

open countryside is retained. The existing boundary restricts the expansion of Berkhamsted, safeguards the adjoining countryside and protects the town's historic character. The presence of a specialised institution (The National Film Archive) does not justify the release of adjoining land (Inspector's Report 1993 (CD37) paras 3.16-3.18).

2. Land at Bank Mill Lane, Berkhamsted. Although not part of wider countryside, the site is an important transitional area. Increased consolidation of development would erode the degree of separation between adjoining settlements. Neglect is not a reason for removal from Green Belt. The existing boundaries are clear (paras 3.21-3.24).
3. Land at New Road, Northchurch. The boundaries are clear, firmly defined and have endured for some time. Undeveloped, the land prevents outward spread of the urban area. It is a conspicuous location and would adversely affect the rural surroundings of Northchurch (paras 3.27-3.29).
4. Land adjoining Coppins Close, Shootersway, Berkhamsted. The existing boundary framework is clearly defined. The site is clearly part of the countryside. It stops the expansion of the built up area and protects the countryside from encroachment. Significant extension of the urban area would result in a prominent ridgetop location (paras.3.33-3.35).
5. Land at Swing Gate Lane, Berkhamsted. The existing boundary is a firm, clearly defined and defensible limit to the built up area. Release of this conspicuous ridgetop site would result in clear encroachment into the adjoining countryside (paras 3.40-3.43).
6. Land at Bourne End. Three sites are involved – land east of Bourne End Mills (6a), land between A4251 and A41 Bypass, Bourne End (East) (6b) and land at "Middlefield", Sugar Lane (6c). 6a would have represented a significant expansion of the Bourne End Mills industrial area into the surrounding countryside, undermining the longstanding objectives of Green Belt policy. Although not of high landscape quality, development on the sloping hillside would be a clear intrusion. 6b would significantly erode the gap between Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted and between Bourne End and the bypass. Its exclusion would adversely affect the overall integrity and function of the Green Belt, and could set an undesirable precedent. The arguments against the 6c were identical. Bourne End itself is "washed over" by Green Belt notation (paras. 3.55-3.62).
7. Land off Green Lane, Bovingdon. The proposal would not be small scale rounding off. The site prevents the outward expansion of the village and safeguards the countryside from encroachment. The boundary follows well-defined property boundaries (paras 3.76-3.77).

8. Land between Le Chalet and Hunters Close, Long Lane, Bovingdon. The objector wanted exclusion from Green Belt, but the Council proposed low cost housing in line with the Inspector's Report 1981 (Proposal H70) (para 3.80). The site is some distance from the main built up part of Bovingdon and its development would consolidate the loose-knit ribbon of development along Long Lane (paras 5.116-5.117). The Inspector recommended deletion of Proposal H70 and inclusion of the site in the Airfield Study (para 5.125).
9. Former MOD site, Middle Lane, Bovingdon. Removal from Green Belt was not requested, rather policy guidance regarding appropriate beneficial use. The site was properly included in Green Belt, and should be included in the study of airfield sites (paras 3.82-3.85).
10. Land between Bakers Wood, Long Lane and Shantock Hall Lane and South of Bovingdon Brickworks, Bovingdon. The proposal would result in a major expansion of Bovingdon in an isolated area away from the settlement. A fundamental reappraisal of Bovingdon's strategic role would be required and the rural character and appearance of the locality would be dramatically changed. It should be included in the suggested airfield study area (paras 3.89-3.93).
11. Land off High Ridge Road, Apsley (Manor Estate). The existing boundary is logical and clearly defined. The new road is no reason to change it. The land provides a buffer and retains a visual link to the countryside. Development would create an undesirable precedent in a prominent ridgetop location (paras 3.102-3.104).
12. Land South of Featherbed Lane, Apsley. New road construction dramatically altered the appearance of the area and left an isolated sliver of agricultural land. As it is physically and visually well contained by woodland and new roads its release would have little impact on the wider functions of the Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary should be reviewed in the Two Waters and Apsley Study (paras 3.108-3.110).
13. Land between Featherbed Lane and Sheethanger Lane, Felden. The existing boundaries follow hedges and fences and are recognisable and defensible. The land prevents the spread of Felden, and provides a valuable area of transition between the built up area and the open countryside. Development would result in the consolidation of the built up area (paras 3.117-3.118).
14. Land at Red Lion Public House, London Road/Nash Mills Lane and Shendish Edge, London Road, Nash Mills. The existing Green Belt boundary north of the Red Lion marks a firm edge to the built up area. The land prevents the outward spread of the urban area and in particular the merging of Nash Mills with the development along Rucklers Lane. Development would erode the vulnerable break between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley. The Shendish Edge

site makes a similar if more limited contribution to the physical and visual separation of settlements (paras 3.123-3.127).

15. Land at Westwick Farm, Leverstock Green. The existing boundary is mostly clear and defensible. The land forms the outer edge of an important green wedge linking Leverstock Green to the open countryside. Development would result in a significant extension of the built up area into the countryside. Other proposals in the area increase the site's importance (paras 3.35-3.37).
16. Land r/o Watford Road, including the Trout Lake, Kings Langley. Development would consolidate and extend the built up area, and erode the open area between Kings Langley and Abbots Langley (paras. 3.161-3.167).
17. Land at Rectory Farm, Kings Langley. The existing boundaries provide a firm defensible long term limit, and the land forms part of the strategic gap with Hemel Hempstead (paras. 3.169-3.171).

2.6.10 He also concluded that land south of Redbourn Road should not be added to the Green Belt as it had never been part of the Green Belt, and the boundary was purely administrative, not marked by any features on the ground (paras 3.140-3.142).

2.6.11 The Inspector commented on the impact of the A41 bypass (completed in 1995) on the Green Belt boundary and concluded this created no general justification for the release of Green Belt land for development:

"..... it is inevitable that the new road has to pass through the countryside surrounding the towns in order to provide an effective bypass and relieve congestion in the towns. However, a major transport route which passes through the peripheral Green Belt cannot in itself justify releasing land from the Green Belt, particularly bearing in mind that the adjoining countryside is generally of considerable landscape value. If this were the case, similar arguments could be advanced in relation to other large sites between the urban area and the bypass. I note that although the Secretary of State has made no definitive statement on this matter when or since approving the line of the new road, in the past, inquiry inspectors have commented that local authorities have ample powers to restrict development between the urban area and the bypass and saw no reason to suppose that those powers would be weakened by the presence of the new road. Although in individual cases, the release of such land might not significantly affect the overall character of the various towns and settlements, it is relevant to bear in mind the cumulative impact of such incremental releases." (Inspector's Report 1993 para 3.10).

