

CHAPTER 5: SPATIAL VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The Core Strategy should set out the long term spatial vision for the authority's area and the strategic policy objectives required to deliver that vision.

What you told us

Public consultation on the Council's original Vision and Objectives (2006) was generally supportive with some changes/additions requested. These included strengthening the vision and making it locally distinctive and adding more specific objectives in relation to water management. Further comments in 2007 included ensuring more compatibility between some of the objectives. The Local Development Framework Focus Group also reinforced what should be the main priorities including affordable housing, crime prevention, improving public transport and maintaining communities and the distinctive settlement pattern in the District.

What the Sustainability Appraisal told us

The Sustainability Appraisal supports that the fact that the overall strategy should be solidly and unequivocally grounded in the principles of sustainability.

- 5.2 Taking into account the plans and strategies and evidence base referred to earlier and reflecting the priorities and concerns addressed through public consultation to date, the following spatial vision and strategic objectives are proposed for the Local Development Framework:

Preferred Spatial Vision

Looking forward to 2021 and beyond, the District will remain a prosperous, safe and healthy place where people want and are able to live and work.

This means promoting development that is sustainable so that the present needs of residents and businesses in Three Rivers can be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In essence future development must secure a balanced provision between homes and jobs that also safeguards and enhances the environment, maintains the Green Belt, secures good services and facilities for all and achieves a sustainable transport system.

Preferred Strategic Objectives

In order to implement and deliver the Local Development Framework's Vision, the following set of strategic objectives have been identified. These provide more specific direction for the Spatial Strategy and Core Policies, which are developed in later sections of this document.

1 To ensure that development in Three Rivers recognises and safeguards the District's distinctive character of small towns and villages interspersed with attractive countryside and Green Belt, through sustainable patterns of development

The need for development in the District needs to be achieved whilst protecting the very assets that make Three Rivers unique, and help maintain a high quality of life. There will remain a strong commitment to the protection of the Green Belt which occupies 77% of the area of the District, although it is recognised that some minor adjustments to the Green Belt boundary may be necessary over the plan period to meet development needs, prevent over-development in some areas and generally promote a sustainable pattern of development.

2 To make efficient use of previously developed land

The re-use of land in the urban area is necessary to act as a stimulus for existing settlements, to concentrate development in the most accessible areas and to protect more open parts of the District. Continuing to achieve very high rates of development on previously developed land (PDL) will remain a priority for Three Rivers.

3 To reduce the impact on the environment by reducing waste, pollution and energy consumption, by promoting the use of renewable energy and the conservation of water resources and by designing development to take into account future changes to the climate

There is little doubt that the burning of fossil fuels is contributing to long-term changes in the climate and to pollution generally. It is important that the problem is tackled at all levels including the local. This means designing, constructing and re-using buildings and materials to minimise the use of natural resources and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. It also means dealing with the effects of extreme weather and potential flood risk through appropriate design and siting of development.

4 To balance the community's need for future homes and jobs by providing sufficient land to meet a range of local housing needs and to maintain a prosperous local economy

This will include making appropriate provision for the required numbers of homes and jobs, in line with the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy. For housing this also means meeting local needs in terms of size, type and tenure of units including affordable, special needs and gypsies' and traveller's accommodation. For employment, this means meeting local needs in terms of the type of jobs and within the employment sectors. Some 'balance' between the provision of homes and jobs is needed in order to redress the relatively high daily outflow of commuters from Three Rivers into London and other adjoining areas.

5 To increase levels of affordable housing in the District

A step-change in the provision of affordable housing is needed in order to seek to meet the large identified need for affordable housing in the District. House prices are high relative to incomes in the District and a significant proportion of the population, particularly the young and those within the less affluent parts of the District, are unable to access housing in the general market. The lack of suitable and affordable housing within the District also has impacts on the ability of the District to attract and retain workers with impacts on the key services and the local economy.

6 To facilitate the provision of services and infrastructure to meet the needs of existing development and new development by working on cross- boundary issues with adjoining authorities, service providers and the development industry

It is important that all residents, particularly vulnerable groups and those within the pocketed areas of deprivation in the District, have good access to services including health, education, transport and emergency services and that this is maintained or improved in the future. Potential deficiencies will need to be addressed through planning obligations and other funding regimes as part of new development proposals. The Council will continue to foster relationships with neighbouring Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire Districts and with London.

