

2012

*Local Planning Authority's
Monitoring Report for
1/4/11 – 31/3/12
December 2012*



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Executive Summary

This is the Local Planning Authority's Monitoring Report, which covers the period from 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012. The aim is to demonstrate progress against the programme outlined in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and examine the effectiveness of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. Policies are measured against various indicators but there is no requirement to use national core output indicators previously prescribed by Central Government. The report looks at changes in performance and any progress with actions proposed in earlier Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). Due to changes introduced through the Localism Act 2011, the monitoring requirements prescribed for local planning authorities have altered.

Progress this year includes:

Publication of Draft Options for the Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD) for consultation from 15th June until 27th July 2011.

Consultation on Initial Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) of the Managing Development Delivery DPD (taking account of additional alternatives suggested during the June to July consultation) from 31 August to 12 October 2011.

Council has also adopted Supplementary Planning Documents associated with the delivery of Strategic Development Locations allocated by policies CP18-21 of the Core Strategy (SPDs adopted in October 2011) and for Affordable Housing (June 2011).

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1 BACKGROUND

The Monitoring Report is produced to demonstrate how well an authority is complying with the progress outlined in its Local Development Scheme (LDS) for producing planning policy documents.

The Monitoring Report also explains how well the policies in these planning policy documents are being implemented and whether any changes are needed. The Monitoring Report covers the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. The policies that have been monitored for this year are from the Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD), adopted 29 January 2010. The Core Strategy is the key planning policy document for the Borough, which will be used to guide development. It sets out the long-term vision and overarching policies for the Borough. Some policies from the Proposed Submission Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Development Plan Document (June 2012) are included, even though consultation on the Proposed Submission document occurred outside of the monitoring period covered by this document. The MDD will provide a greater level of detail for the delivery of the Core Strategy.

2 INTRODUCTION TO THE BOROUGH AND ISSUES FACING THE AREA

The area covered by Wokingham Borough lies within the former administrative county of Berkshire in the area known as the Thames Valley and is within the 'Western Corridor & Blackwater Valley' sub-region in the South East Plan. In many ways Wokingham borough is a federation of 3 towns and 14 parishes. The area is diverse; to the north the area is part of the Metropolitan Green Belt; Wokingham, the administrative centre, is an old market town which retains its character but only houses one-fifth of the borough's population; two-fifths of the borough's population live in the towns of Woodley and Earley which adjoin the borough of Reading; the remainder of the population live in smaller settlements which are separated by areas of countryside that include extensive flood plains. The Landscape Character Assessment confirms the borough's diversity. It shows it contains three



separate national landscape areas. The borough includes a range of employment including modern business parks at Winnersh IQ and Thames Valley Business Park.

The 2011 census found that the borough had a population of 154,380. This is a rise of approximately 2.8% per since 2001. The current mid year estimate (mid 2011) is 154,900. The 2011 census figures show a smaller increase than expected given that the mid year estimate for 2010 was 163,200.

Unemployment had remained consistently low at less than 1% for several years but it rose sharply from 0.8% in August 2008 to a peak of 2% in August 2009 (NOMIS October 2012, ONS). Numbers have started to fall since then and have remained at 1.3% or 1.4 % for the last twelve months. Most other Berkshire authorities have followed a similar pattern. The borough has maintained its ranking as the second least deprived in the country in the latest (2010) Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

Census data for 2011 has shown that 16.4% of the Borough's population are from Black and Minority Ethnic communities (including "white Irish" and "white other" categories). This is an increase from 10.19% in the 2001 census and in line with the estimate of 16% in the Mid 2009 experimental statistics (ONS). The census data also showed that compared to the national average (England and Wales) Wokingham Borough has fewer people aged 20 to 30 and fewer males aged 30 to 35. Wokingham has a higher than average proportion of people in the age group 35 to 55.

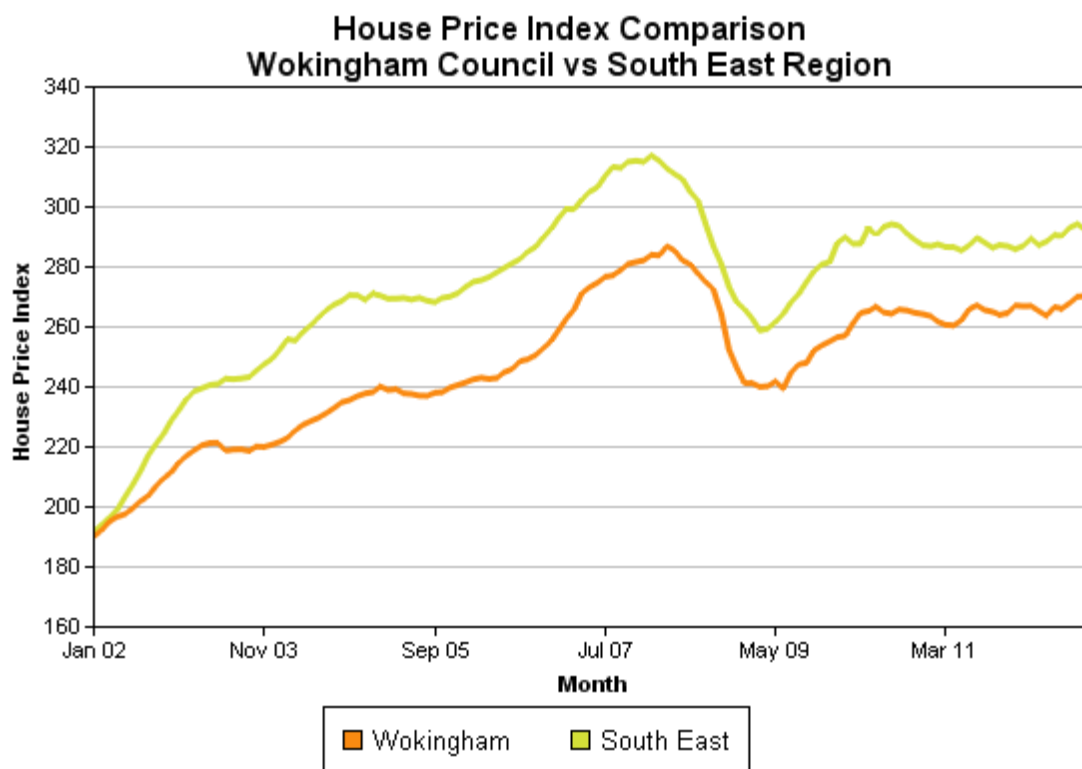
House prices are higher than average for the South East. Although they did fall from their March 2008 peak of £293,054 to £244,719 in June 2009 they have since recovered to some extent. In October 2012 the average house price for Wokingham was £278,611 compared to £209,137 for the South East (Land Registry House Price Index for October 2012).

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Source: (Land Registry House Price Index for October 2012).

The borough has been subject to major development pressure for several decades. This has had a major impact on the character of the borough both in its socio-economic aspects and the balance between built-up areas, areas with the characteristics of "urban fringe" and open countryside.