2.6.12 He did however conclude that the boundary of the Green Belt on land south of Featherbed Lane should be re-examined in the context of the Council's Two Waters and Apsley Study. He felt there were no pressing needs for development warranting any immediate change and did not wish to pre-empt consideration of development

and environmental enhancement options (para 3.109). The dilemma to be resolved was explained in para 3.108 of the Inspector's Report:

"..... the construction of the bypass and associated link roads and junctions does not in itself justify an amendment to the Green Belt boundary. However, in this instance, the physical changes brought about by the new road construction, particularly with the diversion of Featherbed Lane and new link road, here raised on an embankment, have dramatically altered the appearance of the area and left a sliver of isolated agricultural land between the existing urban area and the new roads. It is physically and visually well contained by woodland and the new roads and its release would have little impact on the wider functions of the Green Belt in this locality. On the other hand, the land does provide a soft edge to the urban area and a welcome buffer between existing houses and the new roads and also contributes to the "green" entrance to the town when viewed from the new roads."

- 2.6.13 The Deposit Draft was modified to include the DDP 1984 wording on the limits of development being reached in Tring, Berkhamsted, Bovington and Kings Langley. The second Local Plan Inquiry considered objections to the detailed wording. The Inspector expressed reservations regarding the statement that each of the settlements had reached the desirable limits of development, which might prejudice a comprehensive long term review. He therefore suggested a minor amendment to the first sentence of the statement which was accepted by the Council (Inspector's Report 1994 (CD38) para 3.16). A reference to 'other uses appropriate to a rural area' was also added to the Green Belt policy. The landowner's proposal to exclude land adjoining Coppins Close, Shootersway, Berkhamsted was again rejected (ibid paras 3.18-3.20).

2.7 Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011

- 2.7.1 The Borough Council has had to review its Green Belt boundaries due to the strategic housing allocation in the Structure Plan 1998 (CD32), and identify a suitable Green Belt boundary in the Markyate area.
- 2.7.2 The County Council considered principles and criteria to guide the location of major development between September 1992 and February 1996. The Borough Council began devising its own criteria in 1995 when it was realised that planned regeneration could not deliver the likely housing requirement. The careful process of site selection is detailed in Technical Reports 2 and 3 of the Pre-Deposit Consultation and in the Environmental Appraisal. The main concern of the Borough Council has been to ensure that the least damaging and most sustainable locations have been selected.
- 2.7.3 The County Council's Public Consultation Document "Development Strategy and Dwelling Distribution" indicated that the most appropriate location for the strategic allocation may be west of Hemel Hempstead, though a re-evaluation of the issues on the east side might suggest a different balance (para. 4.18).

- 2.7.4 The Borough Council's work based on its criteria identified potential sites on the edges of settlements in the main transport corridor and including Leverstock Green. This latter point was taken on board in the Deposit Draft of the County Structure Plan which referred to the possibility of some dwellings in St Albans District west of the M1 (Policy 7) and associated exclusions from the Green Belt (Policy 5).
- 2.7.5 The Structure Plan Examination in Public endorsed the Borough Council's approach of identifying a number of locations for development on the periphery of settlements. It removed the proposed development in St Albans District as it would intrude into the countryside, but considered that development at West Hemel Hempstead would not result in coalescence with existing settlements (see also para 2.4.16 above). Based on the information available to the Examination in Public, the Panel considered the potential to be for 1,200/1,300 dwellings in and around Hemel Hempstead (Report of Panel, para 6.21). This did not take into account any opportunities at Berkhamsted or Kings Langley where the Council had suggested further green field provision could be accommodated (Report of Panel para 6.6). Markyate and Tring were rejected as locations for significant growth at the Structure Plan EIP (Report of Panel, para 4.77).
- 2.7.6 The conclusions of the Examination in Public were fed into the preparation of the Deposit Draft of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan in May 1998. It was at this point that the sites at Markyate (identified in consultation with the Parish Council) were added. These sites (H44, H45 and H56) on the edge of Markyate were not in the Green Belt but with the acceptance of the Green Belt extension at Markyate it became necessary to consider the identification of an appropriate Green Belt boundary. One of the sites (H56) was reserved for longer term development needs in line with PPG2 advice, but in view of the Panel's comments it was not considered appropriate to allow for any significant expansion of the settlement.
- 2.7.7 The sites excluded from the Green Belt for housing purposes in the Deposit Draft Plan and Pre-Inquiry Changes are listed below. In addition, the list includes Land at North East Hemel Hempstead which is specifically mentioned in Structure Plan Policy 8 as counting against the strategic housing allocation of about 1,000 dwellings, although not in the Green Belt.

Table 1 Green Belt Releases

Site Reference	Location	Number of dwellings	
		Deposit Draft	Pre-Inquiry Changes
Part I Sites			
H1	Bank Mill Lane, Berkhamsted	40	Deleted
H26	R/O Argyll Road/Ninian Road, Grovehill	14	14
H27	Land at North East Hemel Hempstead	230	230
H34	Land at West Hemel Hempstead (Phase I)	150	150
TWA6	Land NW of Manor Estate	30	Deleted
TWA7	Land SW and SE of Manor Estate	260	Deleted
H43	R/O Watford Road, Kings Langley	20	20
Part II Sites			
H50	Land at Westwick Farm	50	50
H51	Land at West Hemel Hempstead (Phase II)	300	300
Part III Sites			
H52	Land at Durrants Lane/Shootersway	100	100
H53	New Road, Northchurch	50	50
H54	Land at West Hemel Hempstead (Phase III)	100	Deleted
H55	Rectory Farm, Kings Langley	80	Deleted
TOTAL		1,294	914
Total of sites at Hemel Hempstead		1,104	744
Total of sites at Berkhamsted		190	150
Total of sites at Kings Langley		100	20

* including green field release at NE Hemel Hempstead

NB The apparent difference between the Pre Inquiry Changes and the Deposit Draft figures is made up by the following sites: Lucas Sports Ground and related sites off Breakspear Way (350 units), Gas Board site, London Road, Boxmoor (90 units, and an additional 40 units at the John Dickinson site, all at Hemel Hempstead. There is no shortfall in the number of units.

2.7.8 Policy 9 of the Structure Plan states that the Dacorum Borough Local Plan must make provision for an additional 7,200 dwellings in accordance with the development strategy set out in the Structure Plan Policies 6, 7 and 8. This allocation includes 1,000 dwellings at more than one location on the periphery of Hemel Hempstead in accordance with Policy 8 including the land at North East Hemel Hempstead (not in the Green Belt). The balance of the 1,000

dwellings is to be provided on land excluded from the Green Belt. Policy 5 provides for such exclusions and indicates that exclusions linked to Policy 8 could include possible limited exclusions at Berkhamsted and Kings Langley.