7 To deliver improved and more integrated transport systems and reduce the need to travel by locating development in accessible locations

Although levels of car ownership are high within Three Rivers, not everyone has access to a car and nor is it necessary or desirable to use a car for all trips, particularly for short journeys. Providing alternatives to car travel such as better public transport, and better opportunities for cycling or walking, and by locating development within locations which have good access to services and a range of transport options will be major contributors to achieving a more sustainable District. It will also be important to integrate transport networks to enable people to change easily between road, rail, bus and cycle modes.

8 To maintain the viability, vitality and variety of shops and services within the five key settlements in the District

Ensuring that Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth and South Oxhey provide a good range of goods and services across the District will reduce the need to travel to centres further away, especially to meet everyday local needs, and support local businesses.

9 To protect and improve the countryside and the diversity of wildlife and habitats

Three Rivers has visually attractive landscapes and important habitats for wildlife. There is however scope to improve the diversity and connectivity of landscape and habitats. The protection and improvement of these assets will be an important Local Development Framework objective.

10 To protect and enhance the historic environment by resisting the loss of important buildings and ensuring that new development respects the unique character and identity of the towns and villages in the District

Three Rivers is an area rich in its historic buildings, structures, spaces and conservation areas. It will be important to protect this heritage through appropriate control of development but also to enhance the historic environment where opportunities arise.

11 To provide accessible and varied opportunities for leisure, arts, sport and recreational activities in order to promote healthy lifestyles

The Local Development Framework can make a significant contribution towards improved levels of health by supporting the location and provision of suitable open space, children’s play space and sports facilities to increase opportunities to exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle for the whole community.

12 To promote safety and security as a high priority in the design of new developments in order to create attractive and safe places in which to live, work and play

Reducing crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour are key community priorities that can be addressed by the Local Development Framework by promoting good design, securing contributions towards increased police resources and improving access to training facilities provided by the Learning and Skills Council and other agencies.

5.3

Figure 4 shows how these strategic objectives align with the other strategic plans and strategies affecting the Three Rivers area. The majority of the objectives are compatible with other plans and strategies. Where objectives are not directly compatible, there are no conflicts.

5.4

Reasoned Justification

The Preferred Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives are considered to provide the correct framework for the Core Strategy, taking into account the views of the local community. They also reflect and align with other plans and strategies affecting the area.

5.5

Options Rejected

The original Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives have been refined over time to reflect more accurately local aspirations and sustainability objectives and to be more focused and better defined.

Core Strategy strategic objectives	Three Rivers Community Strategy (2006-2012)	Hertfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy (2007-2021)
1 To ensure development is sustainable, in environmental, social and economic terms	✓	✓
2 To reduce the impact on the environment	✓	✓
3 To balance the need for homes and jobs	✓	✓
4 To increase levels of affordable housing	✓	✓
5 To make efficient use of land	✓	
6 To facilitate the provision of services and infrastructure	✓	-
7 To deliver improved/integrated transport and to reduce the need to travel	✓	✓
8 To maintain shops and services in District centres	✓	-
9 To protect and improve the countryside and biodiversity	✓	-
10 To protect and enhance the historic environment	✓	✓
11 To provide opportunities for leisure, sport and recreation	✓	✓
12 To promote safety and security in new development	✓	✓

✓ Objective is compatible/ in alignment with Plan/Strategy

- Objective is not in conflict with Plan/Strategy

Figure 4: Alignment of the Core Strategy strategic objectives with other Plans/Strategies affecting Three Rivers

Three Rivers District Council Strategic Plan (2008-2011)	Three Rivers District Council Housing Strategy (2006-2011)	Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (2006-2011)	Local Area Agreements (2008-2011)
✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	-	✓	✓
✓	-	-	✓
✓	✓		✓
✓		✓	-
✓	-	✓	✓
-	-	✓	-
✓	-	-	✓
✓	-	-	-
✓	-	-	-
✓	-	-	-
✓	-	-	✓

SPATIAL STRATEGY

5.6 The preceding sections of this document set out the proposed vision for the future, and the suggested key objectives. However, in order for them to be achieved, it is necessary to have in place a basic strategy to help direct all future development and activity in the District. This part of the document sets out the preferred strategy and basic spatial principles. These are later developed into more detailed policies.

