



RIGHT HOMES, RIGHT PLACES

REVISED GROWTH STRATEGY PUBLIC CONSULTATION

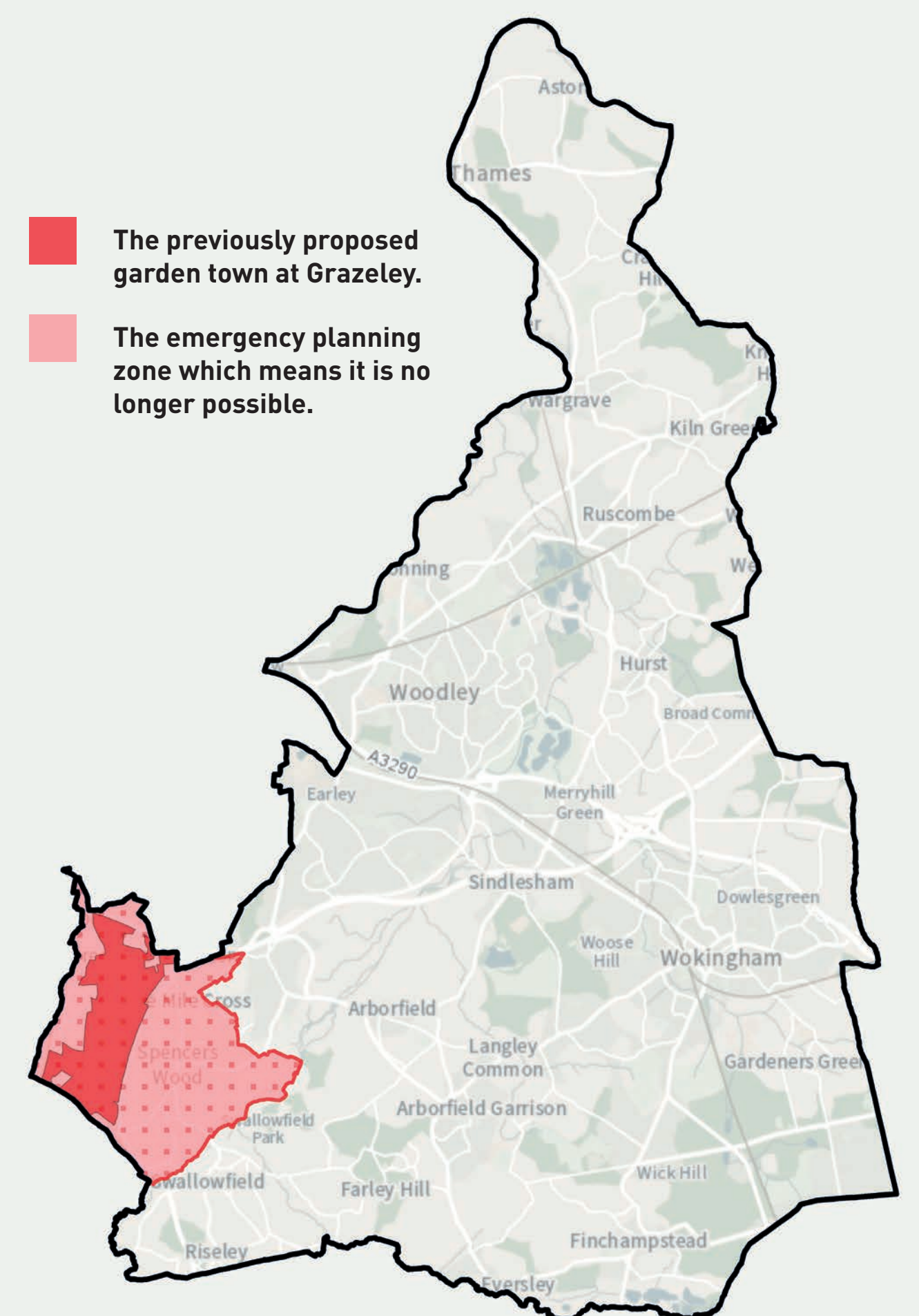
WHY ARE WE CONSULTING ON A REVISED APPROACH?

We prepared and consulted on a full draft Local Plan last year. This set out a strategy for **managing development across the borough**, including the identification of land specifically for housing and other development, as well as policies on climate change, affordable housing, valued landscapes, flooding and much more.

A central focus of our previous strategy was the creation of a **new garden town at Grazeley** in the west of the borough. This provided an opportunity of a new community of around 15,000 homes across Wokingham Borough and West Berkshire District.

Since our consultation, a change in legislation resulted in a significant extension of the areas where **an emergency plan** has to be in place around **AWE Burghfield**. The new area incorporates Grazeley and the villages of Three Mile Cross and Spencers Wood for the first time.

The change means that the proposed Grazeley garden town is **no longer possible** and we need to propose an alternative.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN NOW?

Many of the policies included in the Draft Local Plan are not affected by this change, and will form part of a final consultation on the Local Plan next summer. But we have had to reconsider where development is directed across the borough. **We want to find out your views** on the key changes before we move forward with the next stage of the plan.

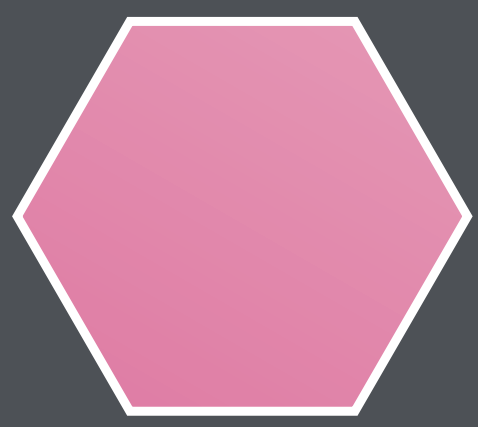
The **key changes in this consultation**:

- We are no longer proposing the new garden town of 15,000 homes at Grazeley
- Our revised approach includes a **new alternative strategic allocation** to create a **garden village** with generous green space in the area to the south of the M4 between Shinfield, Arborfield and Sindlesham - known as **Hall Farm / Loddon Valley**

- Additional **smaller scale development** is also proposed across the borough to support the vitality and viability of our smaller towns and villages
- We're also looking to designate far **more** areas of **Local Green Space** than before
- We propose to extend the plan period to **2038** (previously to 2036)

We haven't forgotten about the other important topics – we're working hard in the background to understand new evidence and national policies and will continue to update our policies. You will be able to take a look at these in the next version of the full plan next year.





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LODDON VALLEY GARDEN VILLAGE

THE VISION

Loddon Valley Garden Village would be based on garden city principles with about **4,500 new homes**.