- 2.7.9 The Hemel Hempstead sites in the Deposit Draft total 1,104 (see Table 1) and can be clearly related to the 1,000 dwellings in Structure Plan Policy 8, and to the exceptional circumstances for the release of Green Belt land under Structure Plan Policy 5. Whilst the total is marginally above 1,000, this is accounted for by West Hemel Hempstead Phase III (H54: 100 dwellings). Paragraph 164 of the Explanatory Memorandum of the Structure Plan 1998 indicates that there is scope for "about 1,000 dwellings" at Hemel Hempstead. H54 would also complete the development form established on the adjoining land (Sites H34 and H51) and falls within the Policy 8 releases.
- 2.7.10 Policy 5 also specifically allows for possible limited Green Belt exclusions at Berkhamsted and Kings Langley. At the time of the Deposit Draft it was not necessary to rely on this provision in order to achieve the releases required by Policy 8. However, Green Belt releases were made at both settlements on the basis of reviews linked to Structure Plan policies 6 and 7 (Sites H1, H43, H52, H53 and H55). Site H1 is a small site on the periphery of Berkhamsted. It will have limited impact and is damaged land. It is regarded as falling under Structure Plan Policy 7 (Berkhamsted being a settlement listed in Policy 6). Sites H52 and H53 are also on the edge of the Structure Plan Policy 6 settlement of Berkhamsted. H52 is expected to involve the regeneration of school sites, thus leading to the more efficient use of land. H53 rounds off the built-up area. Both sites were considered as part of the comprehensive settlement planning of Berkhamsted. Kings Langley is also a potential Policy 6 settlement, i.e. one of the 'other' settlements that may be selected in local plans for limited development. Site H43 is partly within the urban area. It involves redevelopment of some gardens and infills backland between the gardens and public open space. Improved highway management also results. Site H55 is partly developed with poultry sheds. All of the sites were selected on the basis of Sustainable Settlements criteria in Technical Report 2. The sites consist of limited peripheral development in line with Structure Plan Policy 7 and limited exclusions from the Green Belt for this purpose are supported by Structure Plan Policy 5. Paragraph 129 of the Structure Plan states that "it will be for the district councils to decide what scale of development is 'limited' having regard to local circumstances and the scale of any development needs which are in accordance with this Plan but which cannot be provided satisfactorily within existing urban areas".
- 2.7.11 Structure Plan Policy 5 also allows for the identification of "safeguarded land", i.e. not planned for development in the period of the local plan. The safeguarding of some of the proposed land releases (H52-H55) is in accordance with this part of Policy 5. The safeguarding in the Deposit Draft is not unconditional and Policy 18 enables these sites to come forward in the Plan period in specified

circumstances, including if they are needed to ensure a five year supply of housing land. The exceptional circumstance for excluding them from the Green Belt now, relates back to the Plan's need to ensure that sufficient development opportunities exist for providing 7,200 dwellings over the Plan period in accordance with Structure Plan Policy 9. The Deposit Draft rightly seeks to achieve the bulk of its housing need through urban regeneration opportunities and sites within settlements, and the remainder through Green Belt sites chiefly under Structure Plan Policy 8. However, should some of this supply not come forward within the Plan period, reserve sites will need to be released in order to secure the district housing allocation under Structure Plan Policy 9. The Council also recognises that the housing needs of the Borough will not come to an end in 2011. The Council is anxious to avoid successive reviews of Green Belt boundaries at the end of each Plan period, as this undermines the permanence of the Green Belt. Whilst the Panel considered that it would not generally be appropriate to provide for exclusions from the Green Belt for needs accruing after the end of the Plan period, it considered that Policy 5 should not preclude that possibility (Report of Panel, para.9.26). By identifying these sites now, the Plan can ensure that they are identified as part of the comprehensive planning of settlements, accord with the Plan's Development Strategy and sustainability selection criteria, provide the necessary planning requirements and to enable a quick response to any future need. Exceptional circumstances for the sites are therefore justified by a combination of Structure Plan policies and the need to secure sufficient housing over the Plan period and beyond.

- 2.7.12 In bringing forward its Pre-Inquiry Changes, the Council sought to reduce the amount of land taken from the Green Belt, whilst still conforming with Structure Plan Policy 9 (i.e. 7,200 dwellings). The provision in Parts I and II of the Pre-Inquiry Changes in Table 1 totals 764 units: the justification for the release of Green Belt land in this part of the list is clearly established by Structure Plan Policy 8. The Pre-Inquiry Changes mean that the Policy 9 requirement of 7,200 can be met without releasing 1,000 dwellings on sites in accordance with Policy 8. Since with the exception of Site H27 (which is not affected by the changes) all of the Deposit Draft releases are on Green Belt land, if it is possible to achieve the Structure Plan housing requirement without such releases, this must be welcomed. This is, in effect, achieved by bringing forward the greenfield site of the Lucas Sports Ground and related sites (Proposal H15A, Pre- Inquiry Change 57). This is consistent with the Structure Plan (and Deposit Plan) development strategy of focusing development on existing settlements. The land at Breakspear Way has similarities with the land at North East Hemel Hempstead (i.e. a greenfield site not in the Green Belt and on the periphery of Hemel Hempstead). Although initially identified as coming under Policy 7, Proposal Sites H52 and H53 are capable of being treated as Policy 8 sites should other elements of the housing land supply fail to come forward. Were this to happen, then the Green Belt releases (together with H27) would amount to 914 dwellings as shown in Table 1. The scale of the releases would still be within the Policy 8 provision. The over-riding consideration is that the 7,200

requirement in Structure Plan Policy 9 should be achieved and concentrated in and around Hemel Hempstead. Whilst the Pre-Inquiry Changes have reduced the margin provided to meet longer term needs, the Council does not consider that all of the originally proposed Green Belt releases could be justified. Nor does it consider that other sites suggested by objectors should be released from the Green Belt in their place.

2.7.13 The Borough Council accepts that the Green Belt boundary in the Adopted Plan meets all the purposes of Green Belts in PPG2, and it is only as a result of exceptional circumstances derived from the Structure Plan 1998 that areas of land are being proposed for release.

2.7.14 The sites proposed by the Council to be excluded from the Green Belt have firm, defensible boundaries and in some instances improve on the existing boundaries. The boundary of land at West Hemel Hempstead (H34, H51 and H54) is defined by hedgerows and a tree belt, and as indicated above development here should not lead to encroachment with Potten End; the boundary of the small site at Argyll Road/Ninian Road (Grovehill) (H26) is unclear at present and would be defined by the development where there is a significant change in levels; Leverstock Green (H50) will now be defined by Westwick Row (a lane) rather than an indistinct line across the school grounds; New Road, Northchurch (H53) will be bounded by the railway line rather than the canal; Shootersway (H52) will be defined by Durrants Lane, woodland and hedgerows; the boundary at Watford Road, Kings Langley (H43) will now be marked by a road and hedgerows rather than a track between dwellings and property boundaries. All of the new proposed Green Belt boundaries are in accordance with PPG2.