The Council's Core Strategy requires the delivery of 13,230 dwellings between 2006 and 2026. This is based upon the requirements in policy H1 of the South East Plan (12,460) for the period 2006-26 together with the shortfall in delivery at April 2006 against the requirements of the Berkshire Structure Plan (772 dwellings).



3 PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Council produces a timetable setting out when different planning policy documents will be produced and what issues these will cover. This is called the Local Development Scheme (LDS). It is a three year timetable for the Council's planning policies and strategies.

The LDS contains dates of when consultation will take place and also when a public examination will take place for certain planning policy documents.

The current LDS came into effect on 1 July 2011 and covered the period until 30 June 2014. Since the end of the monitoring period covered by this report, the Council has agreed a new LDS which covers the period from 23 June 2012 to 22 June 2015. The key milestones for the preparation of Development Plan Documents, as set out in the current LDS (23 June 2012), are set out below.

| Document Title | Status | Brief Description | Chain Of Conformity | Consult on Pre submission publication | Submit to Secretary of State | Examination in Public | Estimate Date for Adoption |
|--|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Managing Development Delivery DPD (Local plan) | Development Plan Document | To identify and allocate sufficient land for housing as well as other uses to cover the period to 2026, in accordance with the approach of the Core Strategy. The DPD will also set boundaries which can be seen on the Policies Map for issues such as development limits (settlement boundaries) as well as providing policies against which development proposals will be assessed. | With Core Strategy | June – August 2012 | December 2012 | March/Apr 2013 (date depends on whether Planning Inspectorate consider that pre hearing meeting is necessary) | October 2013 (Depends on timing of earlier stages) |

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| Document Title | Status | Brief Description | Chain Of Conformity | Consult on Pre submission on publication | Submit to Secretary of State | Examination in Public | Estimate Date for Adoption |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|--|------------------------------|--|---|
| Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan | Development Plan Document | To identify and allocate sufficient land for sites to cover the period to 2026. The document may also provide additional policies against which development proposals will be assessed. | With Core Strategy | June –July 2013 | November 2013 | Feb/March 2014 (Date depends on whether Planning Inspectorate considers that pre hearing meeting is necessary) | Sept 2014 (Depends on timing of earlier stages) |
| Minerals and Waste Local Plan | Development Plan Document | To identify the approach to the delivery of minerals and the treatment of waste and to allocate sites for such uses. This may be a joint plan produced by some or all of the Berkshire Unitary Authorities. The document will also provide policies against which development proposals will be assessed. | With Core Strategy | June-July 2014 | November 2014 | Feb/March 2015 (Date depends on whether Planning Inspectorate consider that pre hearing meeting is necessary) | Sept 2015 (Depends on timing of earlier stages) |
| Proposals Map and Inset Map | | Local development constraints, designations, site allocations. It will be updated when each Development Plan Document is produced and adopted. | With Core Strategy and other DPD as adopted | | | | |

Further information about the Local Development Scheme can be found at
<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/ldf/ldftimetable/>

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A six week consultation on the draft options for the Managing Delivery DPD was held from 15 June to 27 July 2011. This included a public workshop in line with the Statement of Community Involvement, which is a document that sets out how the Council will consult the local community when preparing planning policies and documents. This informed the Proposed (Pre) Submission version of the MDD produced in June 2012, which was consulted on. The main issues raised during the consultation in 2011 and 2012 on the MDD were considered by The Executive in November 2012. The MDD was submitted to the Secretary of State on 19 December 2012. Further information about the MDD can be found via

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/submittedmdd/>

The current monitoring year saw the adoption of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 2 June 2011. For further details please see

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/housing/adoptedaffordablehousingspd/>

In October 2011, the Council adopted the five SPDs to guide delivery of development within the four Strategic Development Locations allocated by policies CP18-21 of the Adopted Core Strategy.

4 POLICIES AND MONITORING

The Council's planning policy documents cover a wide range of topics, such as how much housing has already been provided and how much housing needs to be provided in the future. Other policies are for employment development and the health of our local town centres, for example, the number of vacant retail units is monitored regularly. There are also planning policies that seek to protect and enhance the Borough's countryside, open spaces and biodiversity and to ensure that development is sustainable.



Monitoring information is collected and made available as soon as possible. The following sections of the Monitoring Report set out how these policies are being implemented and signpost where the relevant information can be found.

5 HOUSING

Core Strategy policies aim to ensure residential development provides a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes. This includes affordable housing that must meet the proven needs of people unable to compete in the general housing market.

Core Strategy Policies

CP2 Inclusive communities
CP5 Housing mix, density and affordability
CP17 Housing Delivery
CP18 Arborfield Garrison SDL
CP19 South of the M4 SDL
CP20 North Wokingham SDL
CP21 South Wokingham SDL

MDD Policies

TB05 Housing mix
TB09 Residential accommodation for vulnerable groups
TB10 Traveller sites
SAL01 Allocated housing development sites (Sites identified through Wokingham District Local Plan)
SAL02 Allocated housing development sites
SAL03 Allocated reserve housing sites

Alexandra Place, a major development of extra care housing was completed and occupied during the monitoring year. This was on the former Crescent House site. The development included new homes for the elderly with communal facilities and onsite care and support for a range of needs.

Beeches Manor – a development of dementia extra care and supported housing accommodation in Wokingham was also completed in April 2012, just after the end of the period covered by this monitoring report.

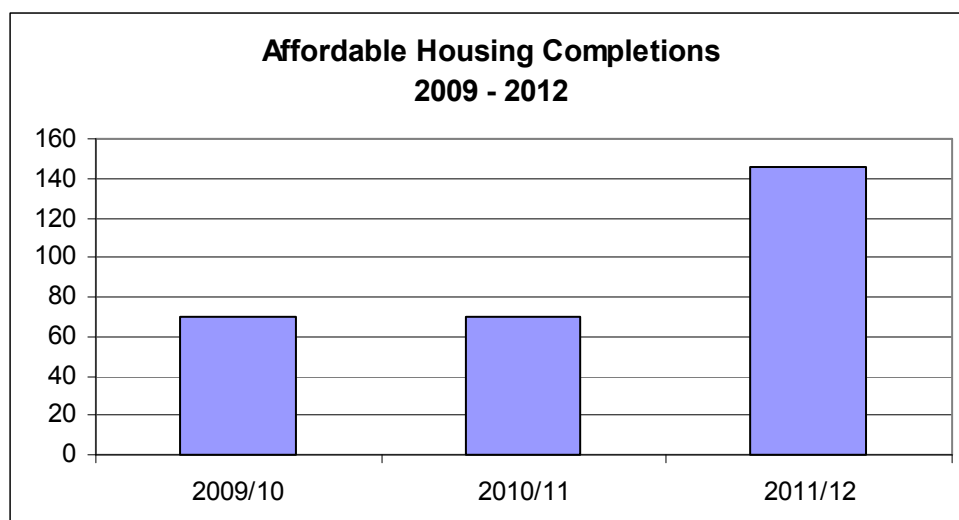


Data and analysis on housing mix, density and affordability can be found in the Planning Commitments for Housing March 2012.