Sustainability would be designed in from the outset, responding to the **challenge of climate change** through measures such as **zero carbon development**, designing in drainage, services to minimise unnecessary journeys and enable more journeys to be made by **walking** and **cycling**. No buildings would be located in the floodplain.

- Site Boundary
- Employment
- Existing Residential
- Proposed Residential
- Hatch Farm
- Historic Settlement
- LC Local Centre
- PS Primary School
- SS Secondary School
- MU Mixed Use
- Open Space
- Green Lanes
- Sports Pitches
- Public Transport Hub
- Bus Priority Routes
- Primary Routes
- Secondary Routes
- Reserved for Strategic Route
- Pedestrian / Cycle Routes
- Bus/Cycle /Pedestrian Only



Nature and countryside would be at its heart – with the River Loddon Valley providing opportunities to **improve** and **enhance wildlife habitats** and where residents are never far from a park, wildflower meadow or other green space.

There would be **greenways** for walking and cycling to connect homes to parks, schools, shops, cafes and restaurants, community centres, cultural venues and sports facilities.

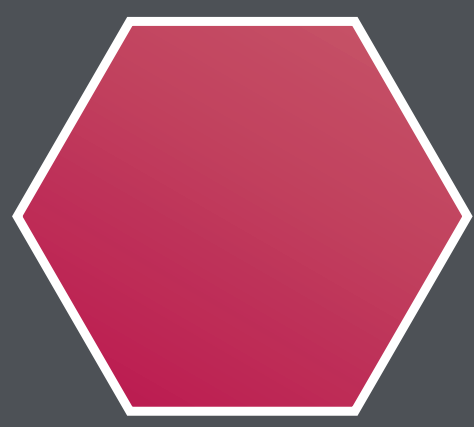
A variety of **well-designed energy efficient homes** of all types and sizes would be available for people of all incomes,

with around 35% of the homes being affordable, such as first homes, social rent, shared ownership and key worker housing.

Housing focussed at three distinct **neighbourhoods**, each with local shops, and a new primary school. The central neighbourhood would include a new secondary school.

Local **transport hubs** including dedicated bus links through the site and to surrounding areas, including Arborfield, Winnersh, Wokingham and central Reading.





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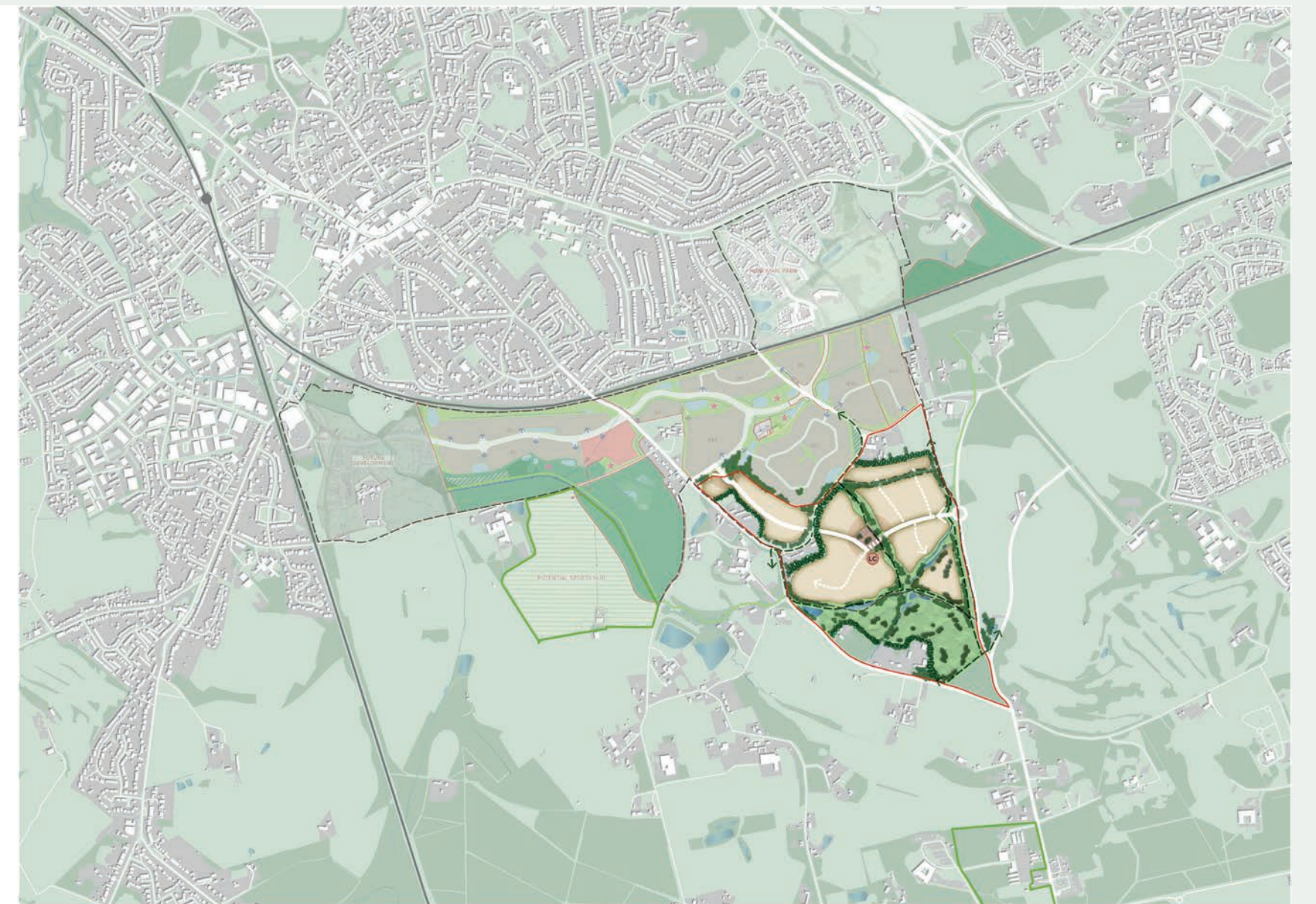
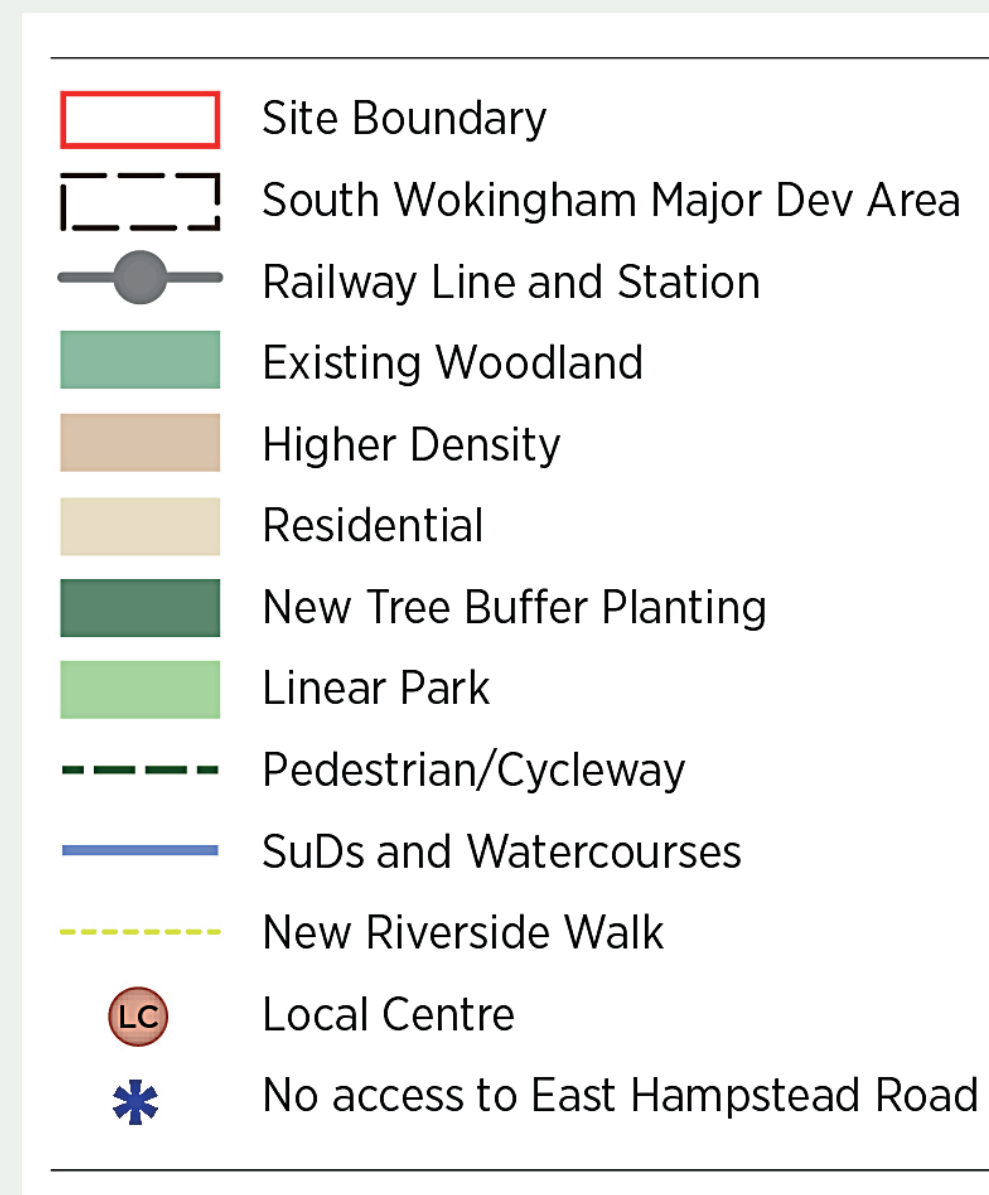
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SOUTH WOKINGHAM

