

## **FAQs for Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation**

The following FAQs will be updated and if appropriate amended during the consultation process to take account of feedback during the exhibitions and comments received. This version is the first version and was published on 3 November 2016.

### **The Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation**

#### **How long does the Consultation last?**

The Consultation runs from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 5pm on the 12<sup>th</sup> December. After this date/time no responses will be accepted.

#### **How can I get involved?**

- The consultation document and other information are available online, at the Council offices, and libraries serving the Districts;
- You can respond using the consultation forms either online or in hard copy (these are the best way as it ensures we have all the information we need) or by letter or e-mail. Only written responses can be taken into account;
- Attend one of the exhibitions that are being held across the districts or see the exhibition material online.

Consultation documents, forms, exhibition material and other information can be viewed at [www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036) or [www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036)

#### **Where are the exhibitions?**

Exhibitions are being held at 13 different locations across the two districts during the first three weeks of the consultation period. Details can be found at [www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036) or [www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036). In addition there is an exhibition for the whole of the consultation period at the Council offices in Amersham and Denham (when not on tour around the Districts).

The exhibition material is available to view online:

[www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/exhibitions](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/exhibitions) or [www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/exhibitions](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/exhibitions)

#### **What happens after this consultation?**

All responses received will be analysed and, where they make relevant points, they will feed into consideration of the final list of proposals to be put into the draft Local Plan. The Councils will publish a full draft Local Plan for consultation in 2017 before submitting the Local Plan for independent examination. At the point of submission there will be a report

that will list the main points raised in previous consultations and the Councils' response to them.

## **Green Belt**

### **What is Green Belt?**

The Green Belt is a policy for controlling urban growth and preventing inappropriate development. The idea is for a ring of open land around large urban areas where most forms of development will be resisted, maintaining an area where agriculture, forestry and outdoor leisure can be expected to prevail. The National Planning Policy Framework (Government's planning policy) defines that the aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl, by keeping land permanently open. In this area much of the Green Belt is the Metropolitan Green Belt. In other words it is London's Green Belt is intended to stop the outward sprawl of London and the effects of London pressure for development within the settlements around London.

National policy says that land in the Green Belt must contribute to one of these purposes:

- Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Under national policy, Local Planning Authorities with Green Belt in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. New Green Belt boundaries should be permanent and defensible using physical features that are readily recognisable. They should promote sustainable patterns of development. The boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan – this is the stage that we are at now.

### **Why are you carrying out a Green Belt review?**

There are not enough opportunities within existing urban areas or on previously developed land in the Green Belt where redevelopment could occur to accommodate all the identified housing and employment needs required over the Plan Period.

A Green Belt review allows us to identify whether there are any parts of the Green Belt that do not contribute to the five purposes of Green Belt land (see above). Those areas could be used to help meet needs, subject to other planning considerations, without harming the reasons for their inclusion in the Green Belt in the first place.

There may also be other reasons why a Green Belt boundary can or should be changed. That is where “exceptional circumstances” exist which could outweigh the harm to the Green Belt purposes. Exceptional circumstances are not defined but will need to be considered as part of any Green Belt review.

The Councils have assessed sites likely to come forward in the built areas and on previously developed land in the Green Belt through a draft Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA); however there remains a significant shortfall in the supply requiring the councils to undertake a Green Belt review.

### **How is the Green Belt being reviewed?**

The Green Belt review will comprise four elements - review of Green Belt areas in two parts, a review of settlements in the Green Belt and an inner Green Belt boundary review.

We are reviewing the entire Green Belt in two parts. Part 1 looked at all areas of the Green Belt across the whole County in conjunction with Buckinghamshire County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Wycombe District Council and assessed how well the Green Belt (divided into parcels) met the Green Belt purposes (see above). This identified a number of parcels/areas to be considered further under Part 2.

Part 2 is published in draft and is included in the scope of the Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation. Part 2 will be finalised to take account of consultation responses and further work (for example we are seeking a ‘critical friend’ input). The draft Part 2 Assessment looks at the Part 1 parcels/areas in more detail as well as Options included in the Initial Consultation and areas nominations (predominantly from landowners/developers) within the Green Belt for consideration to see whether exceptional circumstances could apply to remove the land from the Green Belt and whether a defensible Green Belt boundary can be defined.

The reports and full methodology can be viewed online:

[www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence) or  
[www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence).

[www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/greenbeltpart2](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/greenbeltpart2) or  
[www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/greenbeltpart2](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/greenbeltpart2)

The Review of Settlements in the Green Belt and Inner Green Belt Boundary Review is not yet complete but will be published as part of the background documents to the draft Local Plan next year.