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/housing/housingmonitoring/>

Affordable Housing Supply

The chart below shows that the number of affordable homes completed has doubled in the monitoring year 2011/12. Most new supply is secured through Section 106 negotiations with developers, and is therefore dependent on sites getting planning consent, and developers then building them out.



Housing Delivery

The Council has produced a document on housing land supply at 31 March 2012 "Planning Commitments for Housing – March 2012 (November 2012)" which is derived from the details from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) produced for the borough. The SHLAA was carried out to assess the amount of land available for residential development and to consider sites with potential for new housing. This Planning Commitments for Housing document takes account of the allocation of sites within the Proposed Submission Managing Development Delivery (June 2012) document.

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Plan period and housing targets

Following adoption of the Core Strategy on 29th January 2010, policy CP17 sets the borough's housing requirements from April 2008 to March 2026. The phased requirements are set out below.

| Time Period | Housing Target for period (Housing target per annum) |
|----------------|--|
| 1/4/06-31/3/11 | 3,000 dwellings (600 per annum) |
| 1/4/11-31/3/16 | 3,500 dwellings (700 per annum) |
| 1/4/16-31/3/21 | 3,615 dwellings (723 per annum) |
| 1/4/21-31/3/26 | 3,115 dwellings (623 per annum) |
| <i>Total</i> | |
| 1/4/06-31/3/26 | 13,230 dwellings (661.5 per annum) |

Net additional dwellings and managed delivery target

Net additional dwellings

Details of completions since April 2001 are set out below

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| 1/4/01-31/3/02 | 237 |
| 1/4/02-31/3/03 | 418 |
| 1/4/03-31/3/04 | 492 |
| 1/4/04-31/3/05 | 376 |
| 1/4/05-31/3/06 | 655 |
| 1/4/06-31/3/07 | 1,018 |
| 1/4/07-31/3/08 | 488 |
| 1/4/08-31/3/09 | 368 |
| 1/4/09-31/3/10 | 226 |
| 1/4/10-31/3/11 | 220 |
| 1/4/11-31/3/12 | 273 |

Site allocation

The housing delivery requirements identified above have been addressed by the allocation of sites in the Proposed Submission MDD DPD. Policy SAL01 Allocated Housing Development Sites (Sites identified through Wokingham District Local Plan) would provide around 999 dwellings). They would contribute towards the overall housing requirement and the maintenance of a rolling 5 year supply of housing land. The sites allocated for residential development are:

- Land at Hatch Farm Dairies, Winnersh (431 dwellings)
- Land at Sandford Farm, Woodley (468 dwellings)



- Land at junction of Hatch Ride and Old Wokingham Rd, Crowthorne (100 dwellings)

Policy SAL02 Allocated Housing Development Sites would provide around 840 dwellings across the Borough. These include 725 at major development locations and 115 at modest development locations.

Policy SAL03 Allocated Reserve Housing Sites would provide around 135 dwellings. These sites are allocated for development after 1 April 2026 unless one of the following applies:

- The Council accepts that the overall dwelling requirement for 13,230 net dwellings between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2026 is unlikely to be achieved
- The Council accepts there is a deficit in the rolling 5 year supply of housing land
- An approved Neighbourhood Plan confirms that residential development of an allocated reserve site can occur before 1 April 2026

Housing trajectory

The Council has also produced a housing trajectory associated with the Core Strategy (updated to April 2012 and taking account of the allocation of sites within the Proposed Submission MDD). **The housing trajectory in Appendix 1 shows past and estimated future housing completions on an annual basis.**

The information in appendix 1 demonstrates that sufficient land has been identified to meet both the overall housing requirements of Core Strategy policy CP17 and to maintain a rolling 5 year supply of housing from April 2012 to at least April 2021. This has been achieved by taking account of the allocation of sites in the Proposed Submission Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). The Summary SHLAA indicates that taking account of the identification of sites for these dwellings, the Council's assessment of rolling 5 year supplies of housing land at both April 2012 and 2013 indicates supplies of 5.4 years and 5.8 years respectively.



Within the area where residents may visit the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area there is a need to provide land as an alternative visitor destination (mitigation land) in association with any residential development. The provision of such land has been agreed. Whilst the supply of housing from the affected area has been constrained, this constraint was removed from May 2010 as planning applications could be permitted.

SDLs for Arborfield Garrison, South of the M4 and, North Wokingham and South Wokingham

Within the Core Strategy, a significant proportion of the borough's housing (around 10,000 dwellings out of the 13,230 required in the borough) is expected to be delivered from the four Strategic Development Locations (SDL) allocated in policies CP18-21.

Development of all the allocated Strategic Development Locations in the Borough will be guided by individual Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for each SDL and an over-arching Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD.

The diagram in Appendix 2 illustrates the role of each SDL for housing delivery within the borough, and the comparison between them and other sources.

Neighbourhood Planning

The Localism Act of 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning. This is intended to involve communities in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. No Neighbourhood Plan has been produced in the Borough so far but a Neighbourhood Area has been agreed for the parish of Shinfield. Further details can be found at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/ldf/neighbourhood/neighbourhoodplansgeneralinformation/>



Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community infrastructure Levy is a new charge for development which may be imposed by local authorities. The charge will be for certain types and size of development and will contribute to the local infrastructure needed as a result of the new development. Wokingham Borough Council has not yet introduced CIL. The Council is at the evidence gathering stage and aims to have CIL in place by April 2014.

6 EMPLOYMENT

Objectives include: Allow limited new business, industrial, distribution and storage development to meet local needs, retain the range of employment and provide job opportunities for the local population in locations that have regard to environmental issues and limiting the need to travel.

Core Strategy Policies

CP9 Scale and location of development proposals
CP13 Town Centres and Shopping
CP14 Growth and Renaissance of Wokingham town centre
CP15 Employment Development
CP16 Science Park

MDD Policies

TB11 Core Employment Areas and Defined Bad Neighbour Uses
TB13 Science and Innovation Park
TB14 Whiteknights Campus
TB15 Major Town and Small Town/District Centre development
TB16 Development for Town Centre Uses
TB17 Local Centres and Neighbourhood and Village Shops
TB18 Garden Centres and other small rural units outside Development Limits
SAL07 Sites within Development Limits allocated for employment/commercial development

The table below shows the amount of employment floorspace developed in Wokingham Borough in the monitoring year. It shows the amount for the various business use classes, previously developed land (PDL) and the amounts for Wokingham town centres and Core Employment Areas.