2.7.15 Policy 5 of the Structure Plan Review 1998 also indicates the limits of the Green Belt extension around Markyate, which should be as far as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the west. The Borough Council concludes that the County Council has given a broad indication of the extent of the Green Belt extension which should be delineated in the Local Plan, taking account of the purposes of this proposal (see para 2.4.17 above), the need to enclose Markyate and give the Green Belt sufficient width, and circumstances on the ground. The best and most defensible boundary would follow the lanes - Roe End Lane, Friendless Lane and Petley Hill - to join the existing boundary west of Flamstead. There are few other features which can be used. The inner boundary is defined to allow Markyate to meet some of its housing needs, identified in association with the Parish Council and in accordance with its role as a large village in the settlement hierarchy (consistent with Structure Plan 1998 Policy 6).

2.7.16 The Joint Statement in DBLP Policy 3 has been updated due to the strategic housing requirement and associated exclusions from the Green Belt. It is unaltered for Bovingdon and Tring where the Council continues to support the principle that the desirable limits of development have been reached. Tight inner Green Belt boundaries are still important at Berkhamsted and Kings Langley where limited changes are proposed. The principles of preventing coalescence with Bourne End and Dudswell and maintaining the skyline of the valley sides are still applied in Berkhamsted. For Kings Langley the intentions to retain a rural zone around the village and prevent coalescence with Hemel Hempstead remain important and are retained.

3. SETTLEMENT POLICY

3

3. SETTLEMENT POLICY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section of the report provides a comprehensive background to the approach to development in various categories of settlement. The context in terms of Government guidance is covered first, followed by the strategic planning context at regional and County levels. It then concentrates on Policies 3, 4 and 5 of the Dacorum District Plan and the settlement aspects of the Joint Statement agreed between the Council and the DoE at the first Public Local Inquiry into that plan. The background to the selection of small villages in the Dacorum Borough Local Plan is then summarised, and the evolution of settlement policy is taken through to the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.

3.2 Government Guidance

3.2.1 *Circular 42/55* indicated that existing towns and villages inside a Green Belt should not be allowed to expand further, apart from a strictly limited amount of 'infilling' or 'rounding off' (within boundaries to be defined in Town Maps). Even within the urban areas thus defined, every effort should be made to prevent any further building for industrial or commercial purposes; since this, if allowed, would lead to a demand for more labour, which in turn would create a need for the development of additional land for housing (para 6).

3.2.2 *Circular 50/57* gave advice on the definition of Green Belt boundaries, including the treatment of existing settlements. Most of these would have the Green Belt notation carried across them. Settlements where it was proposed to allow infilling, but not extensions of the settlement, could still be washed over by Green Belt, but should be listed in the Written Statement (para 7). The need to map the limits for development of a settlement was only likely to arise where a limited measure of expansion was proposed or the existing settlement was scattered and the authority's intentions needed to be shown precisely e.g. where infilling could occur (para 8).

3.2.3 *Circular 14/84* reaffirmed the objectives of Green Belt policy and the related development control policies of Circular 42/55, but provided advice on the definition of Green Belt boundaries in local plans (paras 3-4), with particular reference to derelict or damaged land (paras 5-6).

3.2.4 *PPG2 Green Belts (1995)* advises on defining Green Belt boundaries which allow for the safeguarding of land to meet long term development needs (see para 2.2.12 above). It also provides advice on the treatment of existing villages in Green Belt (para 2.11). Three alternatives are suggested:

- (a) if no new building beyond that normally appropriate in the Green Belt is proposed, the village should simply be part of the Green Belt (or "washed over" with Green Belt designation).

- (b) If infilling only is proposed, the village should either be “washed over” by Green Belt and listed in the development plan, or inset (ie excluded) from the Green Belt. The local plan should include policies to ensure that any infill does not have an adverse effect on the character of the village concerned. If a village is “washed over”, its boundaries may still need to be defined to show where infilling is permitted.
 - (c) If limited development or limited expansion is proposed, the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.
- 3.2.5 *PPG3 (CD3)* places the emphasis on re-using urban land to relieve pressure on the countryside. Strategies should ensure that housing is available where jobs are created (para. 3).
- 3.2.6 With regard to rural areas, new greenfield sites will still be needed outside the urban areas, but these should be sensitively related to the existing pattern of settlements and have proper regard to Government policies for the protection of the countryside (para. 18).
- 3.2.7 Some villages may have reached the limit of their natural growth, while in others provision could be made for modest development without damage to the countryside or to the settlement itself. New housing in villages may help to maintain local facilities and services, although the relationship between size and service provision is not always direct (para. 19). The character of particular settlements should always be respected, and what may be appropriate in a village with a dense, intricate pattern of development would be out of place in a sparser more open one. Village and town development should avoid creating ribbon development or a fragmented pattern of settlement.
- 3.2.8 Paragraphs 32-37 deal with new settlements: substantial stand alone villages and small towns promoted by developers to provide a significant contribution to the supply of new housing in an area. However, Green Belts and AONBs are not suitable locations. They are a last resort, only to be used if more satisfactory methods of providing land for housing are not available.
- 3.2.9 The revised draft PPG3 (March 1999) contains a larger section on developing outside urban areas, and covers urban extensions, developing in public transport corridors, village expansion and infill and new settlements.
- 3.2.10 It suggests that where development has to take place outside existing urban areas, local planning authorities should utilise the most sustainable option and plan built developments as a community (paras. 56-57).

3.2.11 Planned extensions to existing urban areas are likely to prove the next most sustainable option after building on appropriate sites within urban areas, especially where it is possible to utilise existing physical and social infrastructure (para. 58). Reviewing tightly drawn Green Belt boundaries should be an exceptional policy which should not compromise the objectives for which Green Belts were designated (para. 59).

3.2.12 The potential access by public transport should be considered when choosing villages for expansion or infill, but this is not the sole consideration (para. 60). Availability of previously developed sites, capacity of existing infrastructure, ability to build communities and physical constraints should also be taken into account (para. 23).

3.2.13 Location of significant additional housing should be limited to circumstances where:

- it can be demonstrated that additional housing will support local services which could otherwise become unviable
- it is necessary to meet local needs such as affordable housing
- the development will be designed sympathetically and laid out in keeping with the character of the village (para. 61).

In rural areas there should be adequate housing provision to meet the needs of local people (para. 62).

