

5 Strategic Options

5 Strategic Options

5.1 This chapter describes the different options (approaches) the LDF can pursue in order to deliver the vision and aims set out in the previous chapter. The options and questions presented here concentrate on the strategic issues of accommodating development. These options are not necessarily exhaustive and you may feel that there are other approaches which could be pursued. Should this be the case you are encouraged to provide details of these as part of your representation. More detailed policy areas are discussed in Chapter 6: Development Management Options.

Common Features To All Options

5.2 With each of the different options for the LDF representing a different approach to delivering a common vision and strategic aims, there are elements which are common. These common features are highlighted below and are followed by a more detailed justification.

Overview

- Continuing the strategy of urban focus and urban renaissance by encouraging mixed use developments in town centres and other areas that offer the opportunity to access key services and employment, in balance with a high quality built environment.
- Respect and maintain the general settlement pattern of the Royal Borough and the countryside areas between them, through focusing new development according to the settlement's role and function, and continuing protection of the Green Belt.

Economic Features

- Maidenhead will continue to develop its position as a key business location in the Thames Valley and the Royal Borough's primary business location. High quality office floorspace will be provided in Maidenhead town centre where it would contribute to wider rejuvenation.
- Windsor and Eton will continue to be one of the country's most popular tourist destinations with the historic environment at the heart of its attraction.
- Employment growth will in general be focused within existing employment and commercial areas.
- Diversity of employment will be maintained by protecting an appropriate supply of industrial and warehouse floorspace across the Royal Borough.
- Retail growth will in general be focused in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres where it would link to existing shopping facilities. Within Maidenhead, retail growth will underpin rejuvenation of the town centre and be located where it would support the existing core shopping facilities.
- The delivery of a transport hub focused at Maidenhead railway station with clearer links to the town centre.

Housing Features

- Housing will in general be focused within existing settlements outside the Green Belt at a level appropriate to the role and function and in locations where they can access key services and employment. The majority of housing will be delivered in the Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor, areas.
- Require the provision of affordable housing as part of larger housing developments across the Royal Borough. Exceptions to restrictions on new housing in the Green Belt to allow local rural housing need to be met where suitable sites exist.

Environmental Features

- Building and activities within the Green Belt will be tightly controlled to ensure against inappropriate forms of development.
- Create and protect new Green Belt land.
- The historic environment will be protected and enhanced across the Royal Borough.
- Important natural assets including those important to wildlife and the River Thames Corridor, will be protected and enhanced across the Royal Borough.
- High quality design, including respect for local character and the use of renewable / low-carbon technologies, will be required across the Royal Borough.
- Development at risk of flooding will be avoided for its own sake and for the sake of elsewhere.

5.3 The settlement pattern within the Royal Borough is characterised by the two main towns of Windsor and Maidenhead and a number of smaller surrounding settlements. Larger settlements in general offer the greatest potential to accommodate growth in the most sustainable form, primarily due to their inherent critical mass supporting a wide range of economic and social services and facilities, and the availability of land for development through natural economic change. In broad terms both national and regional planning policy promote the efficient use of urban land to deliver the majority of new development. This includes building at higher densities, focusing developments which attract a large number of people within town centres, and ensuring that all development benefits from an appropriate access to facilities and services.

5.4 The overall spatial approach for all options continues the strategy of urban focus and renaissance, maximising the role of the towns in accommodating development. At the heart of this approach is the support for the town centres which are the most accessible locations within the Royal Borough and from which there are public transport connections to the wider region. Overall, the existing settlement pattern would be maintained as would the countryside between them. Previous work on the LDF showed strong support for maintaining this pattern for future development.

5.5 The majority of development will be delivered in and around Maidenhead to reflect the town's sustainability level, its role as a business location and the availability of land. While both Windsor and Maidenhead are major towns,⁽¹⁷⁾ Maidenhead is generally a more sustainable location. It is the larger town, performs a significant role in the Thames Valley business economy and is not subject to the same level of constraints as Windsor.⁽¹⁸⁾ The selection of Maidenhead as the terminus of Crossrail also provides a further stimulus to the rejuvenation of the town centre.

5.6 Windsor is a healthy town centre with a wide range of shops. It has a particularly high level of environmental quality due to its setting alongside Windsor Castle and the presence of many other historic buildings, parkland and the River Thames. The town centre is not comparable with others in the Royal Borough or wider area due to the high levels of tourism. Windsor's continued success is dependent on maintaining the quality of the visitor experience both in terms of accessibility and historic integrity.

5.7 In contrast to Windsor, Maidenhead town centre is aimed more towards the needs of residents. Whilst an accessible shopping location with a good range of shops, the town centre has fallen in national rankings due to the increased shopping and leisure provision at larger neighbouring centres. Action is required to stop the potential long-term decline of the centre and ensure its competitiveness as a shopping, leisure and employment destination. Improved linkages from the railway station to the core shopping centre is essential to the rejuvenation of the centre. Allowing high quality office development within the centre, and carefully managing supply elsewhere, further provides an opportunity to build on the stimulus of Crossrail and deliver wider community benefits.

17 Both Windsor and Maidenhead are defined as Secondary Regional Centres in the emerging South East Plan.

18 Windsor and Eton are restricted by the extent of the historic environment including land within the Crown Estate.

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5.8 Current information on the land availability shows that approximately 60% urban potential is within Maidenhead compared to approximately 20% in Windsor, 7% in Sunninghill and 6% in Sunningdale. Delivering the majority of development in Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor, prioritises the re-use of urban land, helping the protection of the Green Belt from unnecessary and inappropriate development.

5.9 National and regional policy advise local authorities with Green Belt land to holistically review Green Belt boundaries, including the consideration of whether additional land should be designated. Depending on the density at which development is delivered, there is pressure to amend Green Belt boundaries to increase land available for development in the medium or long-term. The council is committed to protecting the role and importance of the Green Belt and has identified approximately 50 to 60 ha of additional land which may be suitable to designate as Green Belt. The designation of this land is proposed in all of the options regardless as to whether it is needed to help compensate for any potential boundary amendments required elsewhere.