The current local plan set out a vision for a new community as part of the South Wokingham major development.

Montague Park, the first phase north of the railway has become a thriving new community with a primary school and a well-used nature park. The area south of the railway has been granted planning permission subject to a legal agreement with construction expected to start in the coming years. This will include new homes, a second primary school, a neighbourhood centre and parks, play areas.

We are proposing to extend the area identified for housing on to land south of Waterloo Road to provide around an additional **835 new homes**. We also propose to extend the major development area to incorporate Gray's Farm, land which has bought by the council to provide **indoor and outdoor sports** and **community facilities** for the whole community.



A network of paths and cycleways that follow the Emm Brook will improve access to new areas of parkland and open space, including play areas and allotments.

Improvements to nearby junctions will help to improve access to the site, and through to the adjacent major development area.

BENEFITS of the previous local plan



SCHOOLS

7 Primary and 1 Secondary

Two new primary schools in South Wokingham, one in North Wokingham and two each in Shinfield and Arborfield
New secondary school in Arborfield

MAJOR ROADS

Arborfield Relief Road
Shinfield Eastern Relief Road
North Wokingham Distributor Road
South Wokingham Distributor Road
Winnersh Relief Road



PARKS & PLAY AREAS

Total of 240 hectares of new public open space
(that's the equivalent of about 330 football pitches)

40 new children's play parks
12.5 hectares of community allotments
Greenways network of 20 miles

COMMUNITY CENTRES

5 new community centres

Arborfield • Shinfield Village
Montague Park & Matthewsgreen in Wokingham
South Wokingham



SPORTS FACILITIES

£45 million on new sports facilities and improvements to existing facilities

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Nearly 2,000 new affordable homes at low rents and for shared ownership



BUILDING COMMUNITIES - NOT JUST HOUSES

We have invested nearly £1 billion in infrastructure investment, largely funded by developers as a result of concentrating development in four major development areas (Arborfield Garrison, Shinfield Parish, North and South Wokingham).

The Revised Growth Strategy would concentrate the majority of new development in a new garden village at Hall Farm / Loddon Valley as well as taking opportunities to provide new homes within the existing major developments.