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| Amount of B Class floorspace (net sq.m.) completed in Wokingham Borough 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2012 | | | | | | | |
|--|--------|-------|--------|----------|-------|--------|--------|
| Use Class | B1a | B1b | B1c | B1 (all) | B2 | B8 | Total |
| Gross floorspace | -8,935 | 6,521 | -1,319 | 10,592 | 1,894 | 1,498 | 13,984 |
| Gross Town Centre | -1,886 | 0 | 0 | -1,886 | 0 | -165 | -2,051 |
| Gross Core Employment Area | -7,170 | 0 | -860 | 6,523 | 1,084 | -4,982 | 2,625 |
| Gross Previously Developed Land | -8,935 | 6,521 | -1,319 | 10,592 | 1,894 | 1,498 | 13,984 |
| % Gross Previously Developed Land | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| *Hard commitments | - | - | - | 73,283 | 728 | 12,971 | 86,982 |
| **'Hard commitments' are sites with planning permission which have not yet been completed. | | | | | | | |

The single largest drivers of change in the quantum of completed floorspace during the period were the redevelopment of the former Berkshire Brewery site adjacent Green Park as a ambient distribution centre (loss of c.20,000 sqm B8 and development of c.25,000 sqm B8 (part of this site and the redevelopment is within Reading Borough Council) and also the redevelopment of the former Alexander Gibb site in the Suttons Business Park; this involved the demolition of c.12,000 sqm B1 & B8 and construction of c.19,000 sqm B

Results for last year were preliminary as not all sites were surveyed. Revised totals for the monitoring year 2010-2011 are given in the table below.

| Revised Completed | B1 sqm | B2 sqm | B8 sqm | Total |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2010 - 2011 | -1,422 | 475 | -2,993 | -3,940 |

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as use classes. The table below shows B1 Business uses; B2 general industrial and B8 Storage or Distribution. B1 Business uses are broken down further into B1(a) Offices; B1(b) Research and development, studios, laboratories, high technology and B1(c) Light industry. See Glossary for full details.

Town centres and shopping

Wokingham Borough Council has defined certain areas within local town centres as primary shopping areas. These are defined areas where retail

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development is concentrated. For monitoring purposes, the Council considers that land within the following uses is regarded as retail development:

- A1 Shops
- A2 Financial and professional services
- A3 Restaurants and cafes
- A4 Drinking establishments
- A5 Hot food takeaways

The table below shows the amount of A1 and A2 class floorspace development completed for the monitoring year.

| Amount of A1 & A2 Class floorspace (net sq.m.) completed in Wokingham Borough 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2012 | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|
| Use Class | A1 | A2 | Total |
| Gross floorspace | 273 | -721 | -448 |
| Gross Town Centre | -244 | -338 | -582 |
| Gross Previously Developed Land | 273 | -721 | -448 |
| % Gross Previously Developed Land | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| *Total Hard commitments to March 2012 | 750 | -304 | 446 |

The total new floorspace completed in 2012 amounted to just over 500 sqm A1 Class use floorspace
The total new floorspace consented in 2012 amounted to just over 200 sqm A2 Class use floorspace

Vacancy rates

See appendix three for a graph showing trends in retail vacancies in the four centres since 1999. The number of vacant retail outlets in Wokingham has risen very slightly since last year. Vacancy rates in the three other centres have dropped still further with only one vacant unit each in Earley and Twyford and just three in Woodley.

Wokingham Town Centre

A Wokingham Town Centre Public Realm Workshop was held in June 2011. This was held to consider streetscape issues within the parameters set by The Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan. Further information about the redevelopment of Wokingham Town Centre can be found at:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/masterplanning/wokingham-town-centre-redevelopment-update/>



7 COUNTRYSIDE AND OPEN SPACES

Core Strategy Policies

CP3 General principles for development

CP12 Green belt

CP13 Gaps

MDD Policies

TB01-3 Development within and adjoining the Green Belt

TB08 Open space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development

SAL04 New Public Open Space

SAL06 Allocated Country Parks

One of the principles set out in CP3 of the Core Strategy is to ensure planning proposals can provide a framework of open space together with recreational/sporting facilities and private amenity space.

Country Parks and Open Spaces

The Borough has four Sites of Special Scientific Interest, but no Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). There are also 117 Local Wildlife Sites and three Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS). Although, there are no SPAs in the Borough, around 30% of the Borough lies within the 5km protection area for the Thames Basin Heath.

The Council's Countryside Service manages 3 country parks totalling 233 hectares (ha), 11 Nature reserves totalling 110ha (although we are about to increase this figure with a 3.19ha extension to Keephatch and a new site at Shinfield Park of 8.2ha).

Hurst Golf Course and the water-based Multi Activity Centre are set within Dinton Pastures Country Park.

The service also manages one SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) of 18.5ha in Barkham.



The borough also contains 238 hectares of parks and open spaces which include:

- Local parks
- 35 outdoor sports pitches
- Tennis courts
- 4 pavilions
- 18.1 hectares of highway grass verges
- Sponsorship sites (e.g. roundabouts)
- Leisure centre grounds
- Over 95 play areas.

Open space

The Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (MDD DPD) includes standards for open space and recreation facilities which new residential development proposals must adhere to. This includes parks and public gardens; natural and semi natural open space; play areas for children; burial grounds and cemeteries; indoor and outdoor sports facilities and activity halls. New development can bring opportunities to provide new areas of open space or enhance existing ones by onsite measures or contributions to offsite areas. The standards reflect the evidence and approach described in the Wokingham PPG17 Open space, Sport and Recreation Standards Study Paper. (2012)

Building in the Countryside

The Council seeks to control development in the countryside. Annual housing monitoring shows that the number of dwellings completed in the countryside has been consistently low over the last decade. Full details of completions and percentages can be seen in the Planning Commitments for Housing March 2012. Please see tables 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14 at the weblink:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/housing/housingmonitoring/housing2012/>



8 BIODIVERSITY

Core Strategy Policies

C P7 Biodiversity

CP8 Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area

MDD Policies

TB23 Biodiversity and Development

SAL05 Delivery of avoidance measures for Thames

Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

CP7 seeks to conserve and enhance sites that are important for nature conservation and to resist inappropriate development. Development may require mitigation measures to prevent harmful impacts or appropriate compensation measures. CP8 specifies that all proposals must have regard to the cumulative impact of schemes around the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area.

Sibley Hall

Sibley Hall Application secured the retention of the Redhatch Copse ancient Woodland and its transfer to either WBC or Earley Town Council with a commuted sum to cover future maintenance. This should ensure that this valuable Local Wildlife Site should achieve favourable conservation management in the near future.

SANGS

Buckhurst Farm Application has secured a new 12ha SANG site to be owned managed in perpetuity by WBC. In addition with the Kentwood Farm appeal we secured through negotiation a new 3.5ha SANG to be owned and managed in perpetuity by WBC.

Nores Hill Wood and Reading Road Newt Ponds

Nores Hill Wood (Shinfield Park development) and Reading Road Newt Ponds (Baslow Rd development) were transferred to WBC this year with the relevant commuted sums. The Shinfield Park development included the Bat Barn which is intended to be managed in partnership with Berkshire Bat Group.