3.2.14 The draft PPG also sets out the possible circumstances where new settlements (either large scale additions to existing settlements or completely new) may prove to be a sustainable development option:

large enough to support a range of local services

availability of public transport

use previously developed land

there is no more sustainable alternative (para. 62)

3.2.15 *PPG7* states that development plans should help promote healthy rural communities where people can both live and work. The main focus should be on existing towns and villages (including networks of small villages) and other allocated areas where employment, housing and other facilities can be provided close together, thus promoting sustainable development. Development plans should indicate the circumstances in which development will be allowed within and adjacent to villages and country towns. Village appraisals which identify a local community's needs and priorities for the future may also inform development plans (para. 2.10).

3.2.16 *PPG13 (CD11)* is concerned with reducing the environmental impact of transport and influencing the rate of traffic growth to meet the objective of sustainable development (paras 1.1-1.2). It recognises that the location and nature of development affect the amount and method of travel. Section 3 provides guidance to local authorities on locational policies. Generally, the emphasis is on existing town, local and rural centres, public transport centres, alongside corridors well served by public transport (or with the potential to be so served) and close to local facilities is to encourage walking and cycling. The *Revised Draft PPG13* cross refers to Draft PPG3 on housing (see paras 3.2.10-3.2.13 above).

3.2.17 Paragraph 62 of *Planning for the Communities of the Future (Cm 3885 (February 1998))* states that previously developed sites in rural areas may be less sustainable in terms of access to jobs, schools, shopping, leisure and other facilities, so in sustainability terms, some forms of greenfield development may be more attractive, such as extensions to urban areas in public transport corridors.

3.3 Regional Policy

3.3.1 RPG9 (CD23) does not relate to settlements below the level of towns. Among its principles are the redevelopment and recycling of urban land, the protection of Green Belts and resistance to inappropriate development in the countryside (para. 1.10). It recognises the development pressures in West and South Hertfordshire, particularly Hemel Hempstead, Watford and St Albans (para. 7.28), but goes on to place the emphasis on using existing urban land and maintaining the attractive qualities of urban areas. Conservation policies will also be important due to the presence of attractive areas of countryside including AONBs and Green Belt (para 7.29).

3.4 County Planning Context

3.4.1 The principle that the growth of existing settlements within a Green Belt was to be severely restricted was incorporated into the *County Development Plan (1958)* as part of the MGB policy (para 5 (a)). In Dacorum, perimeter boundaries were drawn for Kings Langley and Chipperfield in the submitted version of the Plan, but deleted from the Approved version. They were therefore 'washed over' by Green Belt. The designated area of Hemel Hempstead New Town was shown and Town Maps were prepared for Tring and Berkhamsted as principal centres of population in the County (para 3).

3.4.2 The *Submitted First Review of the County Development Plan (1963)* refined the approach not only by defining strict perimeter boundaries for Berkhamsted and Tring and of course the designated area of Hemel Hempstead New Town, but by defining two categories of village within the MGB which was proposed to be extended to cover the whole of Dacorum (see paras 2.2.8-2.2.9).

- (a) "Excluded" Villages (larger settlements no longer exclusively rural in character and so omitted from the MGB, the perimeter boundary, tightly encircling existing development), and
- (b) "Listed" Villages (retained within the MGB, and wherein a small amount of infilling was to be allowed in defined areas).

3.4.3 In Dacorum, Kings Langley was identified as an "Excluded" Village, and Bovington, Chipperfield, Flamstead, Long Marston, Markyate, Potten End, Wigginton and Wilstone were "Listed" Villages.

3.4.4 Elsewhere in the MGB, applications for new dwellings were to be refused unless it was conclusively shown that:

- (a) suitable housing accommodation was not available in an existing building;
- (b) loss to the rural community or to agriculture or other essential local industries would result if planning permission were refused, because the applicant was employed in the village or the district for which it formed the logical centre;
- (c) there was another quite outstanding reason why a new house should be permitted in the MGB.

Great attention was to be paid to the preservation and enhancement of the character of the villages and to the design of buildings.

3.4.5 The *Approved First Review (1971)* deleted the proposals for "Excluded" and "Listed" Villages but accepted the concept of a perimeter limit closely encircling the existing limits of towns and major villages excluded from the MGB (para 5(a)). In Dacorum, with the MGB restricted to the south of the Borough (see Map 1), only Kings Langley was so defined.

3.4.6 Elsewhere in the MGB, and including the smaller settlements not so defined, new buildings was to be permitted only in the most exceptional circumstances unless required for agriculture or a purpose directly related to the needs of the rural communities.

3.4.7 As indicated in paragraph 2.4.10 above, pending a decision on the future extent of the MGB, the authority would permit in the areas outside the MGB only such development as would be appropriate in the neighbouring Green Belt. The restrictions in the previous paragraph therefore also applied in the rural areas of Dacorum (para 5(b)).

3.4.8 The policies of *Hertfordshire 1981* (a non-statutory Second Review of the County Development Plan adopted in 1972) were designed not only to accommodate the majority of the County's growth in existing towns, but to protect the character of the rural area. To this end it was accepted for the first time that rural settlements should not be allowed to grow by the allocation of additional land for

development at each review of the Development Plan, i.e. villages should not be allowed to expand indefinitely. Thus, as in the Approved First Review, a perimeter boundary was drawn to closely encircle the existing limits of those towns and major settlements excluded from the Green Belt, with similar boundaries drawn for settlements beyond the MGB. The term "Excluded Villages" was reintroduced, and the new "Intermediate Villages" appeared.

3.4.9 "Excluded Villages" were those defined in the Submitted First Review of the County Development Plan, see para. 3.3.3 above), and development within them was to be accepted in principle, so long as the proposal did not prejudice the character of the village itself or the surrounding countryside by its scale or siting. Boundaries were not extended beyond the perimeter lines already approved, except to take account of planning permissions (para 3.4.4). Kings Langley was the only "Excluded Village" in Dacorum, and had an unchanged boundary.

3.4.10 "Intermediate Villages" were the "Listed Villages" from the Submitted First Review, except for Wigginton and Wilstone which had few undeveloped sites left and were to be dealt with as Green Belt villages (see para 3.4.11 below). In the "Intermediate Villages" the County Council continued the policy of accepting the principle of development on the sites listed in the Submitted First Review and on other acceptable infilling sites within the core of the village. The intensification of existing development by the fragmentation of gardens or the demolition of houses of character in these villages in order simply to redevelop their sites at higher densities was not normally permissible (para 3.4.5). The criteria for infilling which also applied to "Green Belt Villages" were defined as follows:

- (a) the plot in question must represent a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage;
- (b) the plot must be located along the same frontage as existing development;
- (c) the plot must represent the minor part of the whole frontage, and have an area, frontage and depth comparable with the adjoining development; and
- (d) the development must not, by reason of its location, shape or topography, be such as to detract from the character of the village or surrounding area (para 3.4.8).