5.10 The high cost of housing means that some households do not have sufficient income for them to afford their own home at prevailing market prices. This has led to recruitment issues and higher commuting into the Royal Borough's main towns from less expensive areas. Information on housing need shows an uneven distribution with the highest need being in the Maidenhead area followed by Windsor when compared with other parts of the Royal Borough.

5.11 Historically the Royal Borough, and particularly Maidenhead, are strong economic performers. Most businesses are located on employment estates and in the towns centres. Maidenhead is the most established location with the largest number of business and floorspace. Over recent years there has been an increased level of investment in office development, both new and refurbishment, particularly in the Maidenhead area. The overall approach to business is to continue focusing investment within employment areas and the town centres, protecting the presence of industrial businesses. New office provision within the Maidenhead area will be managed to ensure the attraction of the town centre, stimulating the rejuvenation of older properties. The re-use or redevelopment of unsuitable locations and premises for alternative uses such as housing will be encouraged.

5.12 All options seek to maintain the quality of our towns and villages including their heritage in order to enhance the attractiveness of our towns and villages as places to live, work and visit. Similarly, all options also seek to ensure the protection of biodiversity and natural environment by ensuring the integrity of important sites and networks including the River Thames corridor.

5.13 High quality design will be expected across all development types and locations. This includes the suitable erection and use of renewable and low carbon technologies to improve the environmental impact of new and existing buildings and activities.

Summary Sustainability Appraisal⁽¹⁹⁾

5.14 The following is a brief summary of the sustainability implications of the key features common to all options.

Table 5.1 Summary Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Common Features to All Options

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Common Features to All Options	
•	Socially, the impact is likely to be mostly positive in terms of providing affordable housing, encouraging sustainable construction and design and improving accessibility to services. However, developing at higher densities and in and around Air Quality Management Areas will need to be managed carefully to avoid any negative impact on air quality and health and well-being.
•	Economically, the impact is mostly positive in terms of supporting the local economy and tourism sector and supporting the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre.
•	Environmentally, the impact is likely to be mostly positive in terms of the reuse of previously developed land, reducing flood risk, reducing the need to travel, reducing green house gas emissions per head, protecting the historic and natural environment and encouraging sustainable transport and sustainable design and construction. However, more development in the towns could lead to a change in built form in some areas, including taller buildings and will need careful management to ensure against localised environmental impacts such as noise. Developing at higher densities in and around Air Quality Management Areas will need to be managed carefully to avoid a reduction in air quality. A new transport hub around

19 See Revised Scoping Report: Core Strategy DPD and Delivery and Development Principles DPD (June 2008).

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Common Features to All Options

Maidenhead railway station provides the opportunity to encourage more sustainable forms of travel and manage traffic movements through the town centre.

Question 4

Do you agree with the general approach outlined under Common Features to All Options?

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Development Density

5.15 The council needs to plan for employment, retail, leisure, education, health facilities and housing. National and regional decisions guide the choices to be made locally.

5.16 A key challenge facing the LDF is how to accommodate the household growth levels forecast for the Royal Borough. The emerging South East Plan requires the delivery of 346 new dwellings per annum, or a total of 6,920 dwellings, between 2006 and 2026 within the Royal Borough. As a local authority with Green Belt land, the emerging South East Plan expects the LDF to plan a further 5 years ahead to 2031. There are, however, objections lodged against this aspect of the South East Plan. A further 5 year supply would require a total of 8,650 additional dwellings to be accommodated up to 2031. In the recent past the Royal Borough has had to deliver a lower amount of approximately 281 per annum.

5.17 The extent of the Green Belt within the Royal Borough⁽²⁰⁾ has led to existing planning policy delivering the vast majority of new housing and commercial floorspace through intensification of urban areas, for example the demolition of existing houses and their replacement with a greater number of smaller homes.

5.18 Past consultations show strong resident support for continuing the approach of intensification of urban areas and the protection of the Green Belt, however, some respondents also express concerns about the impacts of intensification on character and environmental quality, traffic and the amount of apartment development. Representations to many planning applications raise similar concerns, particularly in relation to applications for apartment development.

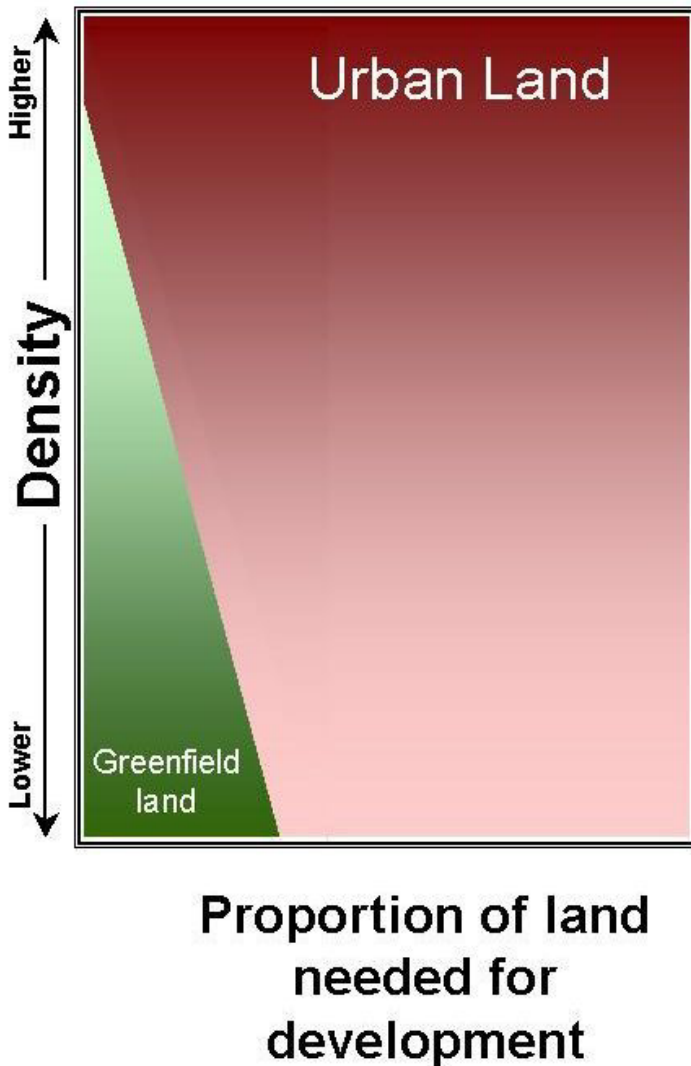
5.19 In line with past consultations, the council's previous work on the LDF proposed a strategy which sought to accommodate development within existing settlement boundaries. To achieve this, the strategy accepted a moderate level of intensification throughout built up areas with greater intensification within the town centres. The strategy was supported by extensive evidence and received cross-party support. The report of the examination was published in October 2007. The Inspector concluded that the strategy was unsound primarily due to the heavy reliance on unidentified land within urban areas to meet development needs. While the Inspector accepted that development within settlement boundaries would continue to be a significant component of future supply, he expressed doubt that strategic land requirements could almost entirely be met by recycling previously developed land within the settlement boundaries. If additional land is to be identified, it will be necessary to look at land beyond existing settlement boundaries in the Green Belt.