Sandford Farm

In a forthcoming development at Sandford Farm an innovative approach was used in order to secure WBC management of the Dinton Pastures Country Park extension although ownership will remain with a management company.

Changes in area of sites designated for their intrinsic environmental value (SPA, SAC, SSSI, LWS, LGS, LNR)

There was a net decrease of nearly 25 hectares in the amount of Local Wildlife Site area in Wokingham Borough, as a consequence of two local wildlife sites being de-selected in April 2011.

The analysis of the changes in area of Local Wildlife Sites is really a measure of the impacts of the site selection panel decisions of that year; the figures for 2011 contained within the table below are the outcomes from the April 2011 site selection panel meeting (at which point the sites designated as LWS or de-selected were confirmed). There was a net decrease of approximately 25 hectares in the area of Local Wildlife Sites in Wokingham Borough in 2011, owing to two sites being de-designated and very minor changes being made to the boundaries of other sites:

Changes in area of sites designated for their intrinsic environmental value

| Site | Ward/parish | Designated? | Reason |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| Norman's Shaw (0.91 hectares) | Swallowfield | Retain | A diverse area of Ancient Semi-Natural Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland BAP Habitat. |
| Wyvol's Copse (14.47 hectares) | Swallowfield | Retain | Site on AWI undergoing restoration to broadleaved canopy from conifers. |
| Park Place School (14.52 hectares) | Remenham | Defer | Additional information sought from Ecological Consultant reports |
| Woodland near Banister's Farm (7.17 hectares) | Finchampstead | De-select | Poor area of Ancient Woodland replanted with conifers. |
| Mill Bank (17.51 hectares) | Remenham | De-select | Woodland has a highly modified canopy so does not meet naturalness criteria 1 |

Source: TVERC



There was a net increase of 2 hectares in the area of Local Geological Sites as a result of two new sites being designated. These were added to the LGS resource in Wokingham, as a consequence of a site selection panel meeting in early 2011. These sites were Barkham Iron-Rich Streams and Longwater Road Gravel Pits. They formed a component of the net increase of just over 2 hectares in the county resource.

The following table identifies the areas of sites designated for their environmental value within Wokingham Borough. A colour coding system has been used:

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| | A reduction in the resource |
| | No significant change in the resource |
| | An increase in the resource |

Areas of sites designated for their intrinsic environmental value

| Designated site | Area in hectares (2010) | Berkshire Area in hectares (2010) | Area in hectares (2011) | As % of Wokingham | Berkshire Area in hectares (2011) | As % of Berkshire |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | 26.98 | 4,848.0 | 26.98 | 0.15 | 4,848 | 3.85 |
| Special Protection Areas (SPAs) | 0.00 | 1,454.8 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1,454.8 | 1.15 |
| Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) | 0.00 | 1,817.0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1,817.0 | 1.44 |
| Local Wildlife Sites | 1,318.09 | 9,637.0 | 1,293.0 | 7.22 | 9,557 | 7.58 |
| Local Nature Reserves | 93.49 | 487.4 | 93.49 | 0.52 | 487.4 | 0.39 |
| Local Geological Sites | 32.68 (3 sites) | 185.73 | 34.86 (5 sites) | 0.19 | 220.8 | 0.18 |

Source: TVERC



National Indicator 197 (The Single Data List 160) proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented.

This indicator calculates the number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Local Geological Sites (LGS) that can be said to be in or have been in positive conservation management in the five year period to 31st March.

In Berkshire, a site was considered to be in positive management if at least 50% of the site was being managed in a way that protected or enhanced the biological or geological interest of that site.

There was an increase in the proportion of local sites in positive conservation management from 40% to 42% between 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Single Data List 160 data analysis for Wokingham Borough Council:

Sites qualifying under Criteria

| Wokingham Borough Council | Sites total | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total | % Positive |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------|---|-----------|------------|--------------|
| 2011/12 | 121 | 34 | 16 | 1 | 13 | 51 | 42% |
| 2010/11 | 120 | 26 | 15 | | 12 | 48 | 40% |
| 2009/10 | 120 | 26 | 13 | | 8 | 47 | 39% |
| 2008/09 baseline | 121 | 26 | 11 | | 8 | 45 | 37% |
| | | | | | | | |
| Berkshire Total 11/12 | 773 | 229 | 57 | | 47 | 301 | 38.9% |

T

The change between the last two reporting years can be attributed to more sites entering into stewardship schemes – primarily Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship – and increases in site management work. The figures are set against a net increase in the number of designated sites in the Borough – one LWS (Park Place/Mill Bank) was de-designated, but two sites (Barkham Iron-Rich Streams and Longwater Road Gravel Pit) were designated as Local Geological Sites.

There are four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within or partly within Wokingham Borough but their condition was not monitored in 2011.

Several types of mapped UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat resource have increased in the monitoring year. These are lowland



heathland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, reedbeds, and wet woodland. The only area to have declined is wood pasture and parkland. Please see the table in Appendix 4 for further information.

9 TRANSPORT

Core Strategy Policies

CP3 General Principles of Development

CP6 Managing Travel Demand

CP10 Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network

MDD Policies

CC07 Parking

CC08 Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure

CC08 Transport site allocations

Car parking standards

Car parking standards can be found in the MDD DPD and the Parking Standards Study Report (2011). Further guidance on parking provision is available in the Borough Design Guide SPD (2012). Planning proposals must demonstrate how the standards are met and that the appropriate level of off street parking is retained.

10 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Core Strategy Policies

CP1 Sustainable Development

CP9 Scale and location of development proposals

CP4 Infrastructure requirements

CP11 Proposals outside development limits

MDD Policies

CC04 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC09 Development and Flood Risk

CC10 Sustainable Drainage

TB06 Development of Private Residential Gardens



Duty to co-operate

The Localism Act 2011 inserted a “Duty to co-operate” clause into the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This is a duty to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development. Local authorities and other relevant bodies are required to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries in a continuous and constructive process of engagement. This includes the homes and jobs needed in the area together with the provision of infrastructure for transport, water supply and wastewater and flood risk and health, community and cultural facilities.

To satisfy this requirement for ongoing collaboration, Wokingham Borough County Council is engaged in a range of sub-regional groups on matters such as delivering strategic transport improvements within Berkshire; work with the Local Enterprise Partnership and around the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Although joint Berkshire plans are no longer produced for minerals and waste the Council continues to collaborate with other local authorities for these areas. The Council is actively engaged in the sub-regional working group SEWPAG (South East Waste Planning Advisory Group) which includes 16 member authorities. SEWPAG has adopted a ‘manifesto’ which includes the following statement to define the purpose of the group:

“To help waste planning authorities in the area to fulfil the Duty to Cooperate on strategic issues enshrined in the Localism Bill, and specifically to give effect to the Government’s stated intention to place the responsibilities of the former Regional Technical Advisory Bodies with local authority groupings”.