In addition to the Part 1 and draft Part 2 Green Belt Assessments the councils have undertaken a Green Belt Development Options Appraisal (viewed on line at <http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=8746&p=0> or <http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=8746&p=0>) which has led to identification of the 15 Preferred Green Belt Options.

The Green Belt can only be reviewed as part of a Local Plan review and will only change when the Local Plan is adopted.

**How much land will need to be released from the Green Belt? What percentage is this?**

That depends on where and how all the identified needs for housing and employment land are to be met. In the Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation we have identified 15 options across the two districts that we are considering for removal from the Green Belt. These options total 410.6 hectares which is 1.4% of the Green Belt of the two districts combined.

Other areas will be recommended for removal from the Green Belt as part of the Local Plan. For example areas considered in the draft Part 2 Assessment that are not relevant to the Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation (e.g. areas of less than 1 ha such as land at Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont including the Village Hall, Library and car park or areas which are already committed for development such as Pinewood Studios extension, Iver Heath), possible settlements to be removed from the Green Belt (e.g. Denham Village, Taplow Riverside) and small scale inner boundary changes.

The Green Belt comprises over 88% of the plan area. We will not know the extent of land to be removed from the Green Belt until the Green Belt review is complete.

**Will there be other changes to the Green Belt?**

Yes there are likely to be other changes. See above two questions.

**How have we considered brownfield land?**

National and local planning policy gives priority to the development of previously developed land (brownfield sites). We have searched for all development opportunities, (greater than 0.25 hectares) inside built areas and for brownfield opportunities in the Green Belt through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). In preparing the HELAA the Councils carried out Call for Sites which gave landowners/developers and other people the opportunity to promote sites for consideration, as well as using our own knowledge of the two districts. Under national planning policy, brownfield sites within the Green Belt can be redeveloped for new uses as long as the new development doesn't affect the openness any more than the old development did.

## **Local Plans**

### **What is a Local Plan?**

Local Plans are the key documents through which local planning authorities can set out a vision and framework for the future development of the area, engaging with their communities in doing so. Local Plans address needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the local economy, community facilities, open spaces and infrastructure. They safeguard the environment, enable adaptation to climate change and help secure high quality accessible design. The Local Plan provides a degree of certainty for communities, businesses and investors, and a framework for guiding decisions on individual planning applications. The plan will therefore include development proposals, planning policies and land use allocations.

### **Where does this consultation fit into the production of the Local Plan?**

The Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation is the second stage in the production of the emerging Local Plan. This follows on from the Initial (Regulation 18) Consultation Incorporation Issues and Options carried out earlier this year. The diagram on the next page sets out the stages the Councils are taking in producing a Local Plan, (statutory stages shown in **bold**).

The Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation is a non-statutory stage of the Local Plan process. In other words we don't have to do it but we want to get views from as wide a range of residents, businesses and other interested parties as possible before we produce a Draft Local Plan in 2017. This is in part response to the Initial Consultation which made it clear that the Green Belt was the single most important issue of concern for respondents to this consultation.

### Key Stages in the Local Plan Production



\* Dates may be subject to change following a review of the Local Plan timetable anticipated to be determined by the Councils Joint Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

### What happens to my comments on the Local Plan?

They will be considered fully by the Councils, and the issues raised will be used to help develop the next stage of the Local Plan (shown above). This draft Local Plan stage will also be the subject of further public consultation. When the plan is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination there will be a report published showing the main issues raised during the consultation and how these have been addressed by the Councils.

### What happened when I commented on the Initial Consultation (Issues and Options stage)?

We received over 5,400 comments to the Initial (Regulation 18) Consultation (Issues and Options stage) within the consultation period. All comments received within the consultation period have been considered and have assisted the Councils in producing the Green Belt Preferred Options Consultation and will also inform the draft Local Plan in due course. Not all comments will lead to changes to the plan but all will have been studied and properly considered.

A consultation responses report has been published that gives information about the consultation process, the comments received and the Councils' response to them. This report is available to view at:

[www.chiltern.gov.uk/article/6011/Summary-of-Responses-to-Initial-Regulation-18-Consultation-Jan-Mar-2016](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/article/6011/Summary-of-Responses-to-Initial-Regulation-18-Consultation-Jan-Mar-2016) or

[www.southbucks.gov.uk/article/6010/Summary-of-Responses-to-Initial-Regulation-18-Consultation-Jan-Mar-2016](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/article/6010/Summary-of-Responses-to-Initial-Regulation-18-Consultation-Jan-Mar-2016)

### **What happens next?**

After consultation on the Green Belt Preferred Options the Councils will consider the comments made, these will assist in the production of a Draft Local Plan which will be consulted on before the Councils submit the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.