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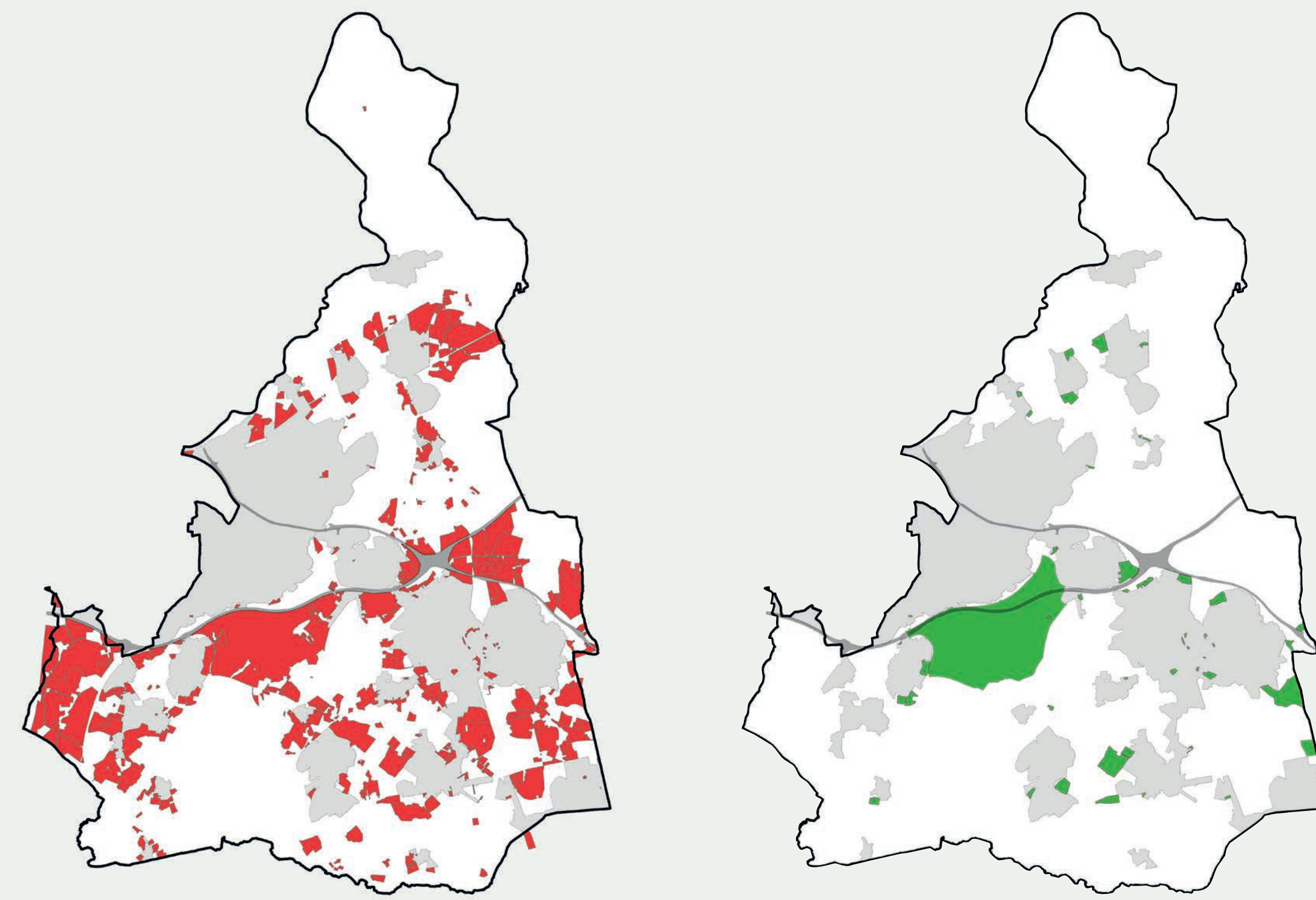
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OTHER SITES

To ensure a regular supply of new homes and the viability of our towns and villages, some smaller allocations are still needed elsewhere.

We therefore also propose about 2,700 new homes to be spread across 46 smaller sites, some of which were included in the previous consultation.

National policy requires us to provide a number of small sites, less than the equivalent of 1.5 football pitches (1 hectare), as these can support small and medium independent builders, who may be based locally and build more bespoke houses.

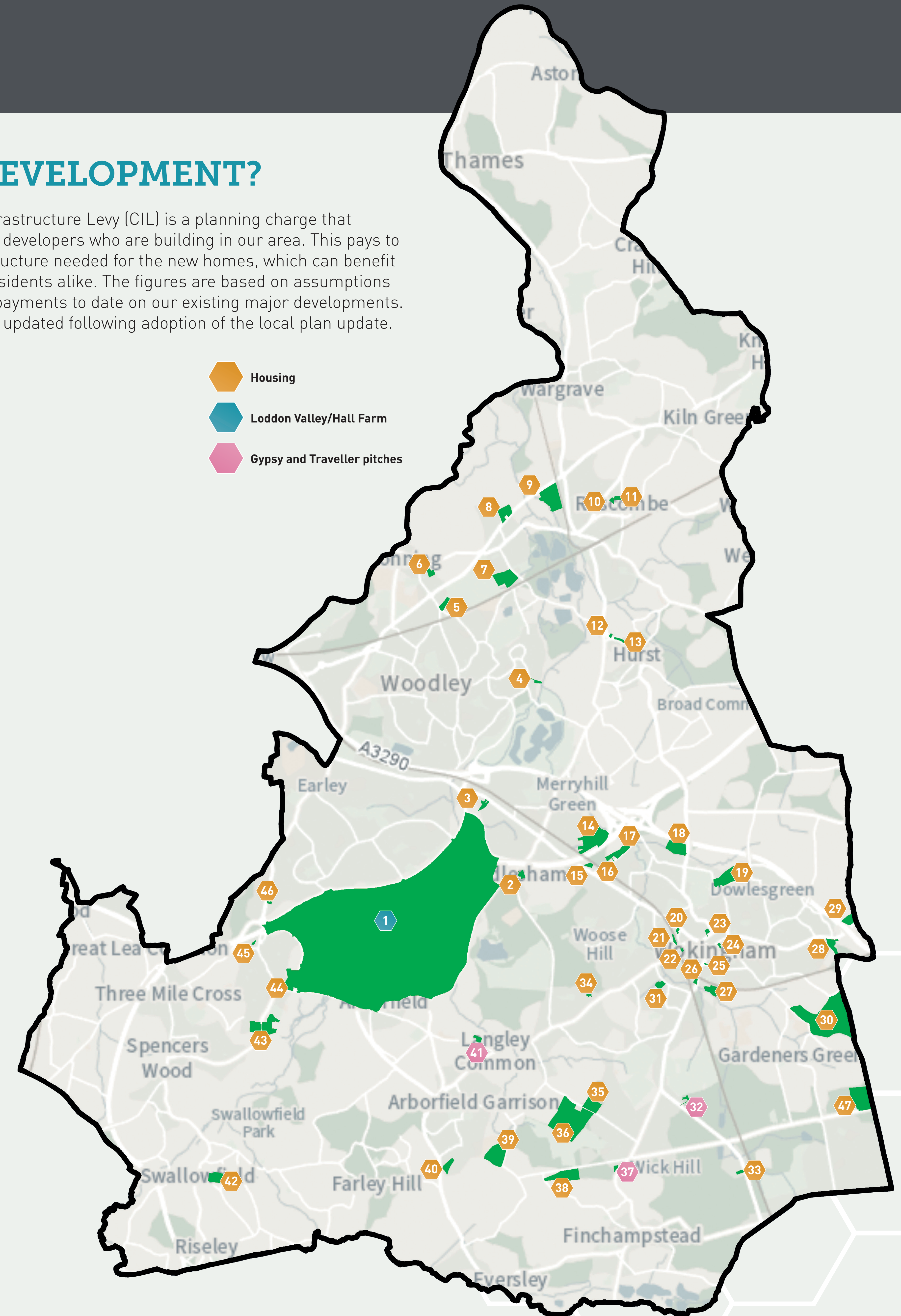


These maps show the land that was proposed for potential development (left) and the land that is actually being recommended for new homes and other development in the new local plan (right).