3.4.11 All remaining villages in the county were defined as "Green Belt Villages" where development would only be permitted if it met the following conditions:

- (a) the applicant cannot obtain suitable housing accommodation in an existing building; and either

- (b) loss to the local rural community, or to agricultural or other essential local interests would result if planning permission were refused, because the applicant is employed in the village or the district for which it forms the logical centre, the application being supported by precise details of such employment; or
- (c) there is some quite outstanding reason (other than under (b) above), supported by the Council, why the application for a new house in the Green Belt should be allowed (para 3.4.6).

In addition, development had to be located in the main core of the settlement and meet the four infilling criteria set out above.

3.4.12 In the *Submitted County Structure Plan (1976)*, housing development was to be concentrated in the major urban areas, with housing in the rural areas limited to a substantially lower rate not exceeding an average of ½% per annum of the existing housing stock in the Rural Areas (Policy 11). In Dacorum, Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring were shown on the Key Diagram as Urban Settlements excluded from the proposed extended MGB.

3.4.13 In the rural part of the County (i.e. within or beyond the MGB) Policy 15 of the Plan divided villages into List A and List B categories. List A villages were those large villages where permission would be granted for limited housing development, provided such development was within the confines of existing development and would not detract from the character of the village or the surrounding area. List B villages were those smaller villages where permission would be granted for limited housing development if located on infilling sites within the main core of the village, following the infilling criteria in Hertfordshire 1981. In Dacorum the following villages were defined:

- List A - Kings Langley
- List B - Bovingdon, Chipperfield, Flamstead, Long Marston, Markyate, Potten End

In those villages and hamlets not shown above, development was not to be permitted unless the criteria in para 3.4.11 above were satisfied.

3.4.14 In the *Approved County Structure Plan (1979)*, the Secretary of State retained the reference to concentrating development in major urban areas in Policy 11 but removed the reference to ½% per annum. He also modified Policy 15 by deleting the lists of villages and detail inappropriate to a Structure Plan. He noted that the policy was intended as an interim policy pending the outcome of the County Council's Rural Settlement Study. He agreed with the Panel that the listing of villages in the Structure Plan might prove too rigid as a form of policy, inhibiting the district councils in their evaluation

of each settlement in local plans, and therefore that the drawing up of lists should be left to be determined in local plans (Decision letter 21 September 1979 para 5.6). The approved Policy 15 allowed limited development within selected large villages which would be defined in Local Plans where it was substantially surrounded by existing development. Infilling sites within the main core of selected smaller villages, also to be identified in Local Plans, may be developed. In all other hamlets and villages, development would not normally be permitted unless loss to the local rural community or to agriculture or other essential local interests would result if permission were refused.

3.4.15 The Secretary of State also considered that it was important to remember the major MGB aim of restricting urban sprawl, and that the expansion of particular settlements should be halted when the acceptable limits of development had been reached. Policy 2 was accordingly modified so that the Green Belt boundaries around the settlements enclosed by it were defined by reference to the degree of long-term expansion of the built-up area acceptable in the context of the stated purposes of the MGB and the Structure Plan policies for employment and housing (ibid para 3.2).

3.4.16 The *Submitted County Structure Plan Alterations 1980* proposed to substantially retain the approved Structure Plan Policy 15, but added three further settlement policies; 15A, 15B and 15C.

3.4.17 Policy 15A stated that development would be concentrated in 'towns', defined as settlements of more than 5,000 population. In smaller 'specified settlements' of 2,000-5,000 population, which were excluded from the MGB, development would be contained within the confines of existing development and limited to ensure the permanence of their boundaries within the MGB and the maintenance and enhancement of their character. Their boundaries would be defined in Local Plans and within these boundaries it was expected that the local planning authority would husband the resources of available land to meet the needs of these specified settlements. In Dacorum the following towns and specified settlements were shown:

Towns - Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring

Specified Settlements - Bovingdon, Kings Langley

Policy 15A also stated that in the rural areas outside these settlements, development would be restricted to uses appropriate to a rural area according to Policies 15B and 15C which recognised the different needs and circumstances of rural settlements within (15B) and beyond the MGB(15C). Policy 15C was more flexible regarding appropriate uses, and included general housing need not tied to rural activities, and employment provision to ameliorate any persistent unemployment or underemployment. It also indicated that settlements in the rural areas beyond the MGB could be selected for these purposes if appropriate in Local Plans.

- 3.4.18 At the EIP some objectors thought Policy 15 too detailed and complex with duplicated elements, considered that it should be left to district councils to devise Rural Settlement policies relevant to their own areas, and suggested that it would be difficult to implement for development control purposes. The Panel concluded, and the Secretary of State agreed, that strategic policies about the distribution of development to different kinds of settlement were required, but agreed that the wording could be simplified to show more succinctly the types of settlement in question, the development that might be provided in each type and how that development should be accommodated. The proposed Policy 15C was welcomed to the extent that it would allow needed development in the villages beyond the Green Belt – in the existing economic conditions, some slight loosening of plan policies to allow more development supportive of employment in these villages was necessary.
- 3.4.19 The *Approved Alterations No.1* therefore listed towns and specified settlements in Dacorum (unchanged from the submitted version) under the West Hertfordshire Policy Area Statement. Policy 15 as modified retained the less restrictive approach towards development in settlements in the rural area beyond the Green Belt selected for the purpose in Local Plans.
- 3.4.20 In the *Submitted County Structure Plan 1986 Review* Policy 49 identified the towns where development would generally be concentrated, i.e. Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring. Markyate was added to Bovington and Kings Langley in the list of 'Specified Settlements' – larger villages in the MGB where limited development compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundaries might be permitted (Policy 50). This was, of course, bound up with the proposal to extend the Green Belt, in the north of the Borough (see para 2.3.16).
- 3.4.21 Development in any other settlement within the Green Belt would not normally be permitted, unless it met the housing and employment needs of agriculture, forestry, leisure and local services in the rural part of the District that could not practicably be met in a location outside the Green Belt, or the local facilities or service needs of the settlement in which the development was proposed (Policy 51). The objective was to severely restrict development in the smaller Green Belt villages and hamlets, which were predominantly residential and under pressure of development but accessible to facilities and opportunities in nearby towns.
- 3.4.22 In rural settlements beyond the Green Belt, the need for limited development to sustain rural life and diversity was again recognised. Policy 52 therefore left scope for District Local Plans to select settlements where development may be permitted for:
- (a) the housing needs of the rural part of the district;
 - (b) the employment needs of agriculture, forestry, leisure and local services in the rural part of the district;

(c) the local facilities and service needs of the rural area.