The Local Plan will then be examined by an independent inspector whose role is to assess whether the plan has been prepared in line with the relevant legal requirements (including the Duty to Cooperate) and whether it is "sound". The National Planning Policy Framework (the framework which all Local Plans must adhere to) sets out four elements of soundness that Local Plans are considered against when they are examined. Local Plans must be:

- positively prepared;
- justified;
- effective; and
- consistent with national policy.

If the Inspector finds that the plan complies with these conditions then he will recommend the plan for adoption. Once both Councils have agreed to adopt the plan it will form part of the development plan for each districts and will replace both Councils' Core Strategy, saved Local Plan and supplementary planning guidance documents based on these plans. The new Local Plan will also form the basis of planning decisions in the plan area.

### **What evidence are we using to propose these options?**

The Local Plan must be supported by a robust and up to-date evidence base. The main evidence documents that have been used to produce the Green Belt Preferred Options include the following:

- Green Belt Assessment Parts one and two:
- Green Belt Development Options Appraisal
- Draft Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment
- Iver Traffic and Transport Study

These are available at:

[www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036) or

[www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036)

### **What happens to the current Local Plan / Core Strategy?**

The new joint Local Plan will replace the existing Core Strategies, saved Local Plans and supplementary planning guidance documents based on these plans.

### **How does this relate to Neighbourhood Plans?**

The Local Plan is produced by the two Councils, covers the whole of the two districts and sets out a wide range of policies about future development. A neighbourhood plan is produced by Parish/Town Councils, covers a much smaller area – usually a parish area but it can be smaller or larger if joint parish plans – and usually only contains policies that are of particular relevance to that area. The Government states that neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. In practice that means that a neighbourhood plan can include anything as long as it doesn't go against the general strategy in the adopted Local Plan of the area.

Neighbourhood plans have to go to examination and then be approved in a referendum of local people before they can come into force. Once they have passed those two tests then they form part of the development plan for the area and are used in making planning decisions.

### **How does will the new Local Plan affect neighbourhood plans?**

If a neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan (i.e. has passed its referendum and agreed to be 'made' by the Council) then it will remain part of the development plan with the adoption of the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan. However if there is a conflict between the neighbourhood plan and the new Local Plan then the Local Plan will take precedence as this would have formed part of the development plan last.

Once adopted the new Local Plan will need to be taken into account when neighbourhood plans are prepared.

### **How do the Preferred Options affect planning applications?**

Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan (Local Plan, any made neighbourhood plans and if relevant minerals and waste planning documents) that exists at the time, as long as there are no other 'material considerations' which 'outweigh' the development plan. The emerging Local Plan will not form part of the development plan until it's formally adopted (expected to be in 2018) but, the further it goes through the preparation process the more weight it, and its evidence base, will carry when deciding planning applications. For instance, when a site or policy is first proposed in the Local Plan it carries no or very little weight in decision-making. If it has been out to consultation and attracted few or no objections, it could carry more weight but again little weight. If it has been through independent examination it will carry even more weight but full weight only comes at the stage of adoption, when the Local Plan becomes part of the



development plan and will then be the starting point for any planning decisions relating to planning applications and potential enforcement proceedings for example.

### **Why are there no detailed Policies in this consultation?**

More detailed policies (the type used when determining planning applications) will be included in a Draft Local Plan which is expected to be available for consultation in 2017. Preparing a Local Plan is a long and complex process and the Councils have decided to consult on Green Belt Preferred Options at this stage, and focus on other policies later, in order to give people the best chance to absorb and comment on all the information. When the Local Plan is submitted for examination, expected to be in 2018, it will include all the proposed policies and development sites in one document.

## **Housing**

### **How much new housing is required over the Plan Period 2014-2036?**

Currently the most up to date Draft Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) sets a housing requirement of 14,700 new dwellings for the two Districts; however this figure could be subject to further review. Not all of this need can be accommodated in the two Districts and as a result we are having to talk to neighbouring local authorities within the Housing Market Area and beyond to see if they can help us meet our unmet needs, under what is known as the Duty to Co-operate. We have a Duty to Co-operate agreement in principle with Aylesbury Vale District Council for justified unmet needs to be provided within the emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. Currently we consider our unmet needs to be 5,800 dwellings.