5.20 In addition to issues of land supply, the Inspector further expressed a review of Green Belt boundaries would provide an opportunity for the LDF to deliver more affordable homes, reduce the overall proportion of apartment development and help ensure against the development of land with poor sustainability credentials. It should be noted that the Inspector reached his opinion before the publication of the Report of the Panel examining the South East Plan which increased the amount of housing that had to be delivered in the Royal Borough.

5.21 Since this time, the council has sought to identify additional land that has the potential for delivering housing and employment. Current information on land supply suggests the continuation of the existing approach to residential density would deliver approximately 15 years supply within the towns and villages excluded from the Green Belt. This is insufficient to fully meet the Government's requirement. While a proportion of unidentified land (commonly referred to as windfall) will become available over time, national planning policy does not allow the council to unduly rely on this.

²⁰ The whole of the Royal Borough, with the exception of the larger settlements is designated part of the Metropolitan Green Belt surrounding London. This amounts to approximately 83% of the total land area or 16,500 hectares.

Figure 5.1 Illustration of Principle: Density and Land Requirement



5.22 The intensity or density at which development is delivered is key in determining how much land is needed for development.

5.23 High densities would deliver more homes on land within urban areas, reducing pressures for greenfield development and ensuring more housing occurred in areas with access to existing services and facilities. However, it may also mean building on some undeveloped areas, some areas in less intensive use and providing taller buildings. While increasing density does not rule out houses, apartment development is more likely as density levels increase.

5.24 Low densities, while reducing pressure to redevelop land within urban areas, means more homes in places which would need additional infrastructure such as roads and utilities, and building on more Green Belt land.

5.25 The principle of how development density affects the proportion of land needed for development is illustrated by Figure 5.1.

5.26 To illustrate how density influences the form and appearance of buildings, Table 5.2 shows a range of recent developments with differing densities from across the Royal Borough.

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Table 5.2 Density and Urban Form

Density and Urban Form		
Density ⁽²¹⁾	Photograph	Plan
14		
36		
47		

21 Dwelling density is calculated per hectare. The relevant site area includes the land developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping, and children's play areas, where these are provided.

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Density and Urban Form


Density ⁽²¹⁾	Photograph	Plan
47		
58		
70		
90		

21 Dwelling density is calculated per hectare. The relevant site area includes the land developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping, and children's play areas, where these are provided.

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Density and Urban Form		
Density ⁽²¹⁾	Photograph	Plan
100		
132		
171		

21 Dwelling density is calculated per hectare. The relevant site area includes the land developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping, and children's play areas, where these are provided.

Density and Urban Form		
Density ⁽²¹⁾	Photograph	Plan
280		

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Question 5

Given the need for new homes and employment, how important do you consider protecting the Green Belt to be compared with more building in urban areas? *(Please circle the number which most accurately reflects your view on protecting the Green Belt- 5 being the most important and 1 being the least important.)*

1	2	3	4	5
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21 Dwelling density is calculated per hectare. The relevant site area includes the land developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping, and children's play areas, where these are provided.

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Option A Higher Density Growth

Option A: Higher Density Growth

Higher residential densities would be likely across the Royal Borough's existing built up areas.

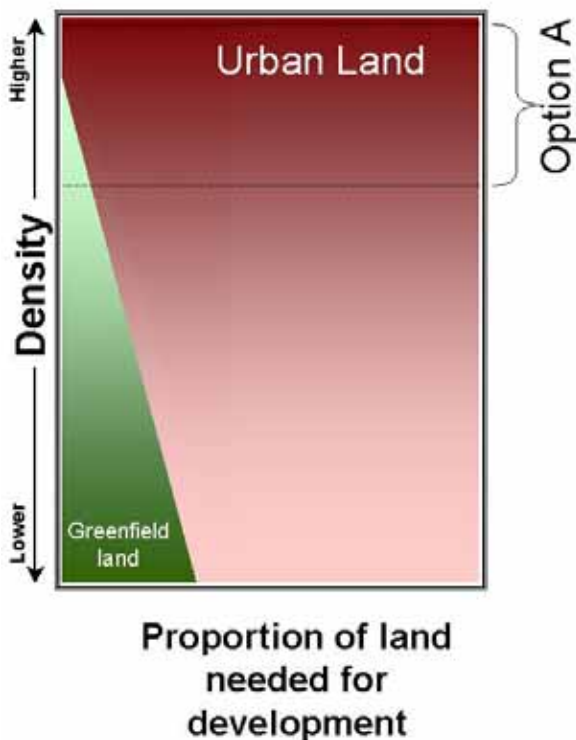
The towns of Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor, would absorb most new development so as to support their role as the most sustainable settlements, their importance as business locations and the availability of land. Other settlements outside the Green Belt would also be expected to accommodate new development.

In town centres, and other specific locations, taller buildings would be likely.

A very small amount of greenfield land, including Green Belt land, around the edge of settlements may be required to provide development - the smallest amount of any of the three options. Any development would be on small sites with limited impact on infrastructure and how the area looks.

There would be no or very minimal net loss of Green Belt land.