National Context

5.7 Government policy² states that in delivering 'sustainable development' local planning authorities need to:

- Bring forward land in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, for industrial development, for retail and commercial development, and for leisure and recreation
- Set out a strategy for the planned location of new housing, using criteria for identifying broad locations and specific sites
- Improve access to affordable housing in urban and rural areas
- Promote economic growth to support business
- Promote urban and rural regeneration by improving facilities, providing high quality development including mixed-use development
- Promote mixed sustainable communities which respects the diverse and special needs of communities
- Address issues such as accessibility and sustainable transport needs, the provision of essential infrastructure, including for sustainable waste management, and the need to avoid flood risk and other natural hazards
- Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car
- Focus developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office development, within existing centres and/or areas with good public transport to promote their vitality and viability and social inclusion, reduce the need to travel and cut carbon emissions
- Promote more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed-use development and suitably located previously developed land and buildings
- Enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character
- Address climate change, through the management of pollution and natural hazards and the safeguarding of natural resources
- Strictly control new building development in the open countryside, away from existing settlements
- Adopt a positive approach to sustaining village communities and rural services and facilities.

5.8 Through development, the Government wants to make sure there is adequate provision for housing and employment to meet the needs of a growing population and to maintain prosperity nationally. In particular, there is a need to ensure a continuous supply of housing land over the next 5, 10 and 15 years.

² Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

Regional Context

- 5.9 The East of England Plan (known also as the Regional Spatial Strategy or RSS) reinforces Government policy regarding development, particularly in terms of the need to meet housing needs, support economic growth, and reduce carbon emissions. Growth needs to be reconciled with the protection of the environment and maintenance of the general extent of the Green Belt.
- 5.10 The spatial approach for the Regional Spatial Strategy seeks to direct the most strategically significant growth to the region's major urban areas where:
- Good strategic networks and public transport already exist and there is scope to improve them
 - There is the greatest potential to build on existing concentrations of activities and infrastructure (physical and social) and enhance them efficiently.
- 5.11 In practice this means directing development to the major towns within the region. These are known as Key Centres for Development and Change (KCDCs). Three Rivers does not contain any Key Centres for Development and Change, however;
- The neighbouring town of Watford is identified as a Key Centre for Development and Change because of its role as a regional retail centre and transport interchange. Compared to other Key Centres for Development and Change, the town has a relatively small allocation of housing (5,200 dwellings up to 2021) but the town's growth is seen within the context of a 'greater Watford area', which includes settlements within Three Rivers and Hertsmere Districts; these Districts will support Watford as a Centre through their own housing and employment allocations
 - The neighbouring Hemel Hempstead is also identified as a Key Centre for Development and Change. Part of Dacorum's 12,000 housing allocation up to 2021 and beyond will need to be located within 'urban extensions' around Hemel Hempstead.
- 5.12 Three Rivers District is also expected to contribute directly to the growth of the region. Specifically this means planning for the provision of 4,000 new dwellings between 2001 and 2021 and contributing to a growth target of 68,000 jobs within Hertfordshire.
- 5.13 With regard to towns other than in Key Centres for Development and Change, the Regional Spatial Strategy sets out that development will still be appropriate. Local development documents should set out the approach to development in these towns with the aim of increasing their economic and social sustainability through measures to:
- Support urban and rural renaissance
 - Secure appropriate amounts of new housing and employment and
 - Improve accessibility, especially by public transport.
- 5.14 In rural areas the Regional Spatial Strategy seeks to ensure that the local economy such as agriculture is supported and diversified, local housing needs are provided for and local services are sustained.
- 5.15 Within the Region, Three Rivers is located within the London Arc sub-region, covering parts of Hertfordshire and Essex. This is a complex network of market towns, commuter settlements and 20th century new towns over which London has a powerful influence. The sub-region faces pressure for development but is constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt. The Regional Spatial Strategy³ states that there is a need to strike a balance between restraining urban sprawl, enhancing the countryside and meeting development needs in sustainable ways. This will be done by making effective use of land within urban areas. Whilst the emphasis is on retaining and enhancing the Green Belt, selective reviews of the Green Belt may also be necessary.