Many planning issues cross administrative boundaries and it is important that there is a mechanism that ensures this happens effectively. Therefore a 'Duty to Cooperate' was introduced by the Localism Act 2011, to ensure that local planning authorities and other public bodies work together in relation to the planning of sustainable development that extends beyond their own administrative boundaries. Local planning authorities must demonstrate their compliance with the Duty to Co-operate obligation when their Local Plan is examined.

### **What are the options to accommodate the new housing?**

New housing can be delivered by redeveloping existing buildings within built up areas and where appropriate in sustainable locations at a higher density than existed before or by filling in gaps between existing buildings or making better use of existing sites or by releasing undeveloped land for development. In Chiltern and South Bucks all the built up

areas are tightly bounded by the Green Belt so releasing undeveloped land will require altering the Green Belt boundary where exceptional circumstances are proven (see above).

### **How much development will be for affordable housing?**

On sites released from the Green Belt for housing, in many cases we will expect to secure higher levels of affordable housing by capturing some of the increase in land value – although this does depend on the level of infrastructure required to serve the sites and viability of development. In built-up areas developments where 10 units (or 6 units within areas in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) are proposed we will either seek on-site affordable housing or a financial contribution depending on the individual circumstances.

It is important to note however that we are awaiting revised guidance from the Government about what types of housing count as 'affordable'. In particular, a new Government initiative called Starter Homes (new homes to be sold to first time buyers at a discount from the market price) are likely to form a significant part of future affordable housing provision.

The evidence base (draft Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment) identifies the level of affordable housing need and the Local Plan will seek to maximise opportunities to try to meet this need. In addition to this it is expected that the Local Plan will include a policy to allow small scale affordable housing proposals to come forward under specified circumstances which would not otherwise be able to secure planning permission.

## **Sites**

### **How do I find out what happened to my site nomination?**

Sites that have been put forward have been assessed through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) process. A draft of this document was published in January 2016 and is to be continually updated at key stages as new sites are suggested. The January 2016 draft can be seen at:

[www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence) or  
[www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036/evidence)

and a revised version will be published in the new year.

### **Why wasn't a previous site in the Issues and Options stage carried forward?**

Sites will be reviewed throughout the process of preparing the Local Plan and sites can be added or taken out for all sorts of reasons. This could include new information becoming available on things like flood risk, transport impacts or evidence on delivery. For a site to be

included in the plan there needs to be a good prospect of “delivery”. In other words it needs to be likely that the site can be brought forward for development within the plan period. If there are significant constraints on a site, possibly including the land owners resistance for development, then it won't be taken forward in the plan.

**I objected to a site being included last time. Why is it still proposed?**

Sites or rather options have been reviewed and will continue to be reviewed throughout the process of preparing the Local Plan. Assessments are technical exercises and examine the suitability and desirability of each site for development. In particular the implications for the Green Belt and sustainability of each site is examined. The consultation is not a referendum to be voted for but judgements made based on planning merits and evidence taking into account views expressed as part of the consultation(s).

**Why are you proposing building new housing in the AONB?**

There is a demand identified for housing and employment development across the two Districts, and all potential ways of meeting that need have to be identified. The Councils are prioritising built area sites and previously developed land, but it would not be appropriate to rule out any area for development (e.g. AONB or Green Belt) without considering whether that might provide the a sustainable solution. Settlements within the AONB have development needs and national guidance does not necessarily prevent development in the AONB. However if proposed development in the AONB is judged to be “major” (major not being defined but would need to be considered in each case) it can only proceed if exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

**Are the sites affected by contamination?**

This is a matter that will be looked into further as the Local Plan progresses. Some contamination is known and identified in the consultation document. Potential risk has not been tested fully at this stage but will be taken into account in a detailed assessment of each option working with the Councils' Environmental Protection Team. Where contamination is identified then this will not necessarily prevent development but the development would need to address this appropriately which could mean removal of the contamination, securing the contamination on site or other controlling or mitigation measures. Development itself could be the most appropriate way of dealing long term with some contamination but equally in some instances contamination may rule development out on part or all of some options.

**Have you contacted landowners or people living and working at the sites?**

The Councils have written to all known key landowners and/or their representatives for each identified option, but are not writing to all landowners at this time. Key landowners have been invited to share their letter with any other parties who have an interest in the land.