Figure 5.2 Illustration of Principle: Option A



5.27 Under this option, the LDF would intensify the strategy of urban focus and urban renaissance by encouraging a step change in intensification with the use of higher density development throughout the Royal Borough's main settlements, particularly in town centres. Town centre developments would be delivered in the range of 125 - 225 dwellings per hectare (dph), while surrounding urban areas would be in the range of 60 - 120 dph. Suburban development would increase to between 50 - 80 dph. The range of densities provided under this option would increase the proportion of apartment developments within urban and suburban areas compared with houses. Apartments would be needed to reach the necessary level of density within town centres. Table 5.2 shows examples of developments with differing densities and can be used to interpret the types of scheme that would need to be delivered under this option.

5.28 Maidenhead and Windsor are widely recognised to be the most sustainable locations within the Royal Borough. While both are main towns, Maidenhead is generally more sustainable and is not subject to the same level of constraints as Windsor. Under this option, the majority of development would be delivered in the Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor areas. This reflects their role as the most sustainable settlements, their importance to the economy and the availability of land for development.

5.29 Providing higher density development in suitable locations makes the best use of opportunities for new homes to be provided in proximity to jobs and services, so encouraging walking, cycling and public transport. It would also provide the maximum opportunity to uplift the commercial value of land within Maidenhead town centre, helping to stimulate its rejuvenation. Higher densities may however lead to a change in the current form of building within particular areas, for example building heights and depths.

5.30 The approach of Maidenhead and Windsor accommodating the majority of development drew high levels of support in previous consultations, however the outcome of the Inspector in his examination commented that there were compelling grounds for placing Maidenhead above Windsor in any settlement hierarchy. In stating his opinion, the Inspector did not however limit the distribution of development solely to Maidenhead.

5.31 While current information on land supply within settlements excluded from the Green Belt suggests a shortfall against the Royal Borough's growth requirement utilising the moderate level of intensification, a higher level would reduce this shortfall. The potential for greenfield development under this option, including potential implications for the Green Belt, is less than any other option.

5.32 Should a limited amount of greenfield land be required for development, restrictions would be put in place to phase back its availability, helping to ensure the viability and delivery of land within settlements. Delivery would lend itself to dispersed small sites with limited visual and infrastructure impacts.

Summary Sustainability Appraisal⁽²²⁾

5.33 The following is a brief summary of the sustainability implications of Option A.

Table 5.3 Summary Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Option A

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Option A: Higher Density Growth	
•	With development in this option more likely to be located in areas that are accessible to services and employment, it should reduce the need for people to travel, and when necessary provide opportunity for walking and cycling.
•	With the smallest potential use of greenfield land, this option should have a reduced impact on the countryside compared to the other options.
•	With greater reliance on existing urban areas to absorb more development, this option requires a change in built form within town centres and some other urban areas.
•	Higher residential densities are likely to reduce the provision of new family housing and increase the proportion of apartment development compared to the other options.
•	Higher residential densities are likely to result in smaller sites being developed. This reduces the potential to provide affordable housing to meet local needs compared to the other options.
•	The higher residential densities, especially in the towns, will need to be managed carefully if there is to be no adverse effect on air quality in and around the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), health and well being, and the number of people exposed to noise pollution.

22 See Revised Scoping Report: Core Strategy DPD and Delivery and Development Principles DPD (June 2008).

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Option B Moderate Density Growth

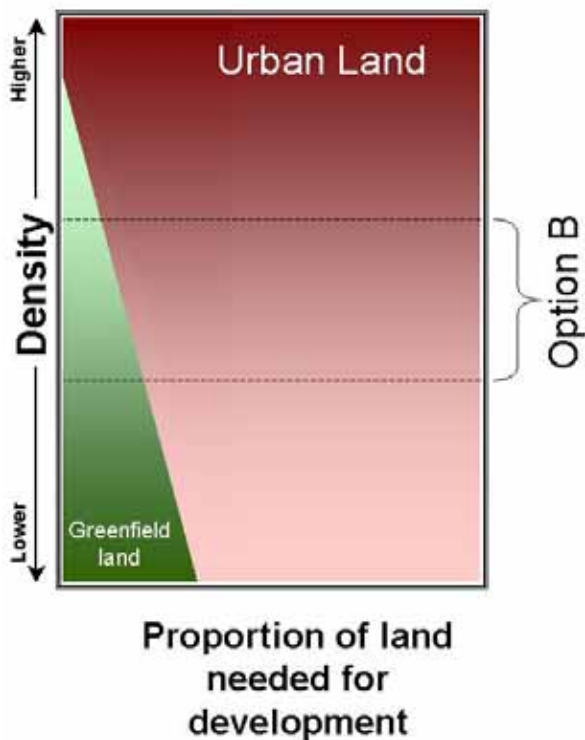
Option B: Moderate Density Growth

Current moderate increases in residential density would be maintained.

The towns of Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor, would absorb most new development so as to support their role as the most sustainable settlements, their importance as business locations and the availability of land. Other settlements outside the Green Belt would also be expected to accommodate some new development.

Some greenfield land around the edge of settlements would be required to provide development, and may result in some loss of Green Belt land. Delivery could be via small sites with limited impact on infrastructure and how the area looks or via one or two larger sites which provide the opportunity to support new facilities and infrastructure.

Figure 5.3 Illustration of Principle: Option B



5.34 Under this option, the LDF would continue the existing strategy of urban focus and urban regeneration by encouraging the use of moderately higher density development throughout the Royal Borough's main settlements. Town centre developments would be delivered in the range of 90 - 120 dwellings per hectare (dph), while surrounding urban areas would be in the range of 50 - 60 dph. Suburban development would occur around 30 - 35 dph. The range of densities provided under this option would allow a variety of housing types to be delivered across urban and suburban areas. Apartments would however be needed to reach the necessary level of density within town centres. Table 5.2 shows examples of developments with differing densities and can be used to interpret the types of scheme that would need to be delivered under this option.

5.35 Maidenhead and Windsor are widely recognised to be the most sustainable locations within the Royal Borough. While both are main towns, Maidenhead is generally more sustainable and is not subject to the same level of constraints as Windsor. Under this option, the majority of development would be delivered in the Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor areas. This reflects their role as the most sustainable settlements, their importance to the economy and the availability of land for development. It would also provide opportunity for a reasonable proportion of new homes to be provided in proximity to jobs, so encouraging access

by walking, cycling and public transport. It would also help stimulate the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre through increased commercial values.

