people have the opportunity of living in a well-designed and energy efficient home, which they can afford, meets their needs, and is located in a community where they are happy living
- An increased emphasis on ensuring high quality and locally-distinctive design for new development across the borough will help provide local people with an environment that they can be rightly proud of. It will help distinguish Basingstoke and Deane from other places and make it an area that will attract further investment.

### Issues to consider

- The *South East Plan* identifies an average of 945 new homes across the borough between 2006 and 2026. About 740 new homes per year will need to be built from now until 2026 to meet the housing requirement if the current local population did not change apart from natural change through births and deaths and assuming the projected continued decline in average household size
- Between April 2006 and March 2009 3448 new homes (net) were built, at an average of 1150 per year, well above the South East Plan annual average. These new homes that have already been built will need to be taken into account in determining how many new homes need to be built in the remainder of the plan period up to 2026
- The borough is split between the Western Corridor Blackwater Valley sub-region and the 'rest of Hampshire' area. The *South East Plan* identifies a separate housing requirement for both areas. Most of the 'rest of Hampshire' provision of 600 homes (2006-26) has already been built or has planning permission
- In Basingstoke town and settlements with populations above 3000 the current policy is that 40% of housing should be affordable where a site has 15 homes or more. For the rest of the borough the level of housing development where affordable housing is required is seven homes or more (or 0.2 hectares). Current policy indicates that affordable housing should be split between social rent (25%) and shared ownership (15%). The borough council has committed to a target of a minimum of 300 affordable homes per year to assist in helping meet the housing needs of those people on the council's housing register. The Core Strategy needs to consider whether the current policy is sufficient to meet this target and reduce the numbers of people in housing need in the borough
- The requirement for higher design and energy efficiency standards will come at a cost, and most of the energy and heating demands come from existing buildings. Consequently it will be important to make significant improvements in the energy efficiency of the existing stock, as well as setting high standards for new

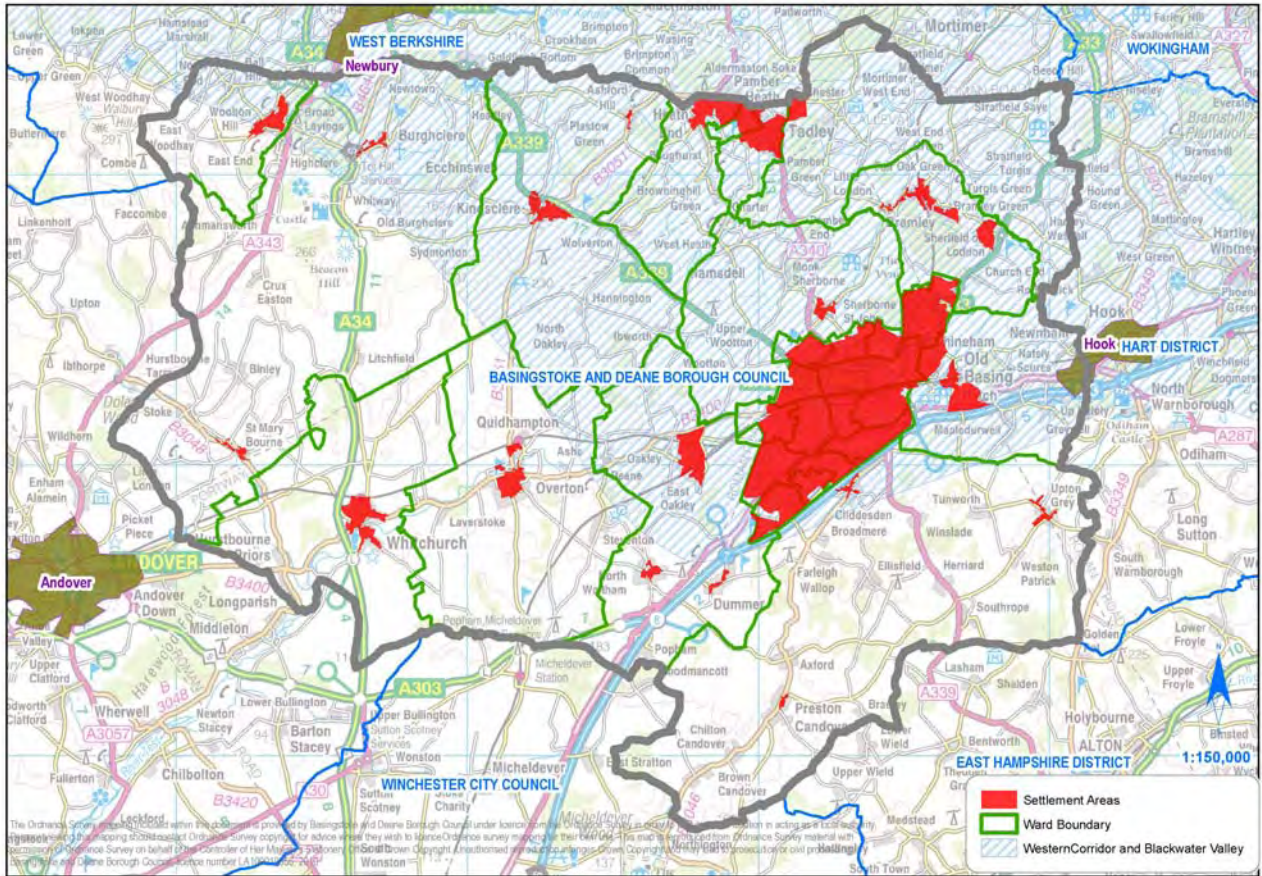
development. This could be achieved by retrofitting existing stock through the application of a carbon-offset obligation from new development and exploring the opportunities for developing combined heat and power generation in existing areas.