The Council is a member of SEEAWP (South East England Aggregates Working Party), a technical group with the role of advising government, Mineral Planning Authorities and industry on aggregates.”

The Council attends regular Berkshire Minerals and Waste Officer working group meetings and the Berkshire authorities are currently undertaking a Berkshire Annual Aggregates Survey.

The authority also collaborates with other neighbouring authorities on other cross boundary issues on matters such as education, flood risk/water supply



and considering implications of proposals around the AWE (Atomic Weapons Establishment) sites. Full details can be seen in the Council's Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement for Wokingham Borough's Submitted Managing Development Delivery DPD (Local Plan) December 2012.

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/submittedmdd/?assetdet4611016=219902&categoryesctl4795479=4163&p=11>

Minerals and waste

The six unitary authorities in Berkshire were preparing a Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD). However this plan was withdrawn in 2010. The work on a Joint Minerals and Waste CSDPD was suspended in March 2011. Each unitary authority in Berkshire is now responsible for minerals and waste planning in its own area. The future approach for minerals and waste planning is under review. The Council's revised Local Development Scheme (23 June 2012 to 22 June 2013) includes an indicative timetable for a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The Council works with other local authorities through SEWPAG and the Berkshire Minerals and Waste Officer working group as described in the previous section.

Flood risk and water quality

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy aims to enhance sustainability through minimising impact on the environment. This includes limiting any adverse effects on water quality, ensuring adequate drainage, avoiding any increased risk in flooding (and where possible reducing it). From the information supplied below it can be seen that this policy is achieving its goals.

Planning applications approved following objections from the Environment Agency

The Environment Agency produces a list of planning applications that it has made initial objections to. This can be seen at:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33582.aspx>



F/2011/0543 Suttons Business Park, Earley. Demolition of existing building for class B8 use with associated surface and decked car parking, new access points, service yard and landscaping. The Environment Agency objected due to an unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment for surface water. The objection was withdrawn subject to conditions imposed to protect ground water quality and prevent increased risk of flooding.

F/2011/1042 Newlands Farm, Charvil. Erection of agricultural building. The Environment Agency objected due to an unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. However, following the submission of further information the Environment Agency said it would withdraw the objection providing the local planning authority was satisfied with the siting of the building. As the building was to be used for “less vulnerable purposes” of agricultural storage it was not considered that a refusal on flood risk grounds could be substantiated.

F/2011/0989 Willow Farm, Barkham. Construction of manege. The Environment Agency objected to the original proposal which included construction of a bridge across a waterway involving culverting. This aspect was dropped from the proposal.

F/2011/1278 Sandford Farm, Woodley. Remediation works to remove contaminated material from former landfill site. The Environment Agency objected due to unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. Following the submission of additional information the objections were withdrawn subject to conditions and informatives being included in the decision notice.

F/2010/2695 Islandstone Lane, Hurst. Change of use of land for stationing of caravans for residential purposes for 1 gypsy pitch plus hard standing stable block and utility/dayroom ancillary. The Environment Agency objected due to unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. The Council refused this planning application but the appeal was allowed by the Planning Inspectorate for a temporary planning permission.



F/2010/1428 Cutbush Lane Arborfield Road & Shinfield Road Shinfield. Construction of Eastern Relief Road including creation of flood compensation areas. The Environment Agency objected due to unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. The appeal against non-determination by the Council was allowed following a public enquiry.

F/2011/1629 Sandford Farm, Woodley. 468 residential units with associated access, parking, amenity open space, local shop, country park and associated highways works and landscaping. The Environment Agency objected due to unsatisfactory flood risk assessment. The final reviewed Flood Risk Assessment was acceptable and the Environment Agency was satisfied that the proposal was acceptable subject to conditions for Flood Risk Assessment works, drainage and water courses.

F/2012/0173 The Chestnuts, Wokingham. Erection of 34 dwellings with parking, landscaping and associated access. The Environment Agency objected due to an unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment. Once this was revised there was no objection subject to a condition for surface water drainage. The application would have been refused but was allowed on appeal.

Any others in the list are either pending or refused.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

The Council completed a review of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and an updated document was published in February 2012. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment assesses the risks of all forms of flooding in a local authority. Please see link for further information:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/flood-risk/>

Brownfield Development

Policy CP9 states that the scale of development proposals in the Borough must reflect existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location together with their accessibility. National planning guidance



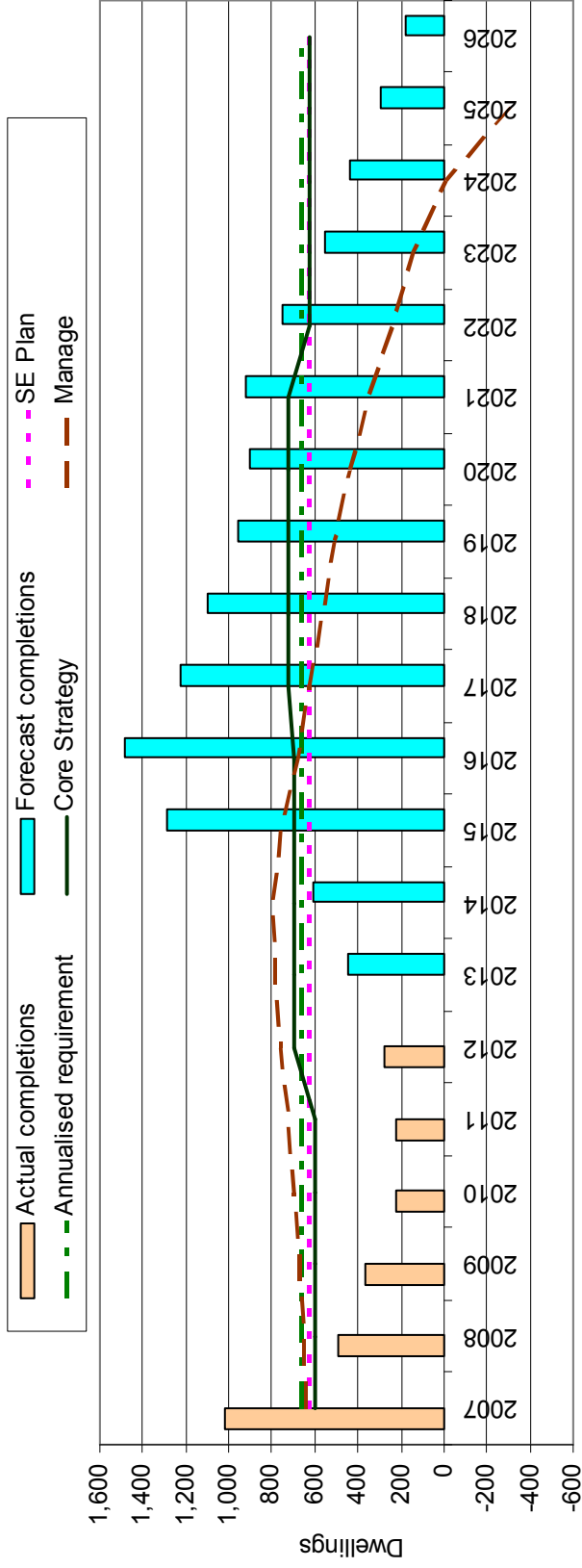
contained in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) had a target for 60% of new housing to be provided on previously developed land (brownfield) but this has since been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which does not have a target. In June 2010 a new PPS3 was released with an amended definition of previously developed land which now excludes private residential gardens and this definition has been carried forward into the NPPF. Therefore all housing applications granted since 9 June 2010 that are developed on residential gardens are classed as Greenfield land. AMR figures for building on previously developed land have been consistently high. Housing data for the monitoring year shows that a high proportion of housing development is still on brownfield land despite the change in PPS3/NPPF and the Council is exceeding the national target of 60% of additional housing on brownfield sites. See housing commitments for further data and analysis.