5.36 The approach of Maidenhead and Windsor accommodating the majority of development drew high levels of support in previous consultations, however, the outcome of the Inspector in his examination report commented that there were compelling grounds for placing Maidenhead above Windsor in any settlement hierarchy. In stating his opinion, the Inspector did not however limit the distribution of development solely to Maidenhead.

5.37 With moderate intensification, current information on land supply within settlements excluded from the Green Belt suggests a shortfall against the Royal Borough's growth requirement. While a proportion of currently unidentified land will become available over time, it is likely that greenfield development will be required for development within the plan period and/or safeguarded for longer-term use. The potential for greenfield development under this option is greater than that proposed by Option A: Higher Density Growth but less than Option C: Lower Density Growth.

5.38 Restrictions would be placed on any necessary greenfield development to phase back its availability, helping to ensure the viability and delivery of land within settlements. Delivery could be via dispersed small sites with limited visual and infrastructure impacts or via one or two larger sites which provide the opportunity to support new facilities and infrastructure.

Summary Sustainability Appraisal⁽²³⁾

5.39 The following is a brief summary of the sustainability implications of Option B.

Table 5.4 Summary Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Option B

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Option B Moderate Density Growth	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a reasonable proportion of new dwellings likely to be located in areas which are accessible to services and employment, the need to travel for new households will be partially reduced, and when necessary provide the opportunity for walking and cycling. The reduction in the need to travel would be less than Option A but more than Option C. • This option uses more countryside, or greenfield development than Option A but less than Option C. • A moderate amount of greenfield development provides the opportunity to provide a higher proportion of family housing compared to Option A, although apartment development will still be required in the town centres. The moderate amount of greenfield development also provides an opportunity to provide more affordable housing to meet local needs compared to Option A. • With less reliance on existing urban areas to deliver more development, this option provides a greater opportunity to maintain the existing built form of these areas compared to Option A. This would help maintain the physical distinctiveness of these areas. 	

23 See Revised Scoping Report: Core Strategy DPD and Delivery and Development Principles DPD (June 2008).

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Option C Lower Density Growth

Option C: Lower Density Growth

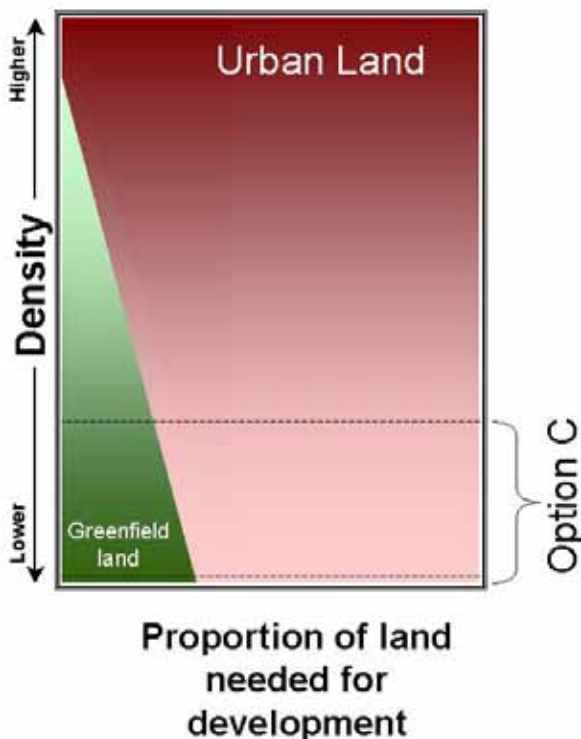
Lower residential densities would be likely across the Royal Borough.

The towns of Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor, would absorb most new development. Other settlements outside the Green Belt would also be expected to accommodate limited new development.

A larger amount of greenfield land around the edge of existing settlements would be needed for development, resulting in a greater loss of Green Belt land, the largest amount of any of the three options.

Delivery could be across many small sites with limited impact on infrastructure and how the area looks, or via a few larger sites which provide the opportunity to support new facilities and infrastructure.

Figure 5.4 Illustration of Principle: Option C



5.40 Under this option, the LDF would continue the strategy of urban focus and urban renaissance but at a lower intensity throughout the Royal Borough's main settlements than under the other options. Intensification would still be utilised in the town centres. Providing lower density development within suburban areas would increase the opportunity to maintain the current form of building and reduce pressures to build on some open spaces.

5.41 Current information on land supply within settlements excluded from the Green Belt shows a shortfall against the Royal Borough's housing requirement utilising the moderate level of intensification. Since lower densities would reduce the potential of urban areas to accommodate further development, this option would lead to a greater shortfall. Greenfield development would be necessary under this option to ensure an adequate land supply. The amount of any greenfield development, and the related impact on the Green Belt, would be the largest of the options.

5.42 Maidenhead and Windsor are widely recognised to be the most sustainable locations within the Royal Borough. While both are main towns, Maidenhead is generally more sustainable and is not subject to the same level of constraints as Windsor. Under this option, the majority of development within existing urban areas would be delivered in the Maidenhead, and to a lesser extent Windsor areas. This reflects their role as the most sustainable settlements, their

importance to the economy and the availability of land for development.

5.43 By distributing development over a wider area, lower densities would reduce the opportunity to provide new homes in proximity to existing jobs. It is likely that a higher proportion of new residents would access facilities by car rather than by walking, cycling or public transport. Lower densities may also impact on the viability of redeveloping some sites within settlements.

5.44 The approach of Maidenhead and Windsor accommodating the majority of development drew high levels of support in previous consultations, however, the outcome of the Inspector in his examination report commented that there were compelling grounds for placing Maidenhead above Windsor in any settlement hierarchy. In stating his opinion, the Inspector did not however limit the distribution of development solely to Maidenhead.

5.45 Restrictions would be put in place to phase back any greenfield development, helping to ensure the viability and delivery of land within settlements. Given the level of potential greenfield development, delivery could be via dispersed small sites with limited visual and infrastructure impacts or via a few larger sites which provide the opportunity to support new facilities and infrastructure.