3: Policy LA1: London Arc

Local Context

5.16

In considering spatial strategy options, it is important to consider existing access to services and facilities within each part of the District. The Council carried out a Settlement Appraisal (2007, update 2008) for each of the 35 defined 'settlements', large and small within the District. The appraisal took into account access to education, health care, shops, post offices and library services as well as to bus and rail services in the District. The appraisal provides a useful tool in:

- Identifying the settlements which have the best access, and therefore where any development should generally be concentrated
- Identifying the settlements with the poorest access, and therefore where development should generally be avoided
- Identifying specific deficiencies in services and facilities across all settlements, and therefore where opportunities should be taken to improve them with or without further development.

5.17

The appraisal found that the settlements with the best accessibility score and category rating were generally those with the largest populations:

Settlement	Population (Census, 2001)	Accessibility Score	Accessibility Category
Rickmansworth	14,571	9.75	Very Good
Croxley Green ⁴	11,519	9.25	Very Good
South Oxhey	11,984	8.8	Very Good
Leavesden	4,499	7.85	Very Good
Abbots Langley ⁴	10,472	7.35	Very Good
Chorleywood ⁴	6,814	6.75	Very Good
Kings Langley	4,942	6.3	Very Good
Carpenders Park	4,875	5.1	Good
Moor Park	1,925	5	Good
Oxhey Hall	3,240	4.7	Good
Eastbury	3,230	3.8	Good
Maple Cross	2,198	3.55	Good
Bedmond	977	2.8	Fair
Sarratt ⁴	924	2.35	Fair

Figure 5: Accessibility rating of main settlements in Three Rivers

(Source: Access to Services and Background Paper Update, May 2008)

⁴ The population of the wider parish areas are significantly higher than the population of the settlements alone

Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.18 The settlement appraisal provides a useful basis as to where future development in District should be broadly directed. Rickmansworth is the principal town in the District in terms of its size, function and overall importance. However in terms of population it is only slightly larger than South Oxhey, Croxley Green and Abbots Langley. Also in terms of overall accessibility, all four locations are broadly comparable and are categorised as 'Very Good'. Future major development in Three Rivers should therefore be primarily focused in and around these settlements.
- 5.19 Major development in other parts of the District needs to be carefully considered because of lower accessibility, but it is not necessarily precluded. Development may be appropriate in these areas particularly where it offers opportunities to rectify specific deficiencies in vital services and facilities or where it provides development necessary to sustain centres as providers of local employment, shopping and other services. Existing settlements in the District are shown on **Map 1**.
- 5.20 Taking into account settlement size, population, existence of, and accessibility to, a range of services and transport infrastructure, and importance in economic and retailing terms, a settlement hierarchy can be defined as follows:

Principal Town
Rickmansworth
Key Centres
South Oxhey
Croxley Green
Abbots Langley
Chorleywood
Secondary Centres
Kings Langley
Carpenders Park
Eastbury
Leavesden
Oxhey Hall
Maple Cross
Moor Park
Villages
Bedmond
Sarratt

Figure 6: Hierarchy of main settlements in Three Rivers

Spatial Strategy Options

5.21

During consultation in 2006 a number of options were considered around the central spatial theme of balancing homes and jobs and protecting the Green Belt. On the basis of an Urban Capacity Study (2005), it was anticipated that the draft Regional Spatial Strategy housing allocation of 3,600 dwellings between 2001 and 2021 could be met on land within the existing built-up settlements, without the need to consider Green Belt land. The options ranged from:

- A continuation of the existing Local Plan approach, whereby development is directed towards all parts of the residential built-up areas of the District which by definition have generally good accessibility to shops, local services and public transport network; to
- The consideration of the use of surplus employment land within the built-up area, should the need arise, either solely for housing development or as part of mixed-use development.

What you told us

The results from the public consultation indicated that there was general support to direct development within existing built-up settlements and reduce the need to travel but recognition also that surplus employment land could be used if necessary, at least in part, for mixed-use development including housing.

What the Sustainability Appraisal told us

The Sustainability Appraisal supports the focusing of development within the built-up area, close to existing services and transport. However it is acknowledged that some employment sites could be equally accessible and there would be merits in using previously developed land and creating thriving mixed-use development.

