

## PAPER 1

The following sets out Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley core strategy issues for consideration by the Assembly.

- 1 **Quality of life:** The local authorities will manage the considerable pressures for development in the sub-region so as to maintain and where possible improve the quality of life as measured by the Integrated regional Framework.
- 2 **Overall pattern of development:** The sub-region has developed as a multi-centred area. The central principle for development during the plan period will be to consolidate growth in and around the principal centres (Reading, Bracknell, Slough, Maidenhead, Newbury, High Wycombe, Basingstoke, Farnborough) and to strengthen the transport links, and in particular, public transport links, between them.
- 3 **Gaps:** The local authorities will preserve the setting and separate identity of settlements and protect areas of the open countryside which penetrate urban areas and provide access to the countryside for residents of urban areas. This will be achieved by the identification and maintenance of Gaps and Green Wedges which will be defined in local plans.
- 4 **Transport:** We will promote forms and locations of development that: (a) will reduce the need for those living or working in them to travel and (b) will make it possible for a greater proportion of their trips to be made by alternatives to the private car.
- 5 **Designated land:** Land which is protected by national or international designations will be excluded from consideration in making strategic land releases. The need for any smaller-scale releases of such land, to address specific locally-determined needs, will be considered through individual authorities' local development documents. Such releases will only be considered as exceptions to a general policy for the protection of such areas.
- 6 **Locations for residential development:** New house building will be located according to the following principles:
  - (a) Full use will first be made of previously-developed land within existing urban areas throughout the sub-region, subject to there being no unacceptable impacts on local amenities and quality of life; but
  - (b) Where this would yield insufficient housing to satisfy the overall requirement for the Western Corridor & Blackwater Valley, additional Greenfield allocations may be brought forward, through LDDs, there these would not involve the development of land subject to environmental or planning policy designations of international, national or regional importance;
  - (c) Any greenfield allocations that may be brought forward in line with (b) above will be predominantly focused on the periphery of the hub centres of Basingstoke, Bracknell, High Wycombe, Newbury and Reading, but smaller allocations may also be brought forward, through LDDs in other sustainable locations.

- 7      **Employment development:** So far as is possible, the need for additional employment space in the sub-region will be met through the more efficient use of land already in such uses, in the town centres and established employment areas. In the event that any additional employment land release is needed, the location and the form of development will be expected to demonstrate high standards of accessibility by alternatives to the private car and low impact on the environment.
  
- 8      **Investment pressures:** Pressures for investment in the sub-region will be managed in a sustainable manner to secure the maximum community benefit from them and to design out their disadvantages. As part of this strategy major employment development will only be acceptable if it includes mitigation commensurate with its impact on the demand for housing, labour and skills and transport.