Summary Sustainability Appraisal⁽²⁴⁾

5.46 The following is a brief summary of the sustainability implications of Option C.

Table 5.5 Summary Sustainability Appraisal of Option C

Sustainability Appraisal of Option C: Lower Density Growth	
•	With a lower proportion of new dwellings likely to be located in areas which are accessible to services and employment, the need to travel for new households will be partially reduced, the least of any option. This may increase the amount of car travel and associated impacts on greenhouse gas emissions and air quality.
•	With a lower proportion of development within proximity to Maidenhead town centre, this option is less likely to assist in its rejuvenation.
•	This option uses more countryside, or greenfield development, than the other options.
•	The larger amount of greenfield development provides an opportunity to provide a higher proportion of family housing compared to the other options, although apartment development will still be required in the town centres. The larger amount of greenfield development also provides an opportunity to provide more affordable housing to meet local needs compared to the other options.
•	Greenfield development will need to be carefully managed to ensure there is sufficient infrastructure to support new residents and workers.
•	With less reliance on existing urban areas to absorb more development, this option provides the greatest opportunity to maintain the existing built form of these areas compared to the other options.

Question 6

Which of the Options do you prefer? *(Please choose one only.)*

- i. Option A: Higher Density Growth
- ii. Option B: Moderate Density Growth
- iii. Option C: Lower Density Growth
- iv. Other

What are the reasons for your chosen option and are there any implications you wish to highlight?

24 See Revised Scoping Report: Core Strategy DPD and Delivery and Development Principles DPD (June 2008).

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Development Form

5.47 Different types and forms of development have a variety of effects on the local area. In general, larger scale developments provide the greatest opportunity to make positive infrastructure provision. For example a scheme of several hundred houses may be able to generate monies to support the provision of a new school. This is a result of their critical mass being able to generate greater monies and localised needs. The scale of larger developments does however create greater localised effects including visual impacts and traffic movements. While infrastructure effects can be mitigated through investment, physical impacts can only be reduced or compensated.

5.48 Smaller dispersed developments reduce the degree of local impact by spreading these over a wider geographical area. This can particularly help reduce visual impacts. Dispersed small scale development does not however support the same opportunity to provide new local facilities. Any improved facility is likely to be in the wider area.

Table 5.6 Development Size Impacts

Development Size Impacts	
Small Sites	Large Sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer changes in how a particular area looks. • Less impact on existing local services and roads. • Unlikely to support new facilities in the surrounding area. • Unlikely to support significant new or improved public transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater changes to how a particular area looks. • More demand on existing services. • Potential for including new facilities within the site. • Likely to be capable of supporting new facilities in the surrounding area. • Likely to be capable of supporting new or improved public transport.

Question 7

If the need for new homes and employment requires building on land outside the edge of an existing settlement, how should this be handled? *(Please choose one only.)*

- New development in one or two large sites.
- New development in a larger number of smaller sites.

Employment Land

5.49 The overall vision seeks to maintain the Royal Borough's strong economy, carefully controlling growth to ensure a sustainable balance between jobs and local labour supply.

5.50 The emerging South East Plan does not contain detailed policy on the level of future employment growth, however, it does provide interim job numbers for sub-regions. The Western Corridor and Black Water Valley, of which the Royal Borough forms part, is expected to see 79,300 addition jobs in the period 2006-2016. The South East England Regional Assembly has indicated that an early review of the South East Plan will be undertaken to provide robust guidance on the scale and location of employment land and floorspace requirements.

5.51 In 2006 it was locally forecast that in the period to 2026 an additional 135,000m² of employment floorspace would be required in the Royal Borough. While this forecast occurred before the current economic downturn, the Thames Valley has traditionally recovered quickly from such situations.

5.52 The majority of offices and other forms of employment is found within the town centres or on other employment areas, especially within Maidenhead. Focusing traffic generating activities together provides an opportunity to manage traffic impacts by providing and encouraging the use of public transport, or where this is not available providing dedicated coach services.

5.53 Over recent years, employment areas have been intensified through the redevelopment of older, less efficient buildings and uses, to meet the needs of the economy. While intensification will continue to contribute to future needs, it might be more appropriate to extend existing sites or provide new areas of land.

Question 8

Looking at planning for new employment, where should this be? *(Please choose one only.)*

- i. On land next to town centres or other existing employment areas
- ii. By building new employment areas on land outside the edge of existing settlements
- iii. Other *(please specify)*

Infrastructure Requirement and Capacity

5.54 In order to avoid placing an undue burden on existing facilities and services, and to help create sustainable communities, new development should provide contribute towards the provision of infrastructure made necessary by that development. This includes not only physical infrastructure such as highway improvements and utilities which are directly required to enable the development to proceed, but also local facilities and services such as open space, leisure, health and education.

5.55 Where new development creates a general need for additional or improved infrastructure, the impact can be addressed either through direct provision as part of the development scheme or through a financial contribution which will be used to make related provision in the local area. The Royal Borough has seen relatively few large development in recent years which warrant major investment in new infrastructure. However, the combined effects of smaller developments has resulted in a substantial increase in the total number of houses and other developments.

5.56 Some areas of infrastructure are provided by statutory undertakers, including water companies and health trusts. There is a need for the LDF and the investment programme for service providers to be complementary to ensure all necessary infrastructure is available or can be provided at the appropriate time. Where a service provider raises capacity issues, and arrangements are not in place for its resolution, planning restrictions can be put in place on the implementation of the development or ultimately refused.

Question 9

Are you aware of any services, facilities or other infrastructure that would be needed or require improvement to support new homes and employment? *(Please provide details including the affected area.)*

Development Management Options

6 Development Management Options

6.1 While the options presented in the previous Chapter 5 concentrated on strategic issues, it is envisaged that the LDF will also incorporate a number of key development management policies. These management policies will seek to ensure the correct implementation of the strategic approach by setting out the general criteria against which planning applications will be considered.

6.2 These policies have been developed with reference to the Sustainability Appraisal objectives⁽²⁵⁾ and are therefore likely to have a positive effect on these objectives.