5.22

The 2006 consultation also considered where the highest concentration of development by density should be directed according to the nature of the settlement (hierarchy). The options ranged from:

- Assessing each form of development on its merits taking into account the character of the area and the location of the site in relation to shops, services and public transport; to
- Setting density guidelines according to the type and accessibility of each settlement in the District whereby the higher order towns such as Rickmansworth would accommodate higher concentrations of development and lower order villages such as Bedmond and Sarratt the lowest levels.

What you told us

The results from the public consultation indicated strong support for development to respect the character of existing areas and for development to be considered on its merits.

What the Sustainability Appraisal told us

The Sustainability Appraisal found that linking the level of density with the level of accessibility was the most beneficial. Setting levels too low may end up forcing development towards green field/Green Belt sites. High density options can also lead to social problems without careful attention to design.

5.23

By 2007, changes in Government policy⁵ in relation to housing supply, and an 11% increase to the District's housing allocation in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, meant that the Council had to consider a new strategy in order to deliver its regional commitment. It was projected that the required number of dwellings (4000) could not

5 Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

be accommodated entirely within the urban area and that a shortfall of around 900 dwellings in the latter part of the plan period would need to be accommodated on the edge of the existing settlement on green field and/or Green Belt land. In this regard a number of broad locations for housing growth across the District were put forward for consultation as part of the Supplemental Issues and Options paper in 2007.

What you told us

The consultation showed there was support in principle for this spatial approach, accepting that the Council had no real choice but to explore locations outside of the existing urban area for new housing development in order to meet future housing needs.

- 5.24 The Supplemental Issues and Options consultation in 2007 also considered spatial options for employment and retail development. In terms of employment and in providing the required number of jobs in the local area, there was broad public support to continue to focus employment opportunities within the established employment areas in the District. These are located primarily within the urban area (Croxley/Tolpits Area, East Kings Langley, Maple Cross, South Oxhey and Rickmansworth Town Centre) but also on the edge of the existing settlement (Leavesden).

What you told us

There was strong public support to use surplus employment land in these areas for other uses such as residential.

What the Sustainability Appraisal told us

The Sustainability Appraisal supports the principle of mixed-use development on employment sites, particularly on previously developed land, providing an element of employment use is retained in order to sustain the local economy and reduce out-commuting.

- 5.25 In terms of where future retailing should be located, various spatial options were put forward to accommodate future growth in retail provision amongst the five main centres (Rickmansworth, Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, South Oxhey and Croxley Green). The options covered:
- Rickmansworth as the principal town in the District
 - Rickmansworth and Abbots Langley to provide a north and south focus
 - All five key centres to provide an even distribution
 - One or two key centres only to target investment where needed.

What you told us

The consultation indicated support for a multi-centre focus amongst all five centres, though Abbots Langley, South Oxhey and Rickmansworth were seen as the areas which should be considered for enlargement and/or improvement.

What the Sustainability Appraisal told us

The Sustainability Appraisal considers that spreading retail development amongst all five key centres is potentially the most sustainable in so far as encouraging the viability of all centres in the District. Ensuring that all centres can provide the basic daily requirements for local shoppers will also help avoid the need to travel further. A broad geographical spread of facilities would also ensure that the needs of residents in outlying areas of the District can be served.

5.26

In summary, as part of the Issues and Options stage, three broad spatial strategies were considered in order to deliver national and regional requirements:

- 1 Focus future housing development within the existing built-up residential settlements. This would continue a historic pattern of residential infilling throughout the urban area, with major development focused in the most accessible settlements; principally within Rickmansworth, Abbots Langley, Croxley Green, South Oxhey and Chorleywood
- 2 As per number 1 above but in addition, surplus employment land, principally within the existing built-up area, would also be used for housing development or as part of mixed-use development to meet future development needs.
- 3 Focus future housing development within the existing urban area, use surplus employment land where available, and also land on the edge of existing settlements. This would involve continuing to infill within the urban area but also making some provision in the long-term for development in more peripheral locations, involving some minor alterations to the Green Belt boundary.

Strategy option 3 is considered to be the preferred option.

These spatial options are illustrated on **Maps 3, 4 and 5**.