The employment development completed in the Borough was all on previously developed land (please see the table in Section 6 Employment).

11 EXTENT THAT POLICIES REQUIRE SAVING

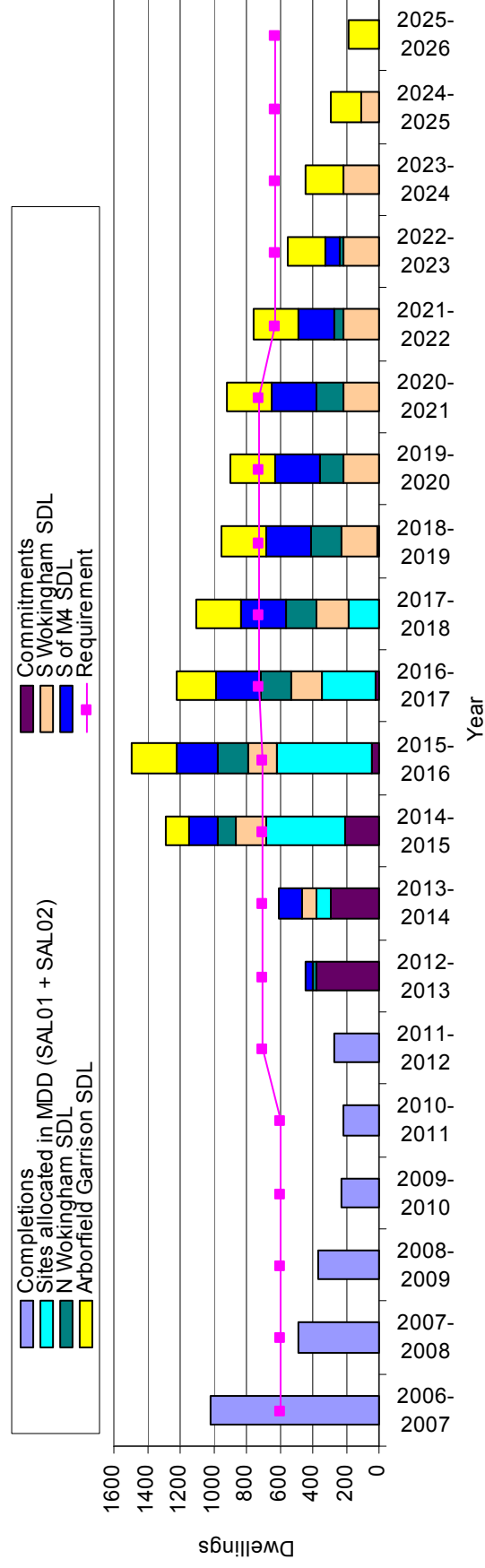
Some policies in the Wokingham District Local Plan (WDLP) were saved and are still in use. For example, they may be used for determining planning applications. All of the remaining 'saved' policies in the WDLP are to be replaced by the Managing Development Delivery DPD once adopted.

Appendix 1. Housing Trajectory of Core Strategy updated to take account of the Proposed Submission Managing Development Delivery DPD

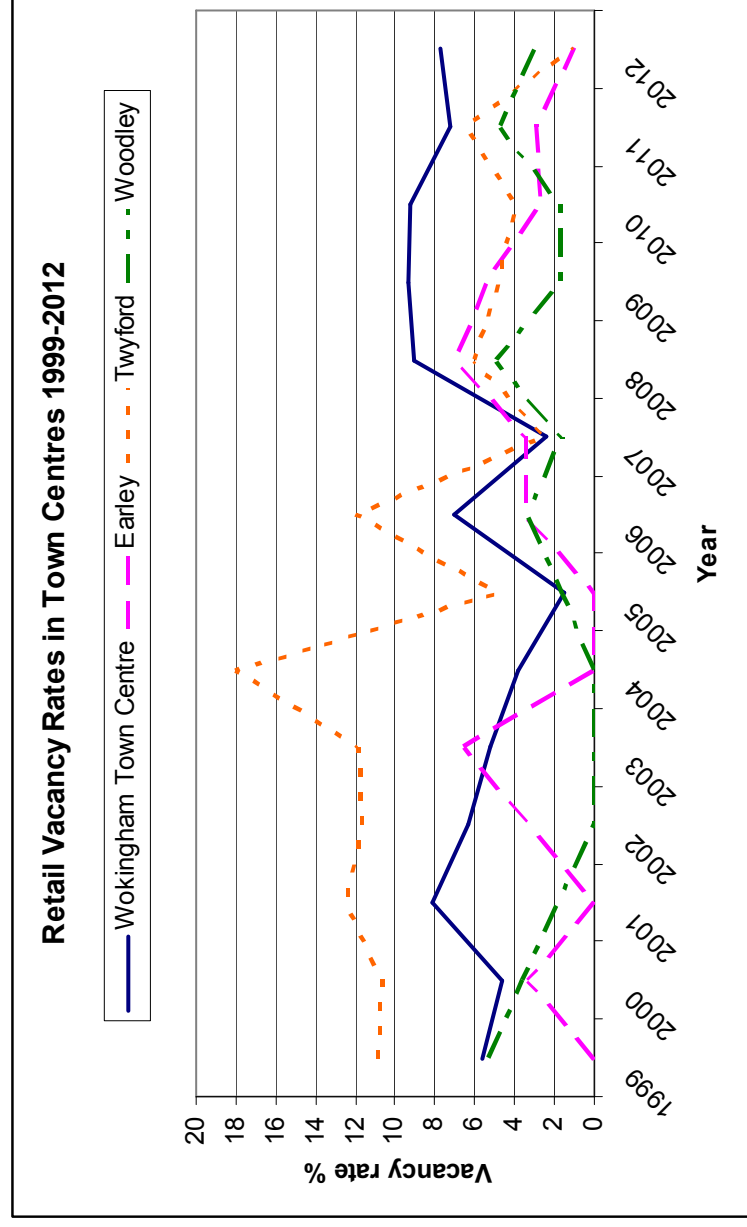


Year from 1 Apr to 31 Mar

Appendix 2. Housing Trajectory for SDLs and other sources of housing supply



Appendix 3. Retail Vacancies



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Appendix 4. UK BAP priority habitat