Table 6.1 Development Management Policies

Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
Sustainable Design and Layout	To seek to ensure that the design and construction of all new developments (including redevelopment and refurbishment of existing housing stock) incorporate sustainable building standards and techniques and improve the vitality, form, layout and connectivity of the built environment. Schemes for development will encourage the sustainable use and disposal of materials and promote both energy and water conservation. New housing should be designed to be "life time" homes capable of easy adaption to meet the differing needs of different age groups.	The evidence for global climate change has become increasingly prominent. It is likely that the changes will particularly affect the South East. The contribution that all development make to climate changes needs to be minimised. Link to Aims from Section 4: 1,4 & 6
Sustainability	All new development within the Borough will be expected to contribute towards achieving the aims of sustainable development. They will support the move towards creating sustainable patterns of development and distinctive communities and maximise the use of previously developed land.	The principle of sustainable development and in particular sustainable patterns of development is a cross cutting policy which underpins all of the plan policies. Link to Aims from Section 4: 1
Renewable Energy	To promote renewable energy and contribute to the achievement of national and regional targets and balance this against impacts on landscape, biodiversity and amenity or local character.	A significant proportion of global carbon dioxide emissions come from burning fossil fuels to provide heat and power. To combat climate change alternative power generation methods need to be encouraged in both new development and as "stand alone" energy schemes. Link to Aims from Section 4: 1
Climate change	To promote measures to address the causes of climate change and adapt to these changes.	The precise impacts of climate change are unclear, however it is evident that climate change will particularly affect many facets of

25 See Revised Scoping Report: Core Strategy DPD and Delivery and Development Principles DPD (June 2008).

Development Management Options

Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
		<p>development and land use. Challenging measures for mitigation and adaptation relating to climate change will increasingly need to be acted upon over the plan period.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 1</p>
Housing Land Supply and Delivery	<p>To ensure that sufficient housing land is identified to deliver the housing requirements set out by the emerging South East Plan. This requires the delivery of at least 346 dwellings per annum (or 6920 over the plan period – 2006 to 2026). It is necessary that during the plan period the supply of residential land is managed and released in phases as appropriate. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing residential land or accommodation would be resisted.</p>	<p>The Borough's housing allocation is set through strategic planning guidance. This is currently the Berkshire Structure Plan, however this is soon to be superseded by the emerging South East Plan.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 2</p>
Affordable Housing	<p>To encourage an appropriate level of affordable and key worker housing in new housing developments through legal agreements to secure accommodation for those eligible households whose needs are not met by the market due to local house prices. This is applicable to provision both within the developed areas of the Borough together with rural exception housing.</p>	<p>The Borough is one of the most expensive places to live in the UK outside Greater London. The high cost means that many households do not have sufficient income for them to afford to buy or rent homes at the prevailing market price.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 2</p>
Rural Exception Affordable Housing	<p>To provide, in exceptional circumstances, a limited amount of affordable housing within or on the edge of recognised settlements within the Green Belt.</p>	<p>The Housing Needs Study for the Borough indicates a need for affordable housing. With the whole of the Borough's rural area being within the Green Belt it is particularly difficult to deliver affordable housing in smaller settlements due to the limited number of development sites coming forward.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 2</p>
Special Housing Needs	<p>To seek to ensure that new housing developments will provide a mix of tenure, size and type to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. This will include</p>	<p>Demographic forecasts predict an increasing requirement for smaller households but also the elderly.</p>

Development Management Options

Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
	vulnerable groups, those with special needs.	Link to Aims from Section 4: 2
Gypsy & Traveller / Travelling Show People Accommodation	To help meet the needs of the Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Show People communities.	The South East England Regional Assembly have demonstrated that there is a shortfall across the South East of suitable accommodation. This will need to be addressed for the Borough. Link to Aims from Section 4: 2
Tourism & Leisure	Support for the existing heritage, tourism and leisure economy and also encouragement of development which supports the sustainable growth of these sectors. Maidenhead & Windsor will be the principal locations for major tourist and leisure development. Other settlements will be acceptable in principle provided that the scale of activity and number of trips are appropriate to the accessibility of the location. Development for tourism and leisure purposes within the Green Belt will be acceptable where it supports the rural economy and protects the countryside and Green Belt.	This is a key theme for the Borough as two of the UK top visitor attractions are located within RBWM. The South East Plan identifies Windsor as a tourism hotspot. Link to Aims from Section 4: 3
Existing Employment Development	To ensure a broad based economy by seeking to protect existing employment land and premises, where appropriate, and maintaining a sustainable balance between jobs and the local labour market. Support for small and medium sized enterprises will be encouraged through appropriate policies to provide suitable accommodation together with encouragement of increased diversification of the rural economy.	The Borough has a high quality environment and excellent transport links to London. It has long been an attractive location for business activities. It is important that economic diversity is maintained and that the attraction of both leading organisations as well as smaller enterprises continues. Link to Aims from Section 4: 3
Town Centre and Retail Development	To seek to maintain and enhance the role and function of the Borough's town centres of Maidenhead and Windsor as the primary focus for retail and commercial development. In particular the rejuvenation of Maidenhead town centre will be encouraged. The vitality and viability of these centres will be promoted	Town, district and local centres are the hub of the community and provide a focus for shops, employment and leisure and are often the most accessible locations by walking, cycling and public transport.

Development Management Options

Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
	together with both the smaller district centres of Ascot and Sunningdale and the local centres within the Borough.	Link to Aims from Section 4: 3
Safe & Accessible Environments	The design and layout of new development should meet best practice to minimise the opportunity to commit crime, reduce the fear of crime, and discourage anti social behaviour. They should also enhance community health and safety. All development should be designed and laid out to maximise accessibility by all modes of travel. In all cases development should be designed and laid out to be attractive to all sectors of the community to meet the statutory requirements if the Disabilities Discrimination Act.	<p>Whilst crime levels are low within the Borough one of the key themes of the Community Strategy is being “safe and secure” and one of the Strategy’s Priorities for Action is creating a safer environment and reducing the fear of crime.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4 & 6</p>
Flood risk and water infrastructure	To ensure that new development is located and designed to ensure that flood risk from all sources of flooding is acceptable. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken and a review of that document is about to be published. These documents consider flood risk from all of the sources of flooding. The development of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise direct surface run-off. All new development will be supported by necessary water and sewerage infrastructure.	<p>Significant areas of the Borough are at medium or higher risk of flooding (27% of the land area).</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4</p>
Residential Amenity	To ensure that existing residential amenity is not harmed by new development and seek to reduce any existing conflicts between residential and other uses.	<p>Many activities can pollute the environment and cause nuisance. This can be land, air, water and includes matters such as noise and light pollution as well as the impact of traffic.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4</p>
Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation	To seek to meet the sporting and recreational needs of the Borough’s residents and visitors and improve the quality of the urban environment by developing a network of quality recreation open spaces and facilities.	Both public and private open spaces and recreation facilities are an essential part of creating sustainable and healthy communities. New development within the Borough is largely restricted to the existing built up areas and pressures to develop open areas within towns exist. Once built on the open space is likely to