WHAT DEVELOPMENT?

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge that allows us to charge developers who are building in our area. This pays to support the infrastructure needed for the new homes, which can benefit new and existing residents alike. The figures are based on assumptions of the average CIL payments to date on our existing major developments. The CIL rate will be updated following adoption of the local plan update.

- Housing
- Loddon Valley/Hall Farm
- Gypsy and Traveller pitches



1 A new garden village at Loddon Valley
4,500 new homes by 2050
See display board on Loddon Valley Garden Village for more information

2 25 new homes
£763,750 CIL

3 85 new homes
£2,596,750 CIL

4 15 new homes
£458,250 CIL

5 24 new homes
£733,200 CIL

6 25 new homes
£763,750 CIL

7 61 new homes
£1,863,550 CIL

8 78 new homes
£2,382,900 CIL

9 180 new homes
£5,499m CIL

10 12 new homes
£366,600 CIL

11 20 new homes
£611,000 CIL

12 3 new homes
£91,650 CIL

13 12 new homes
£366,600 CIL

14 287 new homes
£8,767,850 CIL
New Special Educational Needs School

15 25 new homes
£763,750 CIL

16 15 new homes
£458,250 CIL

17 35 new homes
£1,069,250 CIL

18 130 new homes
£3,971,500 CIL
Possibility of a new care home

19 153 new homes
£4,674,150 CIL

20 31 new homes
£947,050 CIL

21 40 new homes
£1,222,000 CIL

22 21 new homes
£641,550 CIL

23 20 new homes
£611,000 CIL

24 15 new homes
£458,250 CIL
Retail space

25 15 new homes
£458,250 CIL

26 59 new homes
£1,802,450 CIL

27 17 new homes
£519,350 CIL

28 54 new homes
£1,649,700 CIL

29 45 new homes
£1,374,750 CIL

30 835 new homes
£25,509,250 CIL

31 90 new homes
£2,749,500 CIL

32 5 new Gypsy & Traveller pitches

33 15 new homes
£458,250 CIL

34 4 new homes
£122,200 CIL

35 66 new homes
£2,016,300 CIL

36 270 new homes
£8,248,500 CIL

37 4 new Gypsy & Traveller pitches

38 100 new homes
£3,055,000 CIL

39 140 new homes
£4,277,000 CIL

40 10 new homes
£305,500 CIL

41 15 new Gypsy & Traveller pitches

42 70 new homes
£2,138,500 CIL

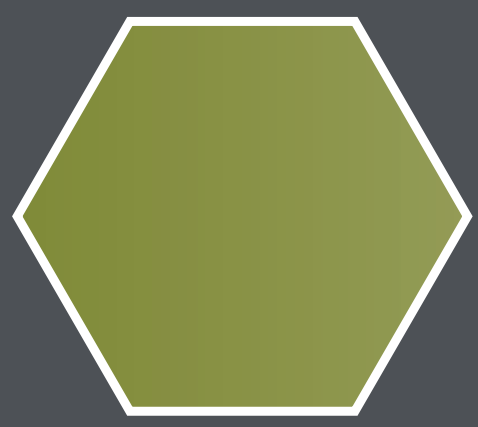
43 175 new homes
£5,346,250 CIL

44 191 new homes
£5,835,050 CIL

45 5 new homes
£152,750 CIL

46 10 new homes
£305,500 CIL

47 Opportunity for a self-funded regeneration project



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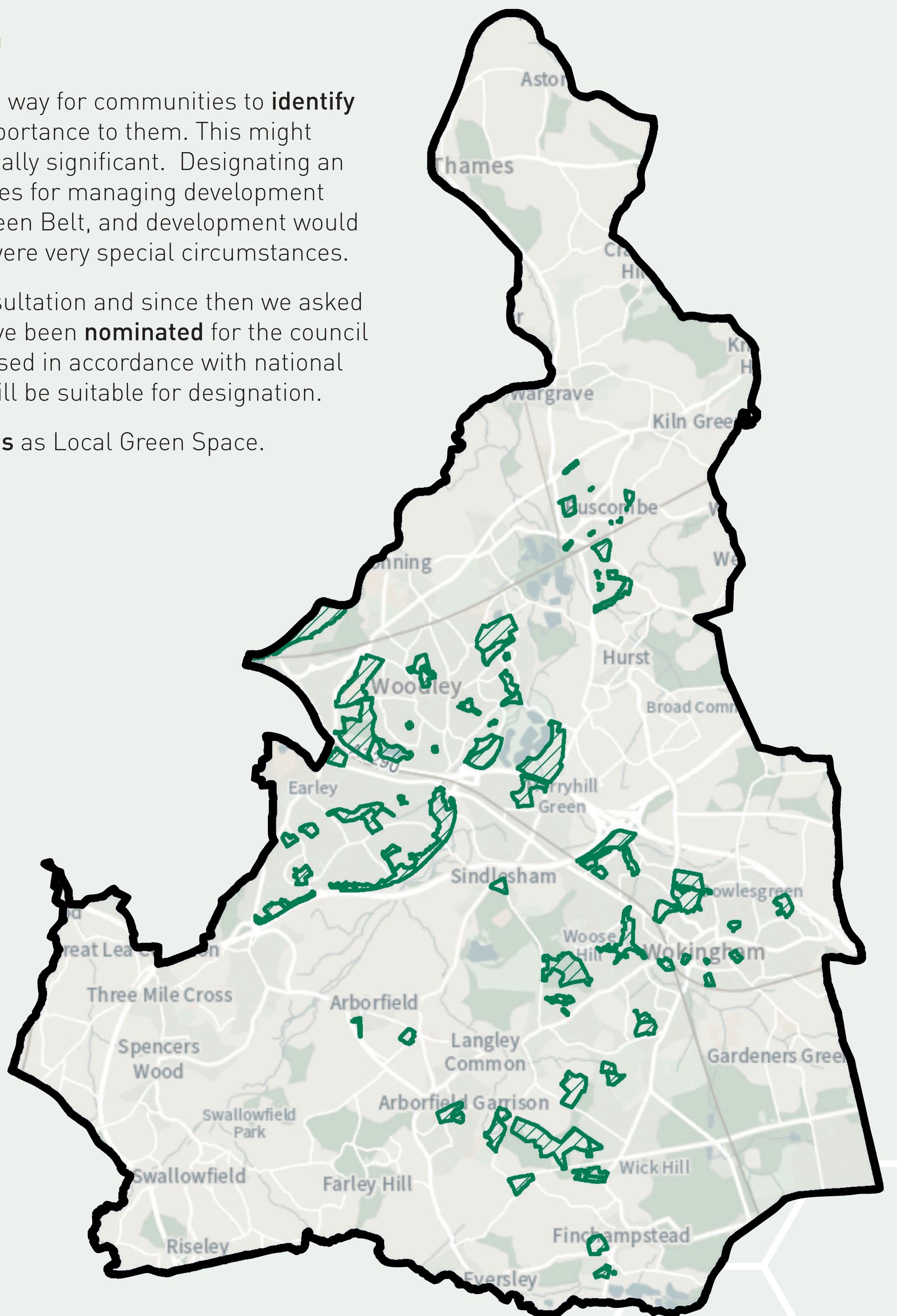
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LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The designation of land as Local Green Space is a way for communities to **identify** and **protect green areas** that are of particular importance to them. This might include parks, open spaces and areas that are locally significant. Designating an area as Local Green Space means planning policies for managing development would be broadly consistent with those for the Green Belt, and development would only be allowed for certain uses, or where there were very special circumstances.