- 3.4.23 Since the Secretary of State did not approve the proposed Green Belt around Markyate, he therefore also deleted Markyate from the list of Specified Settlements, as by definition, such settlements were located in the Green Belt. Development proposals at Markyate were therefore subject to Policy 52 relating to rural areas beyond the Green Belt.
- 3.4.24 Policy 52 was modified in the *Approved 1986 Review* to revise the restriction on development in settlements in rural areas beyond the Green Belt. It was not the Secretary of State's intention that any part of Hertfordshire not designated Green Belt should be regarded automatically as open to development, but he felt the types of development proposed were too restricted. Settlements in rural areas beyond the Green Belt could therefore be selected (by district councils) where development would be permitted if it was compatible with the character of the settlement and consistent with the other policies of the Plan. Recognition of these considerations precluded environmentally damaging development. The revised policy enabled a wider interpretation by district councils, allowing development without reference to specific housing need.
- 3.4.25 *The Structure Plan 1991* (CD26) rolled forward the 1986 Review to 2001, and did not change the development strategy and settlement policy in that plan. Policies 1 (Green Belt), 49 (concentrating development in towns – Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring), 51 (local needs developments in Green Belt settlements) and 52 (settlements beyond the Green Belt and protection of the countryside) were identical. Policy 50 (identifying specified settlements within the Green Belt) was identical, except for the addition of How Wood in St Albans District, and included Bovingdon and Kings Langley in Dacorum.
- 3.4.26 The Proposed Alterations had included proposals to extend the Green Belt around Markyate and to expand the settlement of Markyate. Markyate would have become a specified settlement excluded from the Green Belt under Policy 50. However, the Secretary of State for the Environment in approving the Proposed Alterations rejected both proposals: Markyate therefore reverted to its previous designation outside the Green Belt covered by Structure Plan Policy 52. Whether it continued to be a village where infilling would be permitted was an issue for the review of the local plan (i.e. the preparation of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan).
- 3.4.27 In the event that any housing development were to come forward at Markyate in the review of the local plan, the County Council considered it should result in an improvement to village infrastructure and facilities and should cause no more than minimal environmental disturbance. County Council Intention 73 stated that the County Council would:

"prepare a joint strategy with Dacorum Borough Council for the Markyate area, which inter alia will take into account the following factors:

- (i) no development at Markyate should take place until improvements to the A5 have been carried out;
- (ii) the funding of necessary improvements to the local network, other infrastructure and service and community provision should be borne by the developers;
- (iii) the development should be limited to that necessary to improve facilities in the village;
- (iv) any development should be accompanied by landscaping to enhance the environment of the village as a whole;
- (v) providing the above conditions are met, the scale and timing of development should seek to minimise pressures on the environment and social fabric of the village. This may mean that some development does not take place until after the end of the Plan period" (i.e. 2001).

3.4.28 The Structure Plan 1998 (CD32) is less prescriptive in terms of settlement policy. Policy 6 Settlement Pattern and Urban Concentration lists the towns where development is to be concentrated (Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring in Dacorum). In addition other settlements may be selected within and beyond the Green Belt where limited development may be appropriate to maintain the vitality of the area. Development should meet sustainability objectives. Within the Green Belt the settlements should be inset and development limited to that which is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundary. Development in smaller settlements and in rural areas beyond the Green Belt would only be accommodated to support the facilities and services needed and meet the employment and housing needs for that settlement and its surrounding area only. Unlike previous structure plans no settlements below towns are listed.

3.4.29 Policy 7 (Main Development Strategy) states that development will mainly be brought forward through planned regeneration in the towns. Limited peripheral development will only be acceptable where regeneration opportunities have been fully explored; where demonstrable sustainability benefits are provided; and the development is planned in the context of the town as a whole.

3.4.30 The Hertfordshire settlement policy strategy seeks to retain the pattern of a number of small to medium sized towns, each with a range of facilities, though not completely self-sufficient, surrounded by accessible open countryside (para. 117).

3.4.31 County Council Intention 73 relating to Markyate from the Alterations 1991 has been dropped.

3.5 Dacorum District Plan

- 3.5.1 The *Consultation Draft* contained no specific policy for concentrating development in the main urban areas, but stated in the background text that 'the principal aim of the District Council will be to direct all acceptable development away from Green Belt areas to locations in the main settlements'. Inner MGB boundaries were drawn around Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring, closely following the built-up area.
- 3.5.2 Villages were dealt with in Policies 4 and 5. Policy 4 was broader than Structure Plan Policy 15 in that it related to 'development for all purposes' not just housing development. It applied generally to any village or hamlet irrespective of location. In Policy 5, villages were identified where 'it appears to the District Council that a limited amount of infilling could take place without seriously harmful effects on the character of the village or the surrounding area' and four criteria (derived from Hertfordshire 1981) were listed. Small-scale residential development might be allowed in the main cores of Bovingdon, Chipperfield, Flamstead, Kings Langley, Long Marston, Markyate, Potten End and Wigginton. The policy did not, however, categorise these villages in any way. The cores of Bovingdon and Kings Langley were identified on the Proposals Map, but the core boundaries of the other villages were only shown on supplementary maps held in the Planning Department.
- 3.5.3 By the time of the *Deposit Draft*, the Submitted Structure Plan Alterations 1980 were available to be taken into account. Although the concentration of development in the main urban settlements was again only referred to in the background text, Bovingdon and Kings Langley were identified in Policy 3 as Specified Settlements. Policy 4 contained the provisions of the Submitted Alterations in respect of scope for economic development in the Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt. The villages where small scale residential development might be permitted under the new Policy 5 were sub-divided as follows:

Within the MGB

Chipperfield
Flamstead
Potten End
Wigginton

Within rural areas beyond the MGB

Long Marston
Markyate

As well as satisfying the infilling criteria, such development also had to be in accordance with Policy 4.

- 3.5.4 Inner boundaries were drawn to exclude Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Tring, Kings Langley and Bovingdon from the MGB, following closely existing built-up areas, since the District Plan suggested that there was little need for further land outside urban areas and specified settlements to be developed in the Plan period (para 2.6).

3.5.5 At the *First Public Local Inquiry* into the Dacorum District Plan a Joint Statement regarding the development context of Berkhamsted, Tring, Bovingdon and Kings Langley was prepared by the DoE and the District Council (see para. 2.5.3 above). The proposed modification to incorporate this text was approved by the District Council in the DDP 1984, and clearly indicates the constraints on development around these settlements. Policies 3, 4 and 5 were not the subject of any direct objections and were carried through to the adopted version of the plan.