Development Management Options

Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
		<p>be lost forever. In this light the Royal Borough have prepared an Open Space Audit (2008) and a Playing Pitch Strategy (2001) to identify areas where additional provision would be encouraged.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4</p>
Community Facilities	<p>To seek to protect existing community facilities and secure new or improved facilities, in accessible locations, to meet the needs of local residents through both individual schemes as well as through new developments. The provision of appropriate facilities will provide the best opportunities for all individuals to develop their aptitude and abilities. Examples of community uses covered include health care, education, cultural facilities, places of worship and other meeting places and day care centres.</p>	<p>Due to the high cost of land in the Borough there is a general shortage and difficulty in obtaining premises and land for community uses.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4</p>
Infrastructure and community	<p>To ensure that prior to proposals for development being permitted, infrastructure, services, facilities or amenities made necessary by that development are provided or arrangements are in place to secure their provision at the appropriate time. In particular to ensure that new housing development proposals are associated with appropriate health and education facilities. Facilities should be such that they are able to respond positively to changing demographics.</p>	<p>In order to avoid placing an undue burden on existing infrastructure and services and to help create sustainable communities, new development should provide the infrastructure made necessary by that development.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4</p>
Pollution and Nuisance	<p>To ensure that developments, either individually or in combination with other schemes do not give rise to unacceptable levels of pollution. Furthermore existing and future levels of pollution will be considered in the location of uses sensitive to such impacts.</p>	<p>Many activities can pollute the environment and cause nuisance. While pollution control legislation regulates emissions from polluting activities the planning system has a complementary role in directing the location of development which may give rise to pollution.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 4</p>

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Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
Housing Density	An appropriate minimum density will be applied in line with strategic options, taking into account local issues of townscape, urban character and heritage.	Higher housing densities help to make the best use of scarce land resources within the Borough. Link to Aims from Section 4: 2
The Historic Environment	To seek to protect and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment and heritage.	The Borough has a rich history which is reflected by the number of Conservation Areas, listed buildings Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens. This heritage is highly valued by residents who consider it essential to ensure the Borough's identity and its sense of place. Link to Aims from Section 4: 3 & 5
River Thames Corridor	To preserve and enhance the special character and setting of the River Thames and tributaries (such as the York Stream) to promote its enjoyment for sport and leisure as well as protecting its heritage and biodiversity.	The River Thames is one of the most significant landscape features of the Borough. In addition to the scenic, heritage and biodiversity benefits it also provides opportunities for sport and leisure. Link to Aims from Section 4: 3 & 5
Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area	To protect the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area from adverse effects created by additional housing development occurring within 5KM of the SPA.	The Thames Basin Heaths SPA is an internationally important nature conservation designation. The SPA consists of 13 individual Sites of Special Scientific Interest across Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire. Link to Aims from Section 4: 5
Landscape Character	To seek to protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character of the Borough.	The Borough's landscape is a combination of both natural and man made elements. The conservation of landscape quality relies on protecting key features. Although there are no areas designated for their national importance, the Borough wishes to protect, and where possible, enhance, the quality of both rural and urban environments.

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Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
		Link to Aims from Section 4: 5
Green Belt	<p>To protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development. Within the Green Belt development will only be granted in very special circumstances as set out by PPG2 (Green Belts). Detailed Green Belt policies to therefore cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development for agriculture and forestry; • essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation; • limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings; • limited affordable housing and; • limited infilling or redevelopment of identified existing major developed sites. 	<p>Approximately 83% of the land area of the Borough is within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The larger settlements are excluded from the Green Belt and there are a number of smaller settlements that are within it which have the capacity to absorb limited amounts of new residential development. Detailed policies will therefore cover the forms of development appropriate within the Green Belt.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 5</p>
The Natural Environment	<p>To seek to protect and enhance the Borough's natural environment by preserving and enhancing its ecological, wildlife and geological assets.</p>	<p>One of the major assets of the Borough is the quality of the natural environment and the richness and diversity of wildlife and natural features. Both biological and geological interest also play a valuable role in urban areas.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 5</p>
Built Environment and Townscape	<p>To seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance, local distinctiveness and amenity of the Borough's built environment and townscape by using a range of planning tools (such as Planning Briefs and Area Action Plans) to guide development.</p>	<p>The Borough contains a variety of built development. High quality design is essential for maintaining and improving the quality of life for the Borough's communities and it is a key component in ensuring that the Borough remains attractive to both residents and visitors. It is also an important factor in attracting appropriate investment.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 5</p>
Sustainable Transport	<p>To pursue the establishment of safe, sustainable and integrated patterns of development to facilitate movement by a variety of transport modes including cycling and walking.</p>	<p>National guidance on transport is provided within PPG 13 (Transport) All development should be located where the need to travel is minimised and where the maximum</p>

Development Management Options

Policy Title	Policy Coverage and Direction	Justification
	New developments should be located to help to reduce the need to travel.	<p>number of people can access the development by sustainable forms of travel. This will play a major part in helping to reduce the negative impacts of local air quality and global warming.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 6</p>
Parking Standards	To ensure that the level of car parking associated with a development proposal or particular use is appropriate in order to support a reduction in the reliance on the private car and encourage travel by more sustainable forms of transport. For example providing increased accessibility by walking and cycling.	<p>Car ownership within the Borough is high and its roads are subject to congestion even at off peak times. An appropriate level of parking needs to be provided. Ways also need to be found to increase usage of alternatives to the car. For example public transport, cycling and walking.</p> <p>Link to Aims from Section 4: 6</p>

Question 10

Do you agree with the basic coverage and direction of the development management policies outlined above?
Do you feel there are any other potential topic areas that should be included?