| UK BAP priority habitat type | Area (hectares) 2010-11 | Berkshire context 2010-11 | Area (hectares) 2011-12 | Berkshire context 2011-12 |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Arable field margins | Not known | Not known | Not known | Not known |
| Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh | 455.84 | 2362.41 | 455.84 | 2362.87 |
| Eutrophic standing water | 177.07 | 1437.4 | 177.02 | 1445.14 |
| Hedgerows | Not known | Not known | Not known | Not known |
| Lowland beech and yew woodland | 38.86 | 502.19 | 38.86 | 497.47 |
| Lowland calcareous grassland | 3.43 | 208.99 | 3.43 | 208.97 |
| Lowland dry acid grassland | 0.86 | 117.82 | 0.86 | 128.74 |
| Lowland Fens | 18.4 | 87.32 | 18.45 | 92.19 |
| Lowland heathland | 13.48 | 469.82 | 20.04 | 391.3 |
| Lowland meadows | 9.52 | 225.17 | 9.52 | 228.41 |
| Lowland mixed deciduous woodland | 844.05 | 8589.59 | 1006.89 | 8529.99 |
| Mesotrophic Lakes | 19.84 | 21.45 | 19.84 | 21.63 |
| Oligotrophic and dystrophic lakes | Not known | Not known | Not known | 3.07 |
| Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land | Not known | Not known | Not known | 8.52 |
| Ponds | 4.72 | 14.12 | 4.72 | 13.83 |
| Purple moor grass and rush pastures | 0.00 | 9.41 | 0.00 | 9.22 |
| Reedbeds | 0.63 | 40.59 | 1.04 | 40.34 |
| Rivers | 8.52 | 155.19 | 8.52 | 155.37 |
| Traditional Orchards | 27.47 | 145.92 | 27.47 | 145.92 |
| Wet woodland | 99.22 | 469.83 | 116.93 | 476.85 |
| Wood pasture and parkland | 193.96 | 1131.5 | 190.38 | 1173.43 |
| Total area of BAP priority habitat | 1915.87 | 15988.69 | 2099.81 | 15933.26 |

Source: TVERC



GLOSSARY

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

See “Monitoring Report”.

Berkshire Structure Plan

The old-style development plan setting out strategic planning policies for Berkshire. It was approved by the Secretary of State on 15 July 2005.

Biodiversity

Or biological diversity is a term given to the variety of life on Earth, and the natural patterns it forms.

Community Strategy

A strategy prepared by a local authority to improve the local quality of life and aspirations, under the Local Government Act 2000.

Core Strategy

A Development Plan Document (DPD) (as well as now being known as a Local Plan) setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives of the planning framework for an area, having regard to the Community Strategy. The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy was adopted on 29th January 2010. (See also DPDs).

Development Plan

A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. The Development Plan for Wokingham Borough currently comprises the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, the Managing Development Delivery DPD, Neighbourhood Development Plans, Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans and the South East Plan (The Regional Spatial Strategy). The South East Plan remains part of the Development Plan until it is abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act 2011.

The Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (Local Plan) is one of the Development Plan documents prepared by Wokingham Borough Council

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that make up the Development Plan for the Borough. The other Development Plan document produced by the Council is the Core Strategy, adopted on 29th January 2010, which sets out the strategic planning policy to guide development in the Borough to 2026.

Under the Localism Act 2011, there is the ability for Parish and Town Councils to produce Neighbourhood Development Plans, which would also form part of the Development Plan.

Regional strategies remain part of the Development Plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken. The South East Plan is the Regional Strategy for the Borough.

Development Plan Documents (DPD)

DPD are prepared by local planning authorities and outline the key development goals of the Development Plan.

The first DPD prepared by Wokingham Borough Council is the Core Strategy. The Managing Development Delivery document is also a DPD. There will also be an adopted proposals map which illustrates the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all DPDS.

All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Together, the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Plan Document are also known as the Local Plan.

Inclusive Communities

Communities that promote integration and aim to tackle the exclusion of marginalised groups. This is primarily achieved through suitable housing provision,



the co-ordination of appropriate services and addressing the requirements of the population.

Local Development Documents (LDD)

These include DPDs (part of the statutory development plan) and Supplementary Planning Documents or SPDs (which do not form part of the statutory development plan). LDDs collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area.

Local Geological Sites (LGS)

Local Geological Sites (LGS) are sites within the county that are considered worthy of protection for their Earth Science or landscape importance, but are not already protected as SSSIs. Previously called Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS).

Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

Non statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Local Wildlife Sites are non statutory sites of significant value for the conservation of wildlife. These sites represent local character and distinctiveness and have an important role to play in meeting local and national targets for biodiversity conservation.

Monitoring Report

A report prepared at least annually by the Local Authority which assesses progress with and the effectiveness of planning policy. Previously referred to as the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Framework, which has replaced Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes, with the exception of PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management.



Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

South East Plan (SEP)

The Regional Spatial Strategy for South East England covering the period 2006-2026. It was approved by the Secretary of State in May 2009. Regional strategies remain part of the Development Plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Habitats to protect internationally important habitats.

Special Protection Areas (SPA)

Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect internationally important bird species.

Strategic Development Location (SDL)

These are the key sites identified through Core Strategy policies CP18-21 to take a significant proportion of the Borough's development.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

A SHLAA assists in the identification of sufficient deliverable sites for residential development and the assessment of whether a rolling five year supply of housing land is available. It should be undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. Undertaking a SHLAA is a key requirement of National Planning Policy Framework.

Sui generis

Certain uses do not fall within any use class and are considered 'sui generis'. Such uses include: theatres, houses in multiple occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs,



laundrettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres and casinos. E.g. theatres, night clubs). Also see 'use class'.

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANG)

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces or 'SANGS' are new or existing open spaces designed to attract visitors away from the Special Protection Area by providing an enjoyable natural environment or recreation.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the Development Plan.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA)

A collection of sites on the borders of Berkshire, Hampshire, and Surrey covering an area of 8,274 hectares. It was classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect the internationally important bird species on 9 March 2005 for the populations of three Annex 1 bird species – Nightjar, Woodlark and Dartford Warbler.

Use Class

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes' and include:

- A1 shops
- A2 financial and professional services
- A3 restaurants and cafes
- A4 drinking establishments
- A5 takeaways
- B1a business: offices, not within A2
- B1b business: research and development, high technology etc.
- B1c business: light industry
- B2 general industrial
- B8 storage or distribution

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- C1 hotels
- C2 residential institutions
- C2A secure residential institutions
- C3 dwelling houses
- C4 houses in multiple occupation.
- D1 non residential institutions
- D2 assembly and leisure

Also see 'sui generis'

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