3.6 Dacorum Borough Local Plan

3.6.1 In the preliminary work for the Dacorum Borough Local Plan, a study was undertaken to examine the character of the rural settlements in terms of population size, services and general environment, and to assess whether the list of villages in Policy 5 of the District Plan might be extended and settlement boundaries revised in the light of changing circumstances.

3.6.2 The DDP 1984 policies provided practically a blanket restraint on development within the rural settlements both within the Green Belt and beyond. Whilst the benefits of such stringent control were fully recognised, it had become increasingly apparent that there were some instances where residential development might be acceptable especially in larger villages such as Markyate, Potten End and Wigginton, which contained plots of land already surrounded on three sides by development and whose development would not detract from the character of the settlement or the surrounding countryside.

3.6.3 An anomaly had been identified regarding DDP 1984 Policies 4 and 5, which meant it would be more difficult to obtain permission to build in a named (larger) Policy 5 village than in a smaller unnamed Policy 4 village, as the former had to meet the infilling criteria as well as the overriding Policy 4. Removing the latter proviso would have the benefit of enabling the larger villages to provide for 'natural' small scale growth. It was not envisaged that the changes would result in a significant level of development because of the limited number of suitable development sites. It was considered necessary to include maps showing the defined settlement boundaries in the Plan itself as those used with the District Plan had the status of supplementary planning guidance only.

3.6.4 The rural settlements study drew on the preliminary work for the Adopted Plan 1995 and included a specific appraisal of all rural settlements in respect of the potential for limited development within their existing built-up area. In drawing boundaries, properties set in large grounds on the edge of settlements were generally excluded to avoid potential large-scale redevelopment should the existing uses cease.

- 3.6.5 Initially the possibility was floated that the six 'Policy 5' villages and the additional four settlements of Aldbury, Rucklers Lane, Wilstone and Bourne End might be identified as rural settlements suitable to accommodate a limited amount of infilling. The considerations relating to these settlements and a summary of the overall study are attached at Appendix 1. After careful consideration Rucklers Lane and Bourne End were deleted from the list due to their character, and the uncertainty over the line of the A41 Bypass with its likely associated development pressures. In addition, Bourne End lacked facilities compared with the other small villages identified in the Plan.
- 3.6.6 Little Gaddesden was excluded from the list because although sizeable in terms of population, the linear form of the settlement, and the importance of the gaps between the houses for its rural character, made it unsuitable for definition under the proposed infilling policies. Hudnall, Flaunden, Water End, Ringshall, Nettleden, Great Gaddesden, Piccotts End and Jockey End were considered too small to be included as any further development would detract from their character and setting.
- 3.6.7 Policy 52 of the Structure Plan 1986 Review enabled Districts to select settlements in the Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt where development could be permitted, provided it was compatible with the maintenance or enhancement of the character of the settlement and consistent with the other Structure Plan policies. Markyate was initially identified as such a settlement, but its size (2,500 population), and large number of shops and other facilities including an industrial area, distinguished it from the other settlements in this category. Markyate had more in common with Bovington and Kings Langley, despite its location in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, and it was considered that it should be planned in a similar way. The more flexible term 'Large Villages' was therefore devised, and Markyate included with Bovington and Kings Langley in DBLP Policy 2.
- 3.6.8 Policies 4 and 6 in the Dacorum Borough Local Plan were a continuation and development of Policy 5 in the DDP 1984.
- (a) Policy 4 dealt with selected small villages in the Green Belt (the list remained the same as in the Dacorum District Plan: Chipperfield, Flamstead, Potten End and Wigginton), and to enable effective and practical development control it expanded upon the acceptable forms of development noted in Structure Plan Policy 51 in the 1986 Review and Alterations 1991. The amount of permissible development was restricted to protect the character of the villages and their Green Belt location.
- (b) Policy 6 covered selected small villages in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt. Aldbury and Wilstone were added to Long Marston, as a result of the Rural Settlement Study, and in accordance with the provisions of Structure Plan Policy 52. They provide homes for several hundred people and contain

important services and facilities. They are attractive yet suitable locations to accommodate sensitively designed development in the long term interests of the rural community and thus the countryside.

In both categories of small villages, essential local needs and services would be identified through village appraisals in which the Parish Councils would take the lead role (see Housing Technical Report).

3.6.9 All aspects of the Local Plan's development strategy were considered at the Public Local Inquiry in 1992. The Inspector concluded that the overall development strategy was clear, comprehensible and accorded with Structure Plan policies (Inspector's Report 1993 (CD37) para 2.3). The settlement hierarchy was also supported:

- towns (para 2.6)
- large villages (paras 2.10 and 2.11)
- selected small villages in the Green Belt (paras 2.31-2.33)
- selected small villages in the Rural Area (para 2.51)

The Inspector specifically endorsed the appropriateness of Markyate as a large village: he also confirmed that the policy of limiting development to that which is compatible with the existing character of the village and strictly controlling development outside its boundaries was consistent with Structure Plan Policy 52 (paras 5.147 and 5.148).

3.6.10 With regard to specific objections, the Inspector concluded it was not appropriate to identify Little Gaddesden as a settlement for small scale development due to its special qualities and loose-knit character (para 2.52). He also rejected a proposal by a landowner to extend Wilstone's village core boundary northwards to the canal. The grazing field in question related more to the surrounding countryside than the village itself. It could also create an undesirable precedent for other fringe sites (para 2.53).

3.7 **Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011**

3.7.1 The settlement hierarchy and list of settlements with the associated policies has been retained from the previous Plan.

3.7.2 Although there is a less prescriptive approach in the Structure Plan 1998 Policy 6, the emphasis remains on concentrating development in towns (i.e. Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring – DBLP Policy 1) with Hemel Hempstead taking more development than the smaller towns.

- 3.7.3 The policy also allows for the selection of smaller settlements where limited development may be appropriate, with sustainability considerations to be taken into account. Such settlements should be excluded from the Green Belt. This accords with the Large Villages category (DBLP Policy 2). Small scale expansion of Kings Langley is proposed as it is located in a public transport corridor. Bovingdon is not proposed for expansion. Markyate is in the special circumstance of having its inner Green Belt boundary defined for the first time so small scale expansion has been allowed for to meet longer term housing needs, and support local services.
- 3.7.4 Structure Plan Policy 6 limits development in other small settlements to that required to support the facilities and services needed and meet the employment and housing needs for that settlement and surrounding areas only. The Borough Local Plan rightly distinguishes between selected small villages in the Green Belt (which are washed over by Green Belt) and those in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt.
- 3.7.5 The hierarchy resulted from a recent examination of the character and function of villages and other small settlements, and remains appropriate.

green-belt/lc/pec/bp1

4. MAPS

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