#### How the ambition can be achieved

- For the Core Strategy to be unequivocal in setting the requirement for high-quality, locally distinctive and sustainable design for new homes and new communities
- For the Core Strategy to be clear in the level of new housing that is sought for the plan period up to 2026, and for there to be robust local evidence as to the level of housing being sought
- For the Core Strategy to set out a clear policy on the level and type of affordable housing being sought on housing sites across the borough and to set the threshold(s) for sites on which affordable housing will be sought, based on robust local evidence.

#### **Questions**

1. Do you consider it would be appropriate to provide an average of 740 new homes per year in the borough to 2026, to meet the locally-generated housing need?
2. Would this level of new housing meet our economic aspirations for the borough?
3. Do you consider that the current aspiration of 40% affordable homes on larger sites, and the split of 25% social rented and 15% shared ownership, are still appropriate?



Map no. 2 – Western Corridor and part of Blackwater Valley Sub-Region

## Appendix: Glossary

**Affordable housing** – non-market housing, includes social rented and shared equity ownership / intermediate housing

**Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** – annual report which monitors the implementation of LDF policies

**Carbon neutral** - through a transparent process of measuring emissions, reducing those emissions and offsetting residual emissions – the net calculated carbon emissions equal zero.

**Core Strategy** – the LDF document setting out the vision, spatial strategy and key policies for the borough

**Development Plan Document (DPD)** – a LDF document that is required to be formally submitted to the Secretary of State and is examined by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate as to its 'soundness'

**Diamond for Investment and Economic Growth** – eight diamonds - Basingstoke, Brighton & Hove, Central Oxfordshire, Gatwick, Thames Gateway Kent, Milton Keynes / Aylesbury Vale, Reading and Urban South Hampshire – were identified in the South East Regional Economic Strategy (RES). They are the 'sub-regional functional areas' with the greatest potential for significant contributions to economic growth in the south east.

**Employment land review (ELR)** – part of the LDF evidence base that reviews the employment land in the borough

**Housing completions** – new homes that have been built and signed off by building control officers

**Infrastructure** – is defined in the *South East Plan* as including:

- transport (airports, ports, roads, cycleways, footpaths, railways);
- affordable housing;
- education (further and higher education, secondary and primary education, nurseries);
- health (hospitals, health centres and primary care trusts, ambulance services);
- social infrastructure (supported accommodation, social and community facilities, sports centres, open spaces, parks and play spaces);
- green infrastructure (network of multi-functional green spaces and other natural features);
- public services (waste management and disposal, libraries, cemeteries, emergency services, places of worship, prisons and drug treatment centres);
- utility services (gas, electricity, heat, water, waste water treatment and telecommunications).

**Key themes** – an informal stage of engagement with interested parties on the LDF Core Strategy

**Local Development Document (LDD)** – incorporates both Development Plan Documents (those LDF documents tested by examination) and Supplementary Planning Document (those LDF documents not tested by examination)

- Local Development Framework (LDF)** – the suite of documents that set out the planning policies for the borough
- Local Development Scheme (LDS)** – the project timetable for the LDF
- Local distinctiveness** – what sets a particular area apart from other areas
- Masterplanning** – drawing together of the proposals for buildings, spaces, movement and land use in producing sustainable communities, and matching these aspirations with an implementation strategy.
- Parish plans** - documents produced by town and parish councils in consultation with their local residents that provide clear evidence of community aspirations and priorities. They provide a plan for the future which both the parish and borough councils can support and can open up funding streams for projects
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS)** – national planning guidance and policy which LDF policy needs to take into account
- Pre-submission** – the final formal stage of consultation on a draft DPD prior to the formal submission to the Secretary of State
- Regional Economic Strategy (RES)** – sets out the strategy for economic development in the region
- Rest of Hampshire area** – that part of the borough that lies to the south of the Western Corridor Blackwater Valley sub-region
- Smart growth** – economic growth through productivity gains and limited environmental impact
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – sets out how the council will consult with stakeholders, other interested parties and hard to reach groups with regards to LDF documents
- South East Plan (SEP)** – adopted in 2008 and sets out the planning policy for the South East England region
- Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – a LDF document that does not require formal submission to the Secretary of State or examination by the Planning Inspectorate
- Sustainable Community Strategy** - a required document prepared by local agencies working together to set out the vision for the area and ways it will improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area.
- Town Access Plan (TAP)** – the borough council is currently working with Hampshire County Council to develop an Access Plan for Basingstoke. The plan will be aimed at shaping the way we move in and around the town and at making the best use of the highways and public spaces
- Vision for central Basingstoke** - adopted by the Council in December 2007 and sets out the vision for the future of the town over the next 20 years
- Western Corridor Blackwater Valley sub-region** – one of the nine sub-regions identified across the South East of England region in the South East Plan. The northern, eastern and central part of the borough, including Basingstoke town, are included in this sub-region.

## Key contacts

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## Have your say

Please either complete the LDF Key Themes questionnaire and return to:

**LDF Team**

**Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council**

**Civic Offices**

**London Road**

**Basingstoke**

**Hants**

**RG21 4AH**

or visit [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/go/keythemes) and respond online.