Eight designations were proposed at the last consultation and since then we asked for suggestions and over **100 additional areas** have been **nominated** for the council to consider. All nominated areas have been assessed in accordance with national planning policy and guidance, and not all areas will be suitable for designation.

In total we now **propose designating over 70 areas** as Local Green Space.





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While these topics are not currently being consulted on, we propose to continue the broad approach of these topic areas set out in the draft Local Plan.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

There is no bigger challenge to us than the environmental crisis we are now facing. The council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and has committed to play as full a role as possible in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030. To put this in a national context the UK has committed to being carbon neutral by 2050. The council has a Climate Emergency Action Plan, which includes both ambitious projects and small changes to take us on our journey to net zero carbon. The council will consider the climate impact of all decisions it makes going forwards

The Local Plan is one strand of our climate emergency action plan. Policies in the draft Local Plan seek to reduce carbon emissions by:

- Locating new homes in places that reduce car dependency
- Requiring all new major development to be net carbon neutral and all buildings to be energy efficient
- Supporting renewable energy generation where impacts are acceptable
- Supporting electric vehicle charging and futureproofing for new technologies
- Establishing a carbon offset fund to support schemes to compensate for carbon emissions, such as tree planting



BIODIVERSITY

The Local Plan seeks to maintain, conserve and enhance biodiversity and nature conservation in the borough by:

- Achieving a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity across all development proposals by creating and enhancing suitable habitats
- Incorporating new or enhancing existing biodiversity features through smart design
- Providing or retaining buffer zones between new developments and existing sites and habitats
- Requiring ecological surveys to consider any potential impacts on biodiversity assets



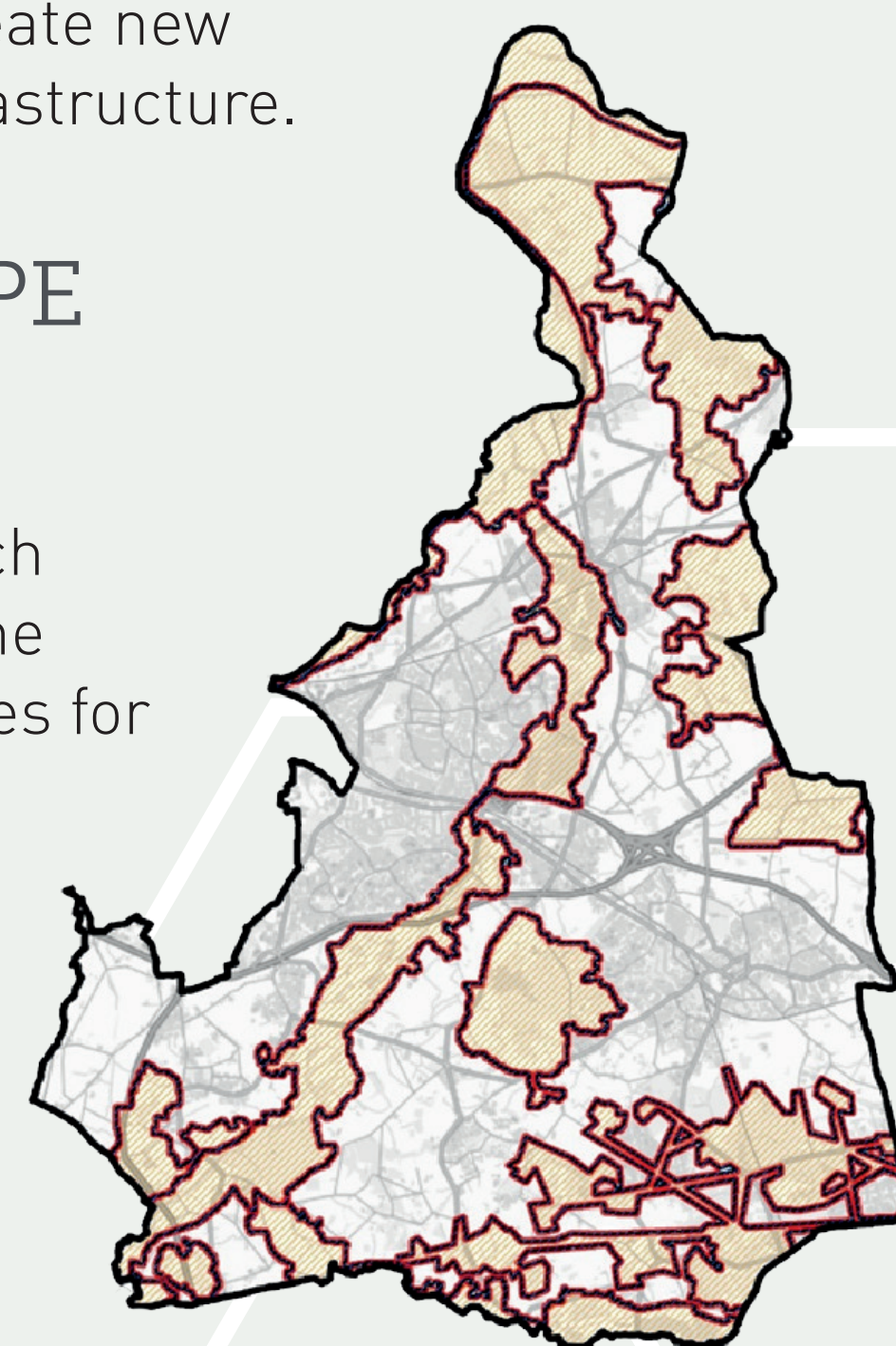
VALUED LANDSCAPES

The plan aims to maintain, enhance and create new networks of wildlife habitats and green infrastructure.