Preferred Option – Spatial Strategy

Adopting an approach (Option 3) which:

- Continues to focus development within the existing urban area through infilling
- Makes planned provision for longer-term development on the edge of the existing settlements within identified broad areas for housing growth.

The preferred broad areas of housing growth outside the main urban areas have been identified on the Key Diagram. These are generally spread throughout the District in order to enable the existing key centres to continue to meet local service needs. A phasing strategy will be adopted to ensure development in these areas generally occurs over the latter period of the Plan (post 2014/15). Regular monitoring will also be employed to assess the need to bring forward these areas in order to maintain a 5/10/15 year land supply in accordance with national guidance. Where appropriate, minor alterations to the Green Belt boundary will be made.

5.27

The Key Diagram (Map 2) sets out the preferred broad housing areas on the edge of existing settlements. Five larger housing sites are put forward. These are generally capable of accommodating at least 100 dwellings (2 hectares) and will generally be suitable for mixed-use development including employment and community uses. In accordance with national guidance, these have been identified on the basis of testing a number of potential locations against an extensive range of planning and sustainability criteria.

5.28

Eight initial broad areas of housing were consulted upon as part of the Supplemental Issues and Options Paper in 2007. The results of public consultation and the

sustainability appraisal in relation to each of these broad areas are set out in **Appendix 2**, together with details of other areas/sites put forward by the public, landowners and developers to meet long-term housing needs.

5.29 As part of the consultation, comments were also sought on the range of criteria that had been used to assess areas. Taking into account the consultation, the Council has developed a greater range of planning and sustainability criteria to evaluate housing areas. Details of the assessment criteria used and how they have been developed are set out in **Appendix 3**.

5.30 The revised criteria have been applied to a broader range of areas across the District to redefine the 'preferred option' broad housing areas. Those with the highest scores have been included as the preferred broad housing areas. Those with the lower scores have not been included.

Appendix 4 sets out more detailed information on these larger housing areas, including maps.

Reasoned Justification

5.31 It is considered that Option 3 provides the most sustainable means of meeting development needs in Three Rivers and the one that is proposed as the 'Preferred Option'. This option enables:

- Development to continue to take place within the urban area, making full use of previously developed land
- Development in the urban area not to exceed concentrations that would have a detrimental effect on the existing character and amenities and put a strain on existing services and infrastructure
- Development to come forward on larger sites, facilitating the provision of better planned development and improvements to services and facilities in an area
- Development to be well distributed in the District taking into account the settlement hierarchy and the role, nature and capacity of existing centres to service new development
- A phased and flexible approach that continues to focus development in and around existing settlements, meeting local development needs and reducing the need to travel to work and to shops and services
- An approach that can sustainably deliver the levels of growth in housing and employment as prescribed by the Regional Spatial Strategy.

5.32 The selected preferred housing areas are considered to be the most appropriate for future development taking into account:

- Their potential impact on the Green Belt and the wider natural and built environment
- Their accessibility in relation to transport, services and facilities
- The likelihood of the area coming forward over the Plan period.

Options Rejected

5.33 Options 1 and 2 were rejected on the basis that they would not be able to deliver the required levels of growth as set out in the emerging Regional Plan without significant impacts on the character, amenities and infrastructure within the existing built-up area. Option 1 in particular would require the capacity of sites in the urban area to be increased by more than double current rates.

- 5.34 A 'do nothing' approach, whereby development would simply come forward on the basis of market forces and then be considered on its merits in the absence of any defined spatial strategy, was also considered but rejected at an early stage of the process. This was not considered to be a realistic option as it would not deliver required levels of growth in a sustainable manner nor deliver it quickly enough to meet local needs.
- 5.35 As set out in the 2007 consultation paper, the Council believes that there is no realistic alternative to the principle of planning for development needs in the area. Instead attention should focus on options around how future development can be planned effectively, taking into account the spatial implications of growth strategies, the needs of service and infrastructure providers and ensuring that development is 'sustainable'.
- 5.36 In terms of suitable broad housing areas, a range of areas/sites were put forward for housing by landowners and developers. It is considered that many of these are not appropriate as broad housing areas because they are not of sufficient size to be considered as strategic areas of growth for the Core Strategy. However, some of these may be considered as part of the Council's general housing supply through Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and subsequently through the Site Allocation document.