### **Will the whole of each site be developed?**

No. The options shown are the areas within which a planned approach to development would occur. Development would not happen across the whole of each site. For instance, where there are existing features of value such as woodlands, they would be retained as part of the overall planned approach to development. Equally, where there are existing houses or other buildings within a site, they would be retained unless the owners wish to redevelop them. Also sports pitches and other important land uses such as community facilities would be protected while new open space and landscaping would be required as part of new developments. Details on the requirements for each option are contained in the Green Belt Preferred Options Document: [www.chiltern.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=8628&p=0](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=8628&p=0)

## **Employment**

### **How much new employment land is being proposed?**

This is still being considered however about 26 hectares could be included in the Green Belt Preferred Options. Further options will be considered within built areas and already developed areas in the Green Belt based on land already in employment use or capable/suitable for employment development/redevelopment.

Another thing to be considered is that, if part of the plans housing need is to be provided in other areas such as Aylesbury Vale, then it would make sense for part of the employment needs to be provided there too to minimise commuting need/distances.

All these factors need to be balanced/assessed to make sure that the right amount of employment land is provided to serve the needs of the two districts and support the economy, will be attractive to the employment market/businesses and can be delivered in the most sustainable locations.

## **Infrastructure and Community Infrastructure Levy**

### **Will there be enough new infrastructure e.g. schools, health facilities, road junctions and other highway improvements?**

We are working hard with infrastructure and service providers to find out what new facilities and services will be required and where as a result of all planned development taking into account current levels of provision, pressures and deficits.

The Local Plan will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Schedule which will set out what infrastructure is needed to supported planned development, who is responsible for its delivery, timing, cost and how this cost is expected to be funded.

Large developments maybe required to directly provide some infrastructure such matters as primary schools, health facilities and necessary road improvements as part of any development or contribute to their delivery (e.g. provision of land and/or financial contributions). Development briefs (setting out requirements for developments on large sites) will be prepared where necessary which will form the framework for future planning applications including requirements for infrastructure both on and off the site.

### **How will the infrastructure be paid for?**

Most development has an impact on or benefits from infrastructure such as roads, schools and open spaces. There are a number of ways infrastructure can be paid for, the main ones being:

1. Local planning authorities can put in place a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)- a charge which specific new developments pay, based on the size and type of development (although there are exemptions granted for certain categories of development). The two local authorities are considering the benefits of setting a CIL alongside producing the Local Plan. It should be noted that exclusions from CIL could include major development sites if for example it is not viable with CIL or where infrastructure is required to be directly provided;
2. A developer may be asked by a local planning authority to enter into a legal agreement obligation to, for example, undertake works, provide affordable housing or provide funding for specific services or infrastructure;
3. Public funding via the Government such as through Growth Fund bids; or
4. Part of infrastructure providers own investment or improvement programmes.

### **What will be the impact of expanding Heathrow?**

At the moment, we don't know whether this will proceed as currently envisaged by the Government and therefore nor do we know what the potential impact could be. Although the principle of building a third runway at Heathrow has recently been approved by the Government, there are so many uncertainties about what will happen and when, that we can't consider it as part of the Local Plan. There are almost certain to be legal challenges to the new runway and so any impacts are unlikely to be felt for many years, perhaps even after the plan period has ended (2036).

If a new runway is to proceed then there will be displaced housing and employment uses and an increase in the number of jobs and workers locally. The Councils will monitor the situation and, if the level of impact looks likely to be significant the Councils may need to review the Local Plan at a future date or undertake limited alterations.

### **Why are there two levels of transport modelling?**

There are two transport modelling reports – strategic and local. The strategic modelling has been carried out with Bucks County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Wycombe District Council and relates to the distribution of likely new development across Buckinghamshire. The local modelling focusses more on the Chiltern and South Bucks joint Local Plan area and analyses the potential impacts of new development on the local road network in more detail. These are being undertaken in phases and further modelling work will be undertaken as the Local Plan progresses. For example new modelling is being undertaken based on the Green Belt Preferred Options and expected development from other areas (i.e. built areas and on previously developed land in the Green Belt).

### **Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

#### **Why are Traveller accommodation requirements being referred to?**

The Councils have a legal duty to plan for all forms of housing need including that for Gypsies and Traveller, and for travelling showpeople. There have been recent changes to Government planning policy on the definition of a Gypsy or Traveller, making it more difficult to assess need and for the Councils to plan for these types of accommodation. But there remains a requirement for local authorities to assess the need for gypsy and traveller pitches and for plots for travelling showpeople, and to make provision for those needs identified. If the Local Plan did not do this it would be likely to be found unsound at its public examination. Some of the potential development options in the Green Belt Preferred Options may be suitable to contribute to this need and the consultation is an opportunity for comments about whether that is appropriate.