SITES OF URBAN LANDSCAPE VALUE

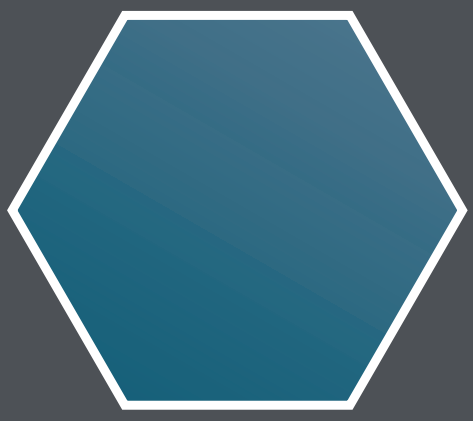
These are open areas within our towns which contribute to local character, ecology and the environment, as well as provide opportunities for recreation and well-being.

The plan proposes six Sites of Urban Landscape Value, including four existing and two new sites at Cantley Park and Woosehill Meadows.



VALUED LANDSCAPES

The Local Plan proposes the designation of 11 Valued Landscapes across the borough (shown right). Each has particular importance due to a combination of special features, including wildlife and ancient woodland; heritage assets, such as listed buildings and conservation areas and perceptual aspects, such as a feeling of tranquillity.



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TRANSPORT

Our roads are congested, as is the whole of the South East and the wider UK. We live in a part of the country where many want to live, and that comes with a cost.

We have to plan for new homes and these new homes bring new residents who will have cars. The growing population is therefore putting ever increasing pressure on our roads and our public transport system. This presents us with a greater environmental challenge.

It is vital that new development promotes healthier lifestyles by integrating housing and transport, providing sustainable choices for how to get around. This should reduce the dominance of private cars.



Source: Lucy Saunders

HEALTHY STREETS

Through the local plan the council is considering endorsing the 'healthy streets' approach, developed by Transport for London and successfully implemented across the city.

The healthy streets approach aims to improve air quality, reduce congestion and make our communities greener, healthier and more attractive places to live, work, plan and do business. It puts people and their health at the centre of our decision-making, helping everyone to use cars less and to walk, cycle and use public transport more.

Developers will be required to consider the ten criteria in the image (left), to ensure the design leads to more attractive and healthier places for people to walk and cycle.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

We know that people will continue to rely on their cars to get around. We are therefore encouraging the use of electric and low emission vehicles by requiring charging points to be designed into new development schemes from the outset.

Electric vehicles themselves won't necessarily mean lower numbers of cars on the roads.

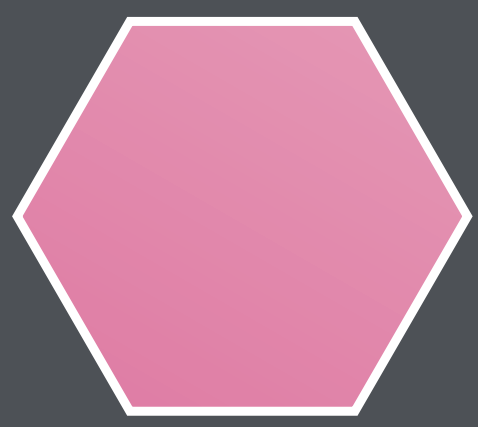


MINIMISING THE IMPACT OF TRAFFIC

All new development will continue to be carefully assessed for any impact it would have on the transport network.

This includes our local roads, motorways and in some cases the rail network.

Development must mitigate against any impact—this could be improving an existing junction, building a new road, funding public transport, or paying to support borough wide improvement initiatives.



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AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Access to homes people can afford is a challenge for people living and working in the borough, particularly our young people as they are more likely to be on lower incomes and less able to secure a mortgage or pay high private rents.

The council require all new developments of over five homes to include a proportion of new affordable homes. In 2019 to 2020, 446 affordable homes were built in the borough.



WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Affordable housing is subsidised housing, which enables the purchase price or rent to be set below market costs.

- Affordable housing for rent: This can be either social rent or affordable rent for those who are not able to rent or buy a home privately
- Shared ownership: Where a new home is provided on a part rent/part buy basis. This allows buyers to 'staircase' to full ownership
- Key worker housing: Discounted housing for those in specific jobs that provide essential services, such as nurses and teachers.



HOW DO WE BUILD IT?

The local plan continues our existing successful approach to affordable housing—seeking at least 35% but up to 50% where possible of the new houses on development sites as affordable housing from all developments of 5 new homes or more.

This approach exceeds the national level recommended by government of seeking affordable housing from developments of 10 new homes or more.

Larger development sites will normally provide a mixture of the different types of affordable housing explained above. The new garden village at Hall Farm / Loddon Valley has the potential to provide around 1,500 affordable homes.

MIX OF HOUSING

It is important that all homes, regardless of whether they are affordable or market value homes, meet the needs of the people who will live in them.

The local plan seeks to ensure that homes provided take into account a changing population in the borough, offering choice in terms of size and type. This means ensuring a wider mix of smaller flats, small and medium sized houses for couples and families, rather than accepting fewer, large and expensive houses only from developers.

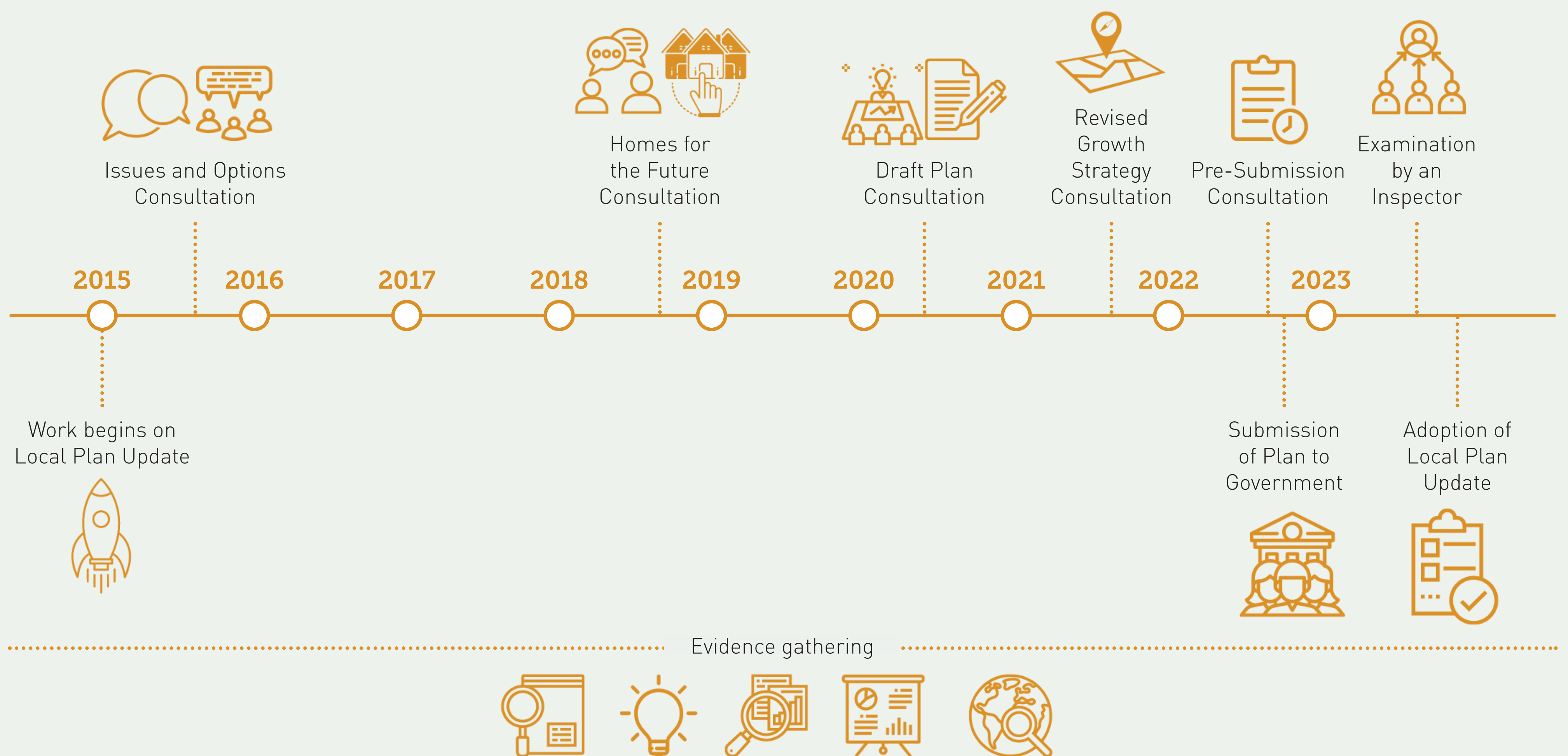




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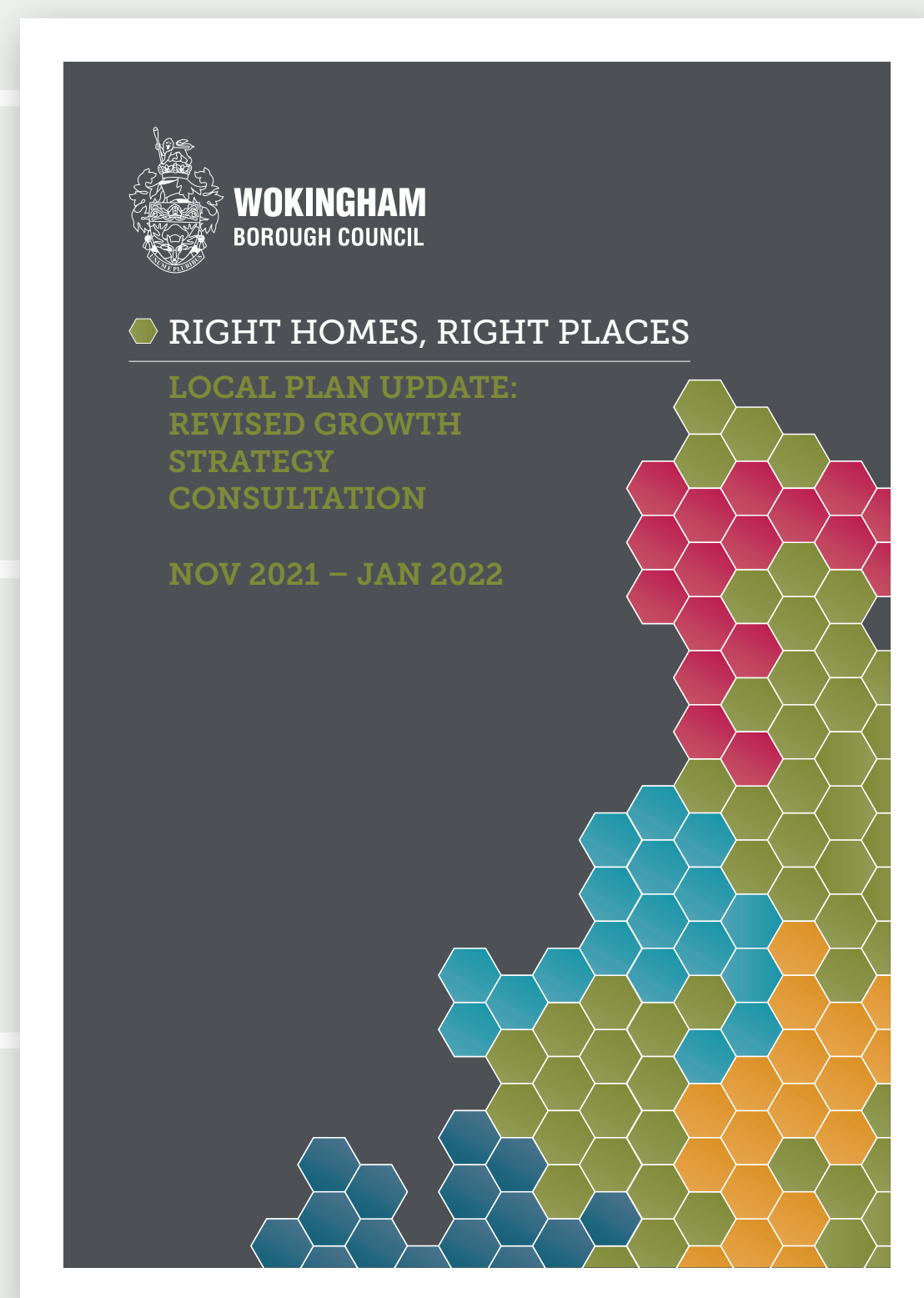
TIMELINE



HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

ANSWER OUR SURVEY NOW!

Fill in our online survey at engage.wokingham.gov.uk



You can also write or email us your thoughts LPU@wokingham.gov.uk

Find the consultation document and all other supporting information and background information on our website

Whether you agree with the approach, or you have changes to suggest, tell us your thoughts before **5pm on Monday 24 January 2022**

WHAT'S NEXT?

- All comments received through this consultation will be reviewed.
- All opportunities and issues raised will be summarised and published on the council's website after the consultation has finished.
- All your comments, alongside any new evidence, will help to inform any amendments or changes to the local plan.
- A 'Proposed Submission' version of the local plan will be prepared. This will be the version we believe is ready to submit to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
- We will invite further comments on the Proposed Submission local plan to ask whether you believe the plan meets the tests of 'soundness' set